District-level Readiness for Elimination of Malaria Tool (DREAM-IT)

Key messages

- Malaria elimination programs are operationally and logistically demanding. To deliver on these demands, malaria programs require a broad range of operational capabilities at all levels of the health system, but particularly at the district level.

- Understanding core operational gaps and challenges at the district level is critical to addressing bottlenecks and barriers to malaria elimination.

- DREAM-IT is a malaria elimination-focused assessment tool designed to systematically and comprehensively evaluate the operational readiness of the health system at all levels for elimination and sustained prevention of reintroduction.

- Results from DREAM-IT can be used to inform operational planning for malaria elimination and identify specific areas for focus or improvement across and within different levels of the health system.

About the Toolkit

The MEI Malaria Elimination Toolkit is a set of proven tools and approaches to help malaria endemic countries accelerate progress toward malaria elimination. Developed by the Malaria Elimination Initiative (MEI) at the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), the toolkit addresses the unique challenges faced by national malaria programs in heterogeneous transmission settings. These tools have been used successfully at the national and/or subnational levels, leading to important changes in malaria policy and practice.

The MEI recognizes that implementing any new tool or approach can be challenging. Technical assistance is available to support the tailoring and implementation of all MEI tools. Please visit our website shrinkingthemalariamap.org or contact us for more information at mei@ucsf.edu.

What is readiness for malaria elimination?

Malaria elimination readiness refers to a state of being fully prepared to achieve malaria elimination. Readiness for malaria elimination is determined by a variety of health system structures and effectiveness and adaptability of these structures. The success of elimination efforts depends upon the epidemiological and entomological surveillance systems. As part of the transition from malaria control to malaria elimination, malaria programs in low-transmission settings must strengthen their readiness for elimination by examining and addressing financial, technical, operational, and programmatic needs and gaps.

What is DREAM-IT and why is it useful?

DREAM-IT aims to inform program planning for malaria elimination strategies and activities within subnational districts and provinces by assessing the readiness of community health workers, health facilities, and district-level health systems to implement and sustain elimination activities. Specifically, the

tool facilitates the identification of capacity gaps and operational constraints to achieving elimination through analysis of 15 core thematic areas (Table 1).

DREAM-IT is a series of five assessment modules with each module corresponding to one level of the health system: national, provincial, district, health facility, and community health worker (CHW). The district module questionnaire is the core module of the tool. DREAM-IT modules are comprised of up to 15 thematic areas, each containing a series of questions related to that area (Table 1). Depending on the assessment objectives and available resources, programs can choose which module levels to include in the assessment and tailor the questions according to country context and priorities.

Who should use this tool and how?

DREAM-IT has been developed for use by anyone – national malaria program staff, partner organizations, research institutions, evaluators, donors, or others – to conduct an assessment of a national malaria program to implement malaria elimination strategies and activities. Countries have used DREAM-IT assessment results to identify key operational strengths and gaps, make improvements in operational strategies and plans, update malaria program national strategic plans and advocate for malaria elimination resource mobilization.

Table 1. DREAM-IT Modules and Thematic Areas

Thematic Area	Community Health Worker	Health Facility	District	Provincial	National
General Information (GI)	x	x	x	x	x
Office Infrastructure (OI)	x	x	x		
Access to Care (AC)	x	x	x		x
Training (TR)	x	x	x	x	x
Supervision (SV)	x	x	x	x	x
Supply Chain (SC)	x	x	x	x	x
Surveillance and Response (SR)	x	x	x	x	x
Vector Control (VC)	x	x	x		x
Community Engagement (CE)	x	x			
Planning and Financing (PF)			x	x	x
Human Resources (HR)		x	x	x	x
Key Document Availability (KD)			x	x	x
Cross-sector Collaboration (CC)			x		
Leadership and Governance (LG)				x	x
Other Challenges (OC)			x	x	x

UCSF Institute for Global Health Sciences