CASE STUDY

FOCUS REGION HEALTH PROJECT

Reducing Stock Outs for Reproductive Health Products

dimagi JSI Ghana Health Service USAID

OVERVIEW

The Focus Region Health Project's Early Warning System was designed to provide real-time stock status information on reproductive health commodities to provide early warning of a dip in supplies. Its automated, data-focused approach fosters effective supervision of ordering and delivery to ensure that essential health commodities is always be available by facilitating consistent, planned ordering and avoiding widespread emergency orders.

SUMMARY

LOCATION

Ghana

SECTOR

Maternal & Child Health, Disease Treatment

PARTNERS

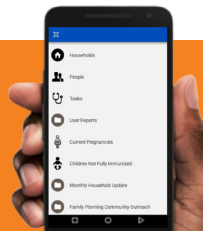
JSI Research & Training Institute, Inc., Ghana Health Services, USAID Deliver Project

FEATURES

Custom Reports, SMS Notifications, Location-based Messaging and Report Access, Web and SMS-based Form Input

NUMBER OF USERS

783



PROBLEM

Visibility into the stock of vital medicines will always be a tricky task, especially in low-resource environments. It is no different in Ghana, where frequent stock-outs and long reporting and ordering processes meant community health workers, and therefore their patients, often went without the medication they needed.

SOLUTION

The Focus Region Health Project (FRHP) developed an application that community health workers can access from their own phones to help decrease barriers to product ordering and increase visibility in the stock status of health commodities across the country. The application's goal is to facilitate consistent, planned ordering and avoiding widespread emergency orders which used to lead to quick, unpredictable depletions of resources.

APP OVERVIEW

The Early Warning System (EWS), based on CommCare, allows community health workers and health facility staff to use their own mobile phones to report stock levels of tracer commodities via SMS to a dedicated, toll-free short code on a weekly basis.

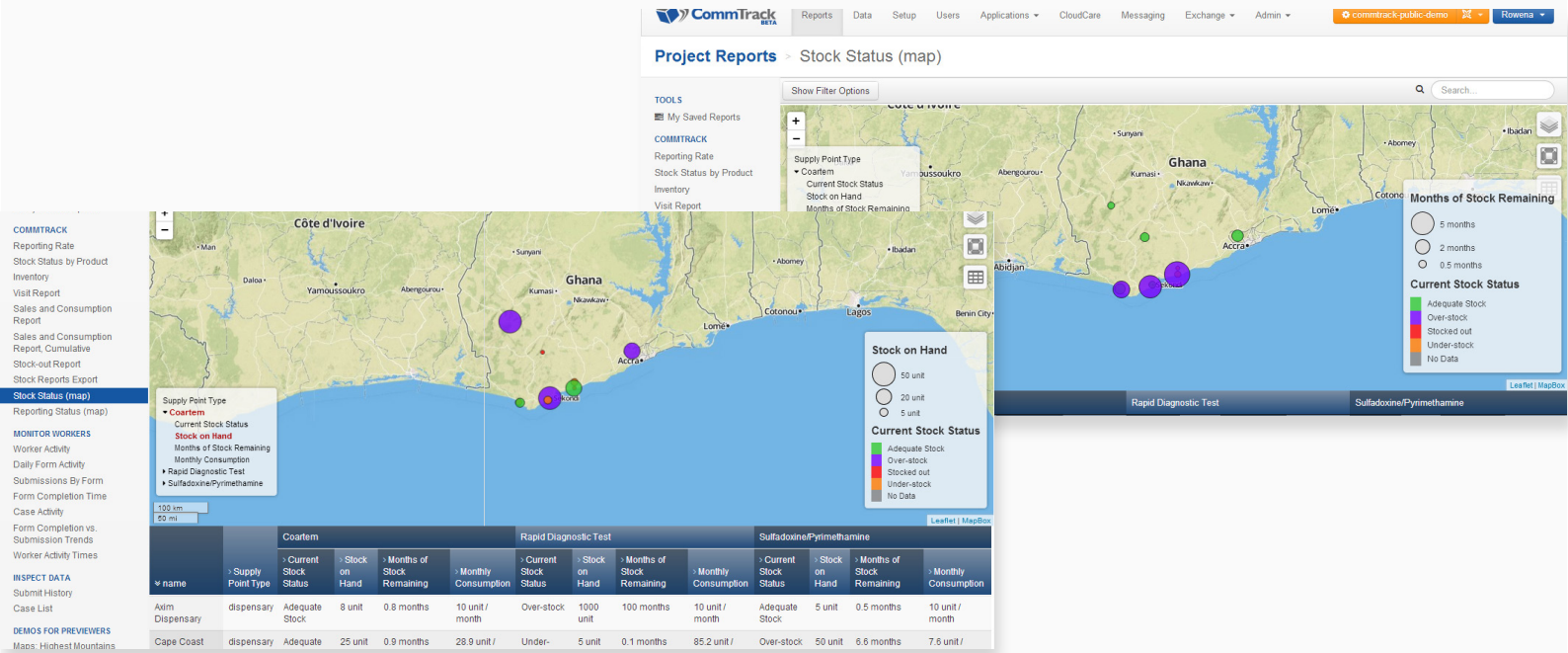
Commodities were selected from a cross-section of priority programs including family planning, malaria, and HIV/AIDS. All levels of facilities are represented, from rural community outposts to urban teaching hospitals and the regional medical stores (RMS).

