



Forecasting & Supply Planning

In 2023, inSupply Health and JSI conducted a joint landscaping assessment to identify opportunities for strengthening data use culture and processes within the public sector supply chain. The assessment used a mixed-method approach, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, with stock status measured by physical inventory checks. Key findings highlighted the Ministry of Health's efforts to promote data use through a national training manual, HMIS systems, 177 key performance indicators (KPIs), and Performance Monitoring Teams (PMTs) across all levels. PMTs at the woreda and health facility levels were the most functional, though engagement from pharmacy departments remained limited.

The assessment revealed that inventory accuracy for eight Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH) products was 100% across the facilities visited, with overall availability at 78%. Stockouts were infrequent and mainly caused by supply shipment delays, particularly for certain vaccines. The report recommends revitalizing PMT governance, enhancing data analysis skills among members, and establishing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to improve decision-making and supply chain performance.

*Themes: 1. **Forecasting and Quantification** 2. Inventory Control Procedures 3. Transport & Distribution 4. Logistics Management Information Systems 5. Data Demand and Use 6. Performance Monitoring Teams 7. Recognition and Capacity Building*

The quantification process for Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH) commodities is both centralized and decentralized. However, poor data quality and reliance on manual tools have resulted in low forecast accuracy, creating inefficiencies in meeting demand.

Collaborative Process

Quantification is a collaborative effort between the Ministry of Health and partners, conducted annually over 2-3 months. It uses various methods, including consumption data for Antiretrovirals (ARVs) and proxy data (issues) for RMNCH commodities. The Woreda plays a crucial role in forecasting certain RMNCH commodities based on targets during Woreda-based planning, while health facilities forecast and procure others using service/coverage targets.

Data Quality Challenges

Data quality has emerged as a significant challenge, affecting the accuracy of forecasting outputs. Forecasts are based on demographic and service statistics, logistics, and consumption data. While adjustments are made to improve accuracy, data cleaning remains a time-consuming process, often taking 2-3 months. Private sector facilities are also included in forecasting efforts, with alignment to annual budgets and corrections made as needed.



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“Quantification is done at the central level; data quality is a problem Logistics and service data is used depending on the program. Compare and reconcile to get best output. Every quarter the quantification is reviewed against supply planning.” Key Informant.

Recommendations



Improving Data Use and Culture

Addressing data use gaps can improve data quality and, in turn, ensure more accurate forecasting and quantification outputs.



Automation

The manual processes for forecasting could be automated to enhance efficiency, particularly in data cleaning and validation.