

# Pre-Service Education for Immunization MCSP Tanzania Program Brief

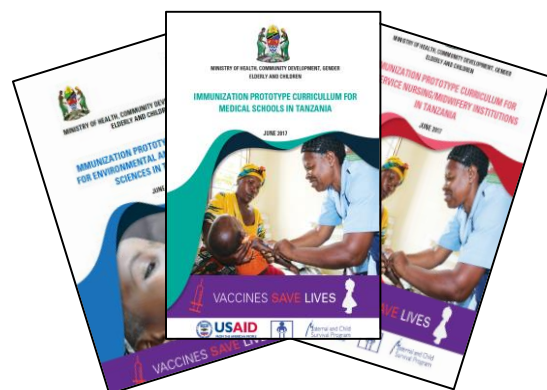
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A properly trained health workforce is critical to ensuring that clients receive high-quality health care services when and where they need them. In Tanzania, the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly, and Children's (MOHCDGEC) Immunization and Vaccine Development (IVD) program relies on a multi-pronged approach for educating those who deliver the nation's immunization services. A key component of this approach is pre-service education, or the training of health personnel such as doctors, nurses, environmental health officers and health officers prior to the beginning of their service. In Tanzania, the main challenge was the lack of standardization of content. From 2016-2018, the Maternal and Child Survival Program (MCSP) supported the IVD to standardize and update its pre-service education (PSE) curriculum package for use around the country and to roll the revised package out to training institutes in Mara and Kagera regions of the Lake Zone. As more health training institutions adopt the standardized PSE package in the future, the number of graduates trained and competent to deliver high-quality immunization services will continue to increase. Over the life of the project, MCSP and IVD became effective advocates in the standardization of the curriculum package.

## Program Approaches, Strategies, Interventions, and Challenges

1. **Advocated for change:** MCSP supported the IVD to advocate for nationwide adoption of an updated, standardized PSE curriculum for immunization. Previously, PSE for immunization had not been standardized, with different training institutions using different curricula to teach their students. Together, MCSP and IVD successfully presented a vision of having one updated, standard curriculum to policymakers in the MOHCDGEC Department of Training and Department of Preventive Services and the President's Office, Regional Administration and Local Government (PORALG).
2. **Updated and standardized immunization PSE curriculum:** With MCSP, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, Clinton Health Access Initiative, PATH, and other partner support, IVD personnel and representatives from 13 training institutes reviewed the immunization PSE training materials in use at the time and developed a revised PSE curriculum by adapting the World Health Organization's (WHO) African region immunization curriculum prototype. The revised curriculum now includes up-to-date information on Tanzania's immunization policies and guidelines as well as content on new vaccines and vaccine technology in line with global standards.



Updated immunization PSE curricula for medical, nursing, and health officer schools

3. **Disseminated updated materials:** At the MOHCDGEC's request, MCSP printed over 13,000 copies of the revised PSE materials for trainers in medical, nursing, and public health schools at all health levels in all regions in the country. MCSP also supported orientation workshops for training institute personnel such as lecturers and tutors of doctors, nurses, and environmental health officers in Mara and Kagera regions. These workshops were well received, with stakeholders recommending that additional orientations be held so that tutors throughout Tanzania can be trained on updated PSE materials.

## Key Results and Lessons Learned

- By 2017, three immunization pre-service curricula (one for medical schools, one for public health schools, and one for nursing and midwifery schools) were developed for national use based on a standardized set of up-to-date materials – the WHO immunization curricula prototype. The new PSE packages include revised lesson plans, course outlines, learner practicum tools, and training facilitator guides for each cadre.
- Training institutions and regional and district medical offices in all regions in the country were provided revised PSE materials to support training for medical, public health officers and nurses and midwives.
- Twenty-one tutors from 12 PSE training institutes in Mara and Kagera regions were oriented by MCSP and IVD on the revised training curricula. Equipped with updated materials, medical and public health officers, nurses and midwives are better prepared to apply new vaccine policies, strategies and technologies to save more lives of children and newborns.



Immunization PSE orientation in Kagera and Mara Regions. Photo: MCSP/Green Sadru

## Recommendations

- The revised immunization curriculum for pre-service training institutes is very important for the sustainable production of a skilled and knowledgeable immunization workforce. Having standardized, up-to-date PSE packages that can be used across the country is critical to assuring that health workers are able to deliver high-quality immunization services into the future. **IVD should continue to update these packets as needed.**
- **IVD and its partners should orient all pre-service health training institutes (medical schools, public health schools, and nursing and midwifery schools) on the revised PSE curricula and provide training and materials needed to adopt and scale-up the new training.** Use of outdated, non-standardized training materials and curricula in these institutions should cease.
- **IVD and its partners should prioritize follow up visits to training institutes in annual plans and budgets to monitor use of new curricula and assist if problems arise.**
- **IVD and its partners should include regularly reviewing PSE and other materials on an annual basis or more to review and determine whether updates of vaccine policies, strategies, and technologies are needed to be made in the curricula.** IVD should also work actively with health training institutes to help them adopt new curricula as needed.

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