The data are then processed and made available to all relevant parties via a website which allows users to view national data as well as drill down to specific regions, districts, or facilities of interest.

IMPLEMENTATION

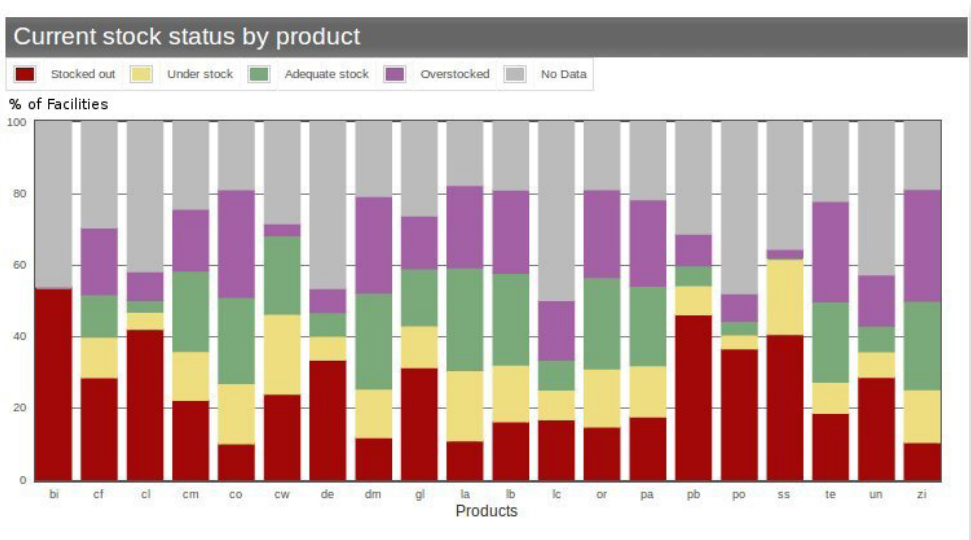
An initial pilot was completed by FRHP with facilities from six districts in Ghana, as well as an extension of the pilot that focused entirely on HIV/AIDS commodities in an additional 89 districts elsewhere in the country.

Following the success of the pilot, EWS has been deployed to 783 public health facilities and community health compounds across 172 districts in all 10 regions, including all antiretroviral therapy (ART) facilities, teaching hospitals and regional medical stores in the country.

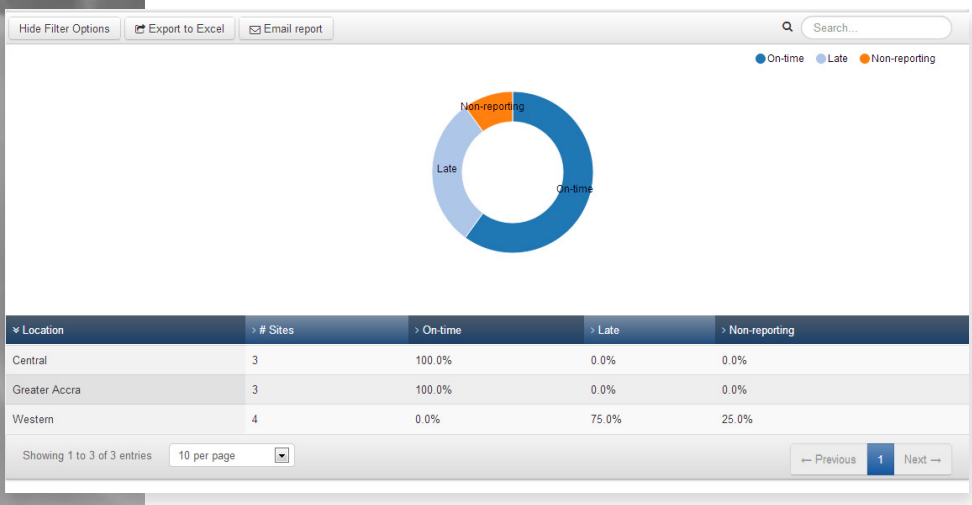


IMPACT

Following the introduction of the Emergency Reporting System, stock reporting rates were as high as 95% in some regions, with an average weekly reporting rate of 84%. Over 90% of users were satisfied with the time spent to submit these stock reports, ease of use, and frequency.



While the percentage of managers who access this information for decision-making was 29%, among those managers who did access the information, 80% used the information to provide feedback to facilities, indicating that greater integration of the system into the decision-making process would be expected to yield higher impact.



Location	# Sites	On-time	Late	Non-reporting
Central	3	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Greater Accra	3	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Western	4	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%

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