CHILD ADVOCACY THROUGH DATA

Visualizing the National Child Helpline Data to Combat Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation of Children in Tanