A Country Countdown
Zambian Story

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BACKGROUND

• Countdown to 2015 is a global initiative that tracks global and national progress towards the achievement of MDGs 4 and 5.

• Focuses on coverage of effective interventions for maternal, newborn and child survival.

• Reports on 75 priority countries which account for more than 95% of maternal and child mortality worldwide.
At country level countdown

• Analyzes country-level coverage & trends for interventions proven to reduce maternal, newborn and child health. (Intervention coverage)

• Tracks indicators for policies and health system strength, financial flows and equity.
• Identifies knowledge and data gaps across the reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health continuum of care.

• Build a common vision and strategies towards the attainment of the MDGs.

• Advocates to policy makers at national and international level.
CD AS POWERFUL INSTRUMENT

In Zambia we used CD as an important mechanism for:-

• In-country mechanism to take stock of achievements and bottlenecks

• Identifying areas and population groups that required more attention

• Monitoring progress towards meeting health-related MDGs
• Identify and address **gaps in coverage** and **quality of care** along the continuum of care for RMNCH

• Translating data into action and stimulating national & sub national actions

• Increase resource allocations for RMNCH to ensure that interventions and programs were sufficiently funded
WHY HOLD COUNTRY CD

– A Country Countdown raised the profile of the health related MDGs

– Helped define roles for specific actions needed to reach the health MDGs.

– Facilitated engagement of partners and enhanced the commitment and accountability of all key stakeholders
IN VolvING POLICY-MAKERS (1)

The CD provided an opportunity to engage parliamentarians to:

• Advocate and influence development and implementation of supportive policies and legislation for RMNCH.

• Support initiatives for investments that save lives.
IN Volving Policy-Makers (2)

• Influence increase in allocation of resources for RMNCH in national budgets.

• Monitor and track in-country progress on the MDGs.
We used Parliamentarians as champions of RMNCH issues and encourage them to engage fellow leaders through strategic one-to-one discussions to support RMNCH.

We also used Parliamentarians in the following strategies;

- Community dialogue (village meetings)
- Discussions with traditional leaders
- Participate in high visibility events and commemorations
COUNTRY-LEVEL BENEFITS (1)

• Through CD provincial and district participants got opportunities to improve information sharing and peer-to-peer learning.

• Well-performing districts got recognized and were able to showcase their work in specific areas.

• The CD also promoted competition, stimulating districts to improve performance.
COUNTRY-LEVEL BENEFITS (2)

The Country countdown facilitated;

• Capacity building in data collection, analysis, disaggregating and packaging into profiles for both national and sub-national level.
KEY LESSONS LEARNED

• Strong leadership from the senior level of the Ministry of Health is required.

• Adequate time for preparations/planning needed

• Development of a shared costed, detailed work plan and budget a priority

• Regular follow ups to ensure pledges to support the CD are fulfilled before the holding the conference.
KEY LESSONS LEARNT (2)

• The process should be inclusive and consultative.

• Countdown conferences should be planned and budgeted for in national budgets.

• Partners should include Countdown process in their work plans and allocate resources.
KEY LESSONS LEARNT (3)

• Decision-makers should be represented in committees to ensure fulfilment of commitments in terms of resources and assignments.

• Media engagement throughout the whole process. Media contacts can serve as allies and early involvement helps to raise the profile of the process and sensitize the public.

• High-level ownership by Government (MOH and MCDMCH) is critical to rally partner support and participation.
OUR CHILDREN, OUR INVESTMENT

THANK YOU!