



JAMII NI AFYA

ZANZIBAR'S COMMUNITY HEALTH SYSTEM



BACKGROUND

In August 2021, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (RGoZ), in partnership with D-tree, celebrated a significant milestone as Jamii ni Afya ("Community is Health")—the government's digitally enabled community health program—reached full national scale.

Jamii ni Afya leverages government guidelines and global best practices to guide Community Health Volunteers (CHVs) using digital technology in delivering high quality, standardized services in maternal and child health, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) and early childhood development.

The data generated from these interactions is used to further personalize health services, improve supervision, and support programmatic and policy

decision-making at community, district and national levels.

This is an important moment for the field of global health, as Zanzibar is one of the world's first examples of a government-led digital community health program achieving national scale. **By ensuring all of its 1.9 million citizens¹ have access to a digitally equipped CHV at their doorstep, the Zanzibar MOH has brought the country closer to Universal Health Coverage than it has ever been before.**

MEASURABLE IMPACT

Though the national scale-up is still in its early stages, Jamii ni Afya is already making an impact. Over 1.5 million people have been registered in the program, demonstrating strong community acceptance and buy-in. In the last seven years, Zanzibar has seen a 75% increase in health facility deliveries and a 57% reduction in maternal mortality. We've seen a 41% reduction in rates of stunting in children under-5. Over 95% of women and children who exhibit a life-threatening danger sign successfully receive care at a health facility; more than triple the rate of typical referral completion. **These important gains are not only saving lives; they are cost-effective. The operating costs of Jamii ni Afya is only \$0.86 per person per year (\$1.6 million total).**

¹ Tanzania Population Household Survey, 2022



LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY

As the catalyst of Jamii ni Afya, the RGoZ and D-tree have had the program's long-term sustainability in mind from the beginning. Jamii ni Afya reflects the RGoZ's vision and commitment, and the program has been designed to position the government to fully take over the operational, technical and financial management of the system. A supportive policy environment has been key in establishing Jamii ni Afya as a formal government initiative, setting up RGoZ's long-term ownership and financing of the program into the future. D-tree partnered with the MOH to spearhead the revision of the National Community Health Strategy (2019-2025), which recognizes digitally enabled CHVs as a formal part of the government's health system and the first-ever Digital Health Strategy (2020-2025) positions Jamii ni Afya within the digital health ecosystem of Zanzibar.

TRANSITIONING TO FULL GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP

Now that Jamii ni Afya is operating at full national scale, the RGoZ has committed to full financial, programmatic and technology ownership of the program. D-tree is working hand-in-hand with the RGoZ to foster a smooth and effective transition, strengthening the capacity of government stakeholders at the community, district and national levels. D-tree and the Zanzibar MOH partnered to develop a transition plan which documents clear milestones over a four-year period (2023 - 2026) in the areas of financial sustainability, program & operations management, and technology & data management.

Financial sustainability: The RGoZ will reach financial sustainability for Jamii ni Afya with a multi-pronged financing approach. This will include increasing national budget support for Jamii ni Afya over the next four years; integration of Jamii ni Afya into the planned health financing reforms, including a Universal Health Insurance scheme; and securing direct government funding from funders.

Program & operations management: D-tree and the Zanzibar Ministry of Health will partner to develop operating tools and transfer skills to enable the RGoZ to fully take on programmatic management (CHV recruitment, training, refresher training, supervision, monitoring), operations management (managing payment of CHV stipends via mobile money), and coordination of partners and government agencies interested in the community health program.

Technology & data management: Within four years, the Zanzibar Ministry of Health will fully maintain the digital Jamii ni Afya platform which guides, coordinates and monitors CHVs' provision of community health services across Zanzibar. This includes user support, system operations, platform management, data management and data use.

VISION FOR PROGRAM EXPANSION

In addition to transitioning Jamii ni Afya to full government ownership, we see tremendous potential to further strengthen the community health program to have more impact and serve as a foundation of primary healthcare in Zanzibar. Specifically, we have plans to expand the program in three key ways:



- Professionalize the cadre, elevating them from community health volunteers to community health workers (CHWs) - including adding them to the government payroll and making them formal government employees.
- Double the number of CHWs and expanding the service delivery package so they can provide more comprehensive services to a smaller number of families in their catchment area.
- Change government policy to allow CHWs to provide curative services at the community level, including administering medications, conducting rapid diagnostic tests, and delivering family planning commodities.

By expanding the program in these ways, we can elevate the status of CHWs in our community, support them to provide comprehensive health services, and shift care delivery to people's households, preventing emergencies before they arise and reducing the demand for curative services.

GOVERNMENT SUPPORT NEEDED



To enable an effective transition of Jamii ni Afya, the RGoZ is committed to securing direct funding early on in the transition process to cover CHV operational costs. We are also interested in discussing funding for the expansion of the program. Specifically, we are looking to raise the following funds to support the program:

CALL TO ACTION

With technical assistance from D-tree, coupled with the support of committed donors, the RGoZ has committed to fully own and transition Jamii ni Afya to ensure high-quality primary healthcare for all Zanzibaris into the future. **An equipped, trained and digitized community health workforce is key to a resilient health system in Zanzibar, one that is better equipped to handle emerging threats; one that uses data to continuously optimize resources to ensure the maximum benefit for our citizens, and one that enables quality, life-saving care to be accessed by all.** The RGoZ has committed to increasingly include the costs for sustaining Jamii ni Afya in our national budget. Until such time and during this critical juncture of transition, we request your financial support to help us continue to strengthen and institutionalize this important initiative and protect the groundbreaking progress that has already been made.