DHIS2 in Supporting Regional Communities: The Case of TB Dashboard for Southern African Development Community(SADC)

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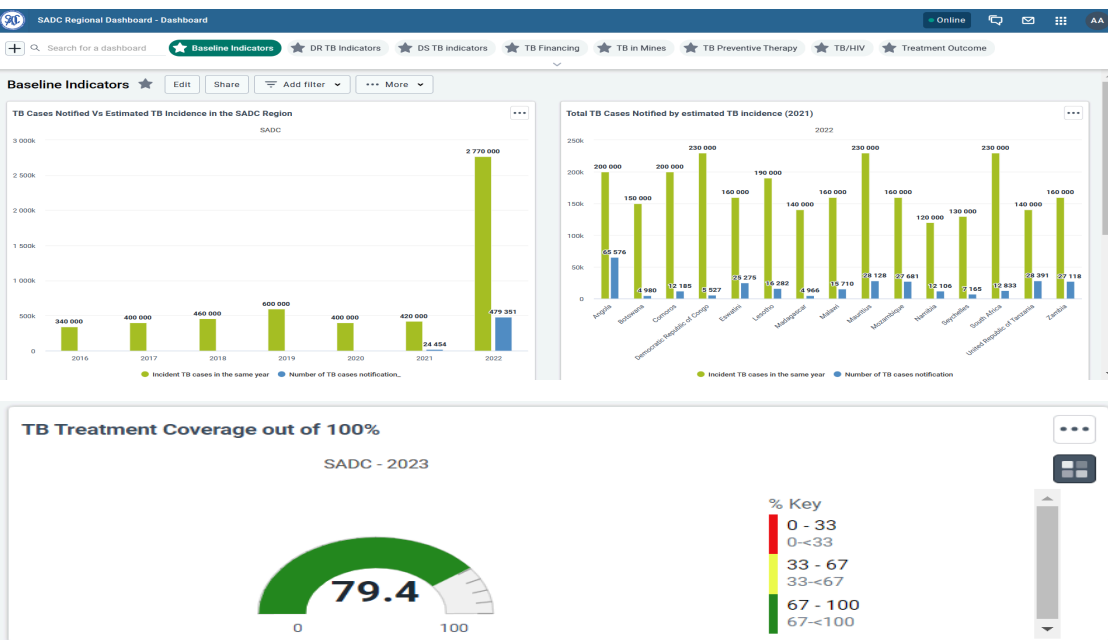
Introduction

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is a regional organization of 16 southern African countries that promotes economic cooperation and integration. Among other things, the community is advocating for the adoption of universal health coverage to combat epidemic diseases such as TB and HIV/AIDS. To monitor adherence to regional and global commitments, SADC developed a 2020-2024 SADC Regional Strategic Plan and Declaration on TB, M&E Framework, which mandated countries to report TB data. Consequently, countries used to report manually using an Excel tool, making it challenging to monitor indicators and make timely decisions. This necessitated the establishment of a regional data repository and dashboard for TB, TB/HIV, and other occupational lung diseases, where data can be submitted electronically.

Method

- The System was developed in collaboration with the UDSM DHIS2 lab as a technical team.
- Secretariat and member states came up with an agreed data collection process and indicators.
- Individual countries' indicator matrices were documented and then aligned to prepare a regional indicator matrix for creating dashboard metadata and datasets.
- Previously collected data was used also to inform the new design.
- System was designed with standardized data collection forms adaptable to SADC's current needs, previously reported data available in Excel, and in-country data collection contexts such as disaggregation criteria. (Standardization was necessary for inclusiveness, flexible analysis of TB indicators across the region, and uniform performance assessment among countries).

16 Countries workshop to standardize indicators and disaggregation prior to SADC Dashboard implementation

Solution and Features

- The implementation was done on the DHIS2 platform, where the data entry process uses data entry and data approval modules, and the regional dashboard uses the default DHIS2 dashboard app.
- The app currently provides an interface allowing users to perform the following:
- Incorporation of a multilingual feature enhances flexibility, allowing the System to be utilized in any of the official SADC languages (English, Portuguese, and French).
- Data entry incorporate approval to help country have maximum verification of what is being sent to the regional community
- Having automated SADC regional analysis of TB data

Visualizations in SADC dashboard

Achievements

- The System became operational in 2022, with the successful upload of historical data from 2015 to 2021.
- The regional dashboard has been not only instrumental for the secretariat in monitoring TB and enabling informed decision-making but has also proven valuable for individual member states, particularly those lacking dedicated electronic TB systems.
- The SADC TB dashboard triggered the potential for linkage with the country's TB systems and created interest for other SADC countries to adopt the DHIS2 platform for monitoring TB and other diseases or interventions.
- The System demonstrates the power of digital technology such as DHIS2 and regional cooperation in the fight against diseases

SADC Data Repository and Dashboard System