



The Power of Digital Tools

A Community-Based Training and Tracking Application to Strengthen Health Outcomes



Developing an effective community collaboration system with a focus on behavioral change to improve health and nutritional practices requires a multi-layered process. Using digital tools to build capacity for tracking activities and analyzing service quality and trends allows service providers to develop more-responsive interventions. Digitalizing tools and processes, particularly for community-based trainings, is a key approach for harnessing the power of technology, streamlining processes, and making better use of data. Digitalizing tools can also offer a tailored enabling environment for users.

Abt is working with USAID on an international activity called Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies (HMHB) in Khatlon Province, Tajikistan. The Activity's goal is to improve the nutritional status of mothers and of children under two, and reduce their morbidity and mortality rates. To achieve that goal, HMHB aims to improve the quality and availability of lifesaving, evidence-based health interventions for women and children.

Two examples of digital strategies are the Community-Based Events digital application and a Continuing Medication app. The Community-Based Events Digital app collects and stores data, and facilitates data analysis, on community-level outreach activities, including community meetings, trainings, and mentoring and supportive visits. Each recorded event captures key information on Activity deliverables, including the meeting coordinator, training topics, and information unique to each attendee.

The Continuing Medication app enables health care workers to track trainings more effectively in Tajikistan's Nutrition Resource Centers, to increase health care worker capacity. Surrounding users with an enabling environment and actionable information helps practitioners to track, plan, and implement evidence-based strategies to improve outcomes.

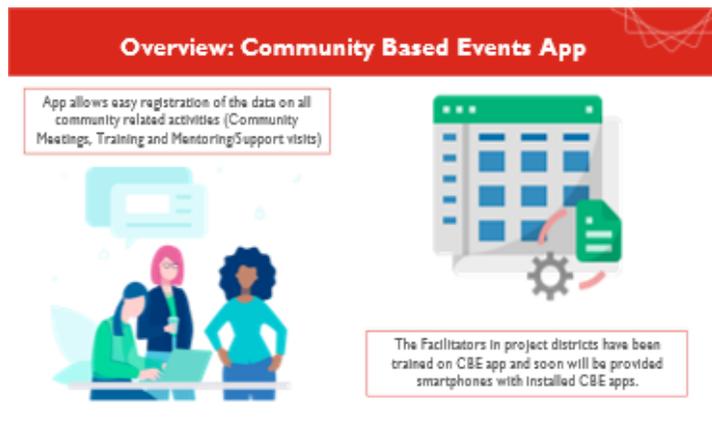
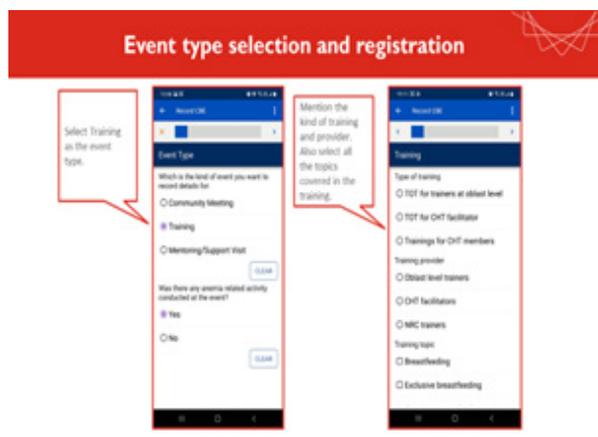
Benefits of Using the Community-Based Events and Continuing Medication Apps

- Service providers can identify and analyze which persons within different communities received specific trainings and how many persons were trained in each topic.
- Project implementers can contrast participant training data with other Healthy Mother Healthy Baby indicators to identify where additional targeted trainings are needed.
- Stronger linkages can be created between levels of health services, and engage communities in quality improvement initiatives at primary health centers and in hospitals.

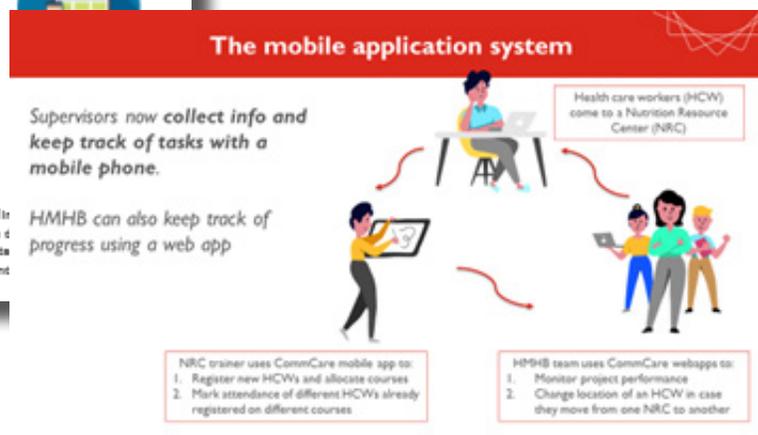
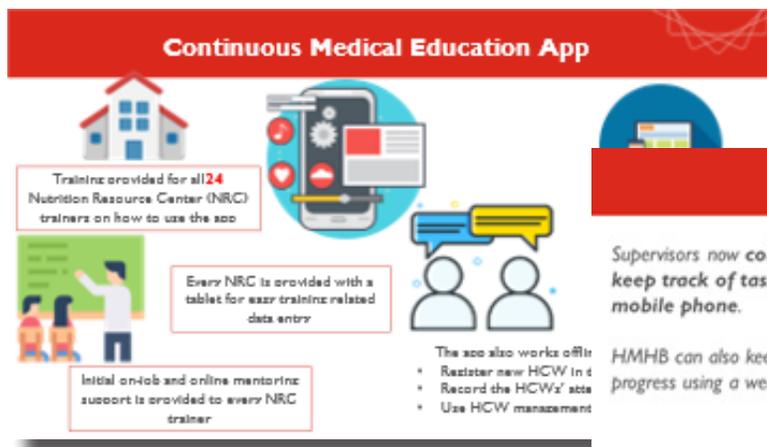
Real-World Application

The Community-Based Events app was developed as part of this project, to track community-based trainings and the health care providers belonging to the country's Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the People. The Community-Based Events app is a tailored adaptation of the open-source CommCare application, which was developed by Activity partner Dimagi. CommCare has been adapted for other applications for the Healthy Mother Healthy Baby Activity to use smarter apps that allow more-granular data capture and analysis over time. The **Community-Based Education app** has been successfully used by 307 facilitators in four districts in Tajikistan and by 12 participating District Coordinators and in Health Lifestyle Centers.

The following provides an illustrative example of the types of training data that can be captured with the Community-Based Education app. The image in Exhibit 1 is an illustrative screenshot.



The following is an illustration of the information collected and tracked for the Continuous Medical Education App.



Future Directions

The use of digital tools to identify key barriers to and motivators for change, and to develop effective messages and interventions, can be effective in adding capacity for training and technical assistance activities. Future versions of the Community-Based Education app will track information about uniquely identified pregnant women during their antenatal care visits, track birth outcomes and growth monitoring for newborns and children under 5, track nutrition counseling, and help prevent malnutrition and stunting in young children. The app may be expanded further to include immunization tracking, and can support multimedia content, including audio and visual guidelines, to enable health care workers to share more-comprehensive counseling during each stage of case management.



For More Information

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