



The Potential for Digital technology to improve delivery of ECD services in Tanzania



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INTRODUCTION (1)

- Early childhood offers a critical window of opportunity to shape the trajectory of a child's holistic development and build a foundation for their future (<https://www.unicef.org/early-childhood-development>).
- In low and middle-income countries across the world, 250 million children under the age of 5 are at risk of not reaching their full developmental potential because of poverty and stunting.
- According to the Tanzania Demographic Health Survey (DHS, 2022), an alarmingly high percentage of Tanzanian children, 47%, are at risk of not reaching their full developmental potential due to socio-economic factors including poverty and malnutrition.
- The National Multi-Sectorial Early Childhood Programme (2021/22-2025/26) calls for a coordinated, multi-sectorial approach as a means to accelerate Early Childhood Development outcomes in Tanzania and therefore contribute to Universal Health Coverage (UHC).



INTRODUCTION (2)

- Community health workers (CHWs), empowered with digital tools, proper training, and mentorship present an invaluable resource in ensuring that “**All children in Tanzania are developmentally on track to develop to their full potential**” through the delivery of holistic and comprehensive Early Childhood Development (ECD) services at the community level.
- The Unified Community System (UCS) is an information and decision making support system developed by the MoH in partnership with key stakeholders implementing community based health programs with the goal of enhancing health service delivery at the community level by leveraging on digital technology.
- The UCS-WAJA app consolidates and captures community interventions such as (not limited to): **HIV; Malaria; Family planning; TB; Leprosy and (most recently) ECD services.**
- In 2023, the UCS-WAJA app content was reviewed and refined to include ECD service delivery for Post-natal and Child modules with a focus on 3 components of the Nurturing Care Framework: **Opportunities for Early Learning; Safety and Security and Responsive caregiving.**
- The MoCDGWSGs in collaboration with D-tree, EGPAF and ELCT are jointly implementing the Mtoto ni Jamii/Malezi III/Kizazi Hodari in Arusha, Tanzania in four councils, namely: Arusha city council, Arusha District council, Meru District council and Karatu District council.



OBJECTIVES

Main Objective:

- To institutionalize and integrate ECD services within Primary Health services which include community-based health services by leveraging on Digital technology

Specific Objectives:

- To strengthen ECD service delivery at the community level by capacitating CHWs with the necessary tools.
- To improve caregiver knowledge and positive practices which contribute to positive child outcomes.
- To strengthen male engagement/involvement in caregiving practices.
- To generate crucial ECD data across the 5 ECD domains to monitor child development progress and decision making



