

Notes from the field

Supporting health facilities in hard-to-reach areas



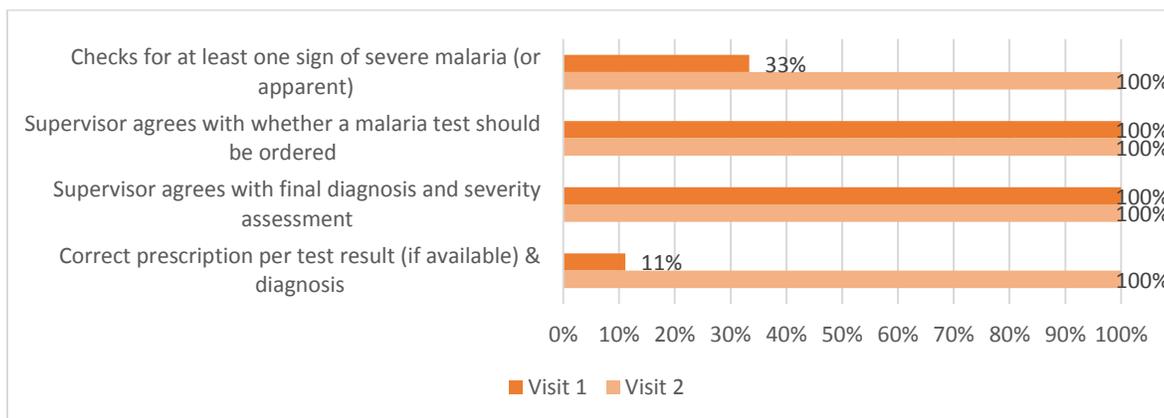
*A supervisor and driver clear the road so their vehicle can pass.
Photo: MalariaCare, Tanzania.*

Morogoro is an isolated region in eastern Tanzania with 384 health facilities, including 14 hospitals, 49 health centers and 321 medical dispensaries. One of them, Mihale Dispensary, is located high in the hills, far from the District Health Office. The dispensary sees more than 30 patients per day but it is difficult to reach by vehicle or motorcycle, and thus rarely receives onsite assistance. With support from the President’s Malaria Initiative and the National Malaria Control Program of Tanzania, the district supervisor—together with MalariaCare staff—visited and provided outreach training and supportive supervision (OTSS) to help the dispensary provide quality malaria case management in line with national guidelines.

Once at the facility, the supervisor worked closely with the lead medical attendant to implement onsite training and mentorship on using RDTs, properly administering artesunate injections to treat malaria and generally providing quality patient care. The dispensary attendant said, “I am happy you have visited

this facility today. I have learned a lot from you. Until today I had received no supportive supervision over the past four years. Thank you so much!” A second OTSS visit was scheduled a few months later. The graph below shows changes in key clinical indicators between the first and second OTSS visits.

Health facility performance on minimum standard steps for clinical case management between OTSS visits 1 and 2, Mihale Dispensary, Tanzania



Targeted support like this across Tanzania is contributing to better health facility performance and improving the quality of services.

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