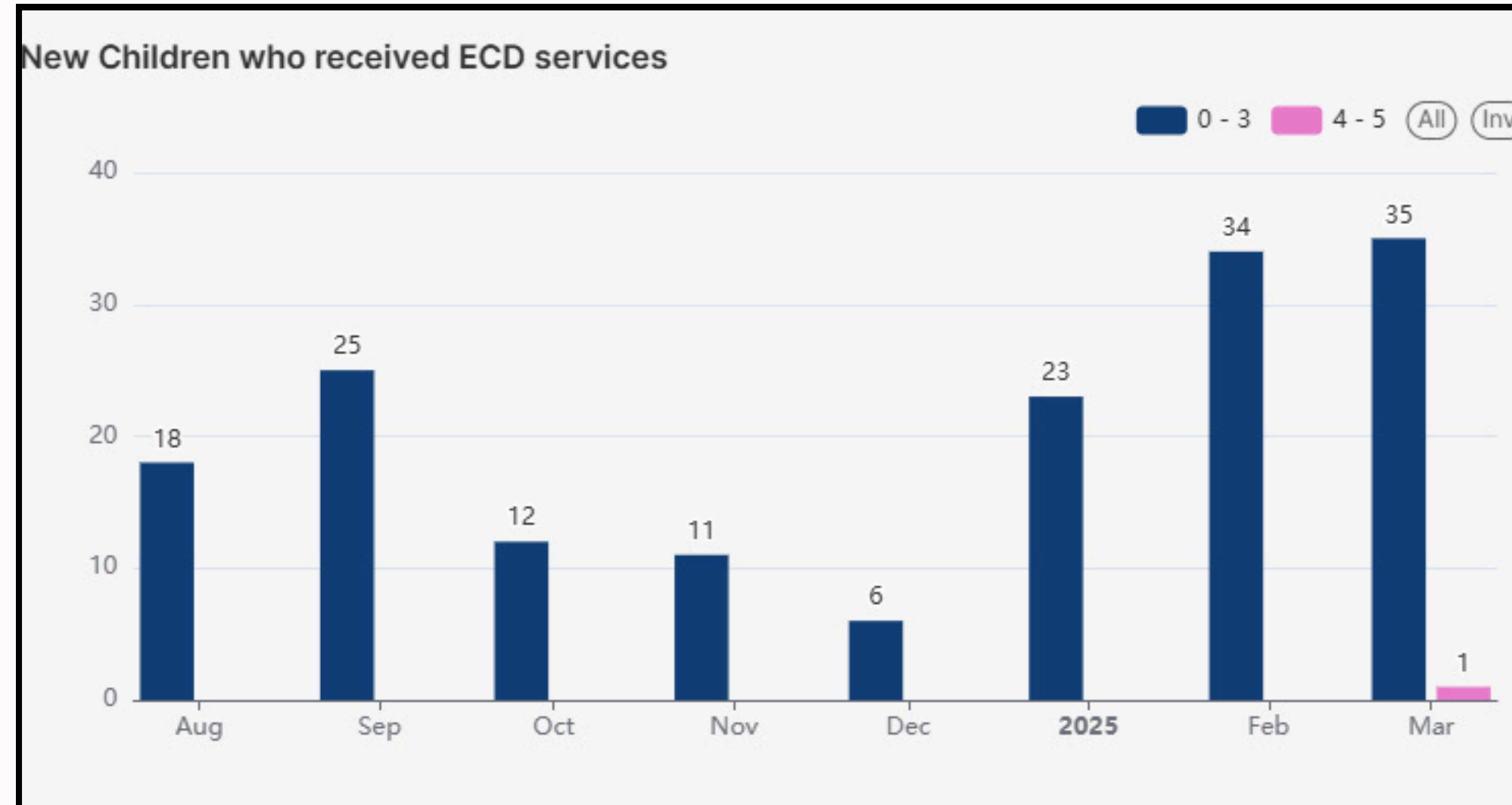
METHODOLOGY

- Updating the existing UCS-WAJA app, used by CHWs to deliver comprehensive Community based Health services (CCBHS) to include content on ECD targeting Antenatal (ANC), Post-natal (PNC) and Children between the ages of 0-5 years old.
- Train CHWs on the use of the improved UCS-WAJA app to facilitate the efficient delivery of CCBHS which include ECD services (registrations; household visits; issue and follow up on referrals to the Health facility).
- Empower CHWs with working tools such as: tablets, Bango kitita and counselling flipbook (on play and communication) to support with ECD service delivery.
- Design and develop an ECD Dashboard (visualisation tool) within the existing UCS-dashboard system to support with CHW performance monitoring for better decision making



RESULTS

- More than 160 CHWs in Arusha region (Arusha CC; Arusha DC; Meru and Karatu) have been trained on the use of improved UCS-WAJA App in delivering essential community health services which include ECD services.



CONCLUSION

- CHWs are a cadre of health care providers, who when empowered with the necessary tools and support (including consistent mentorship) we can ensure that ECD service delivery especially in hard to reach communities.
- While Digital technologies plays a key role in strengthening health systems and therefore improving delivery of ECD services at the community level. It is crucial to generate evidence to support future investment decisions particularly in low-and lower-middle-income countries (LLMIC), where health service delivery is resource-sensitive.

Thank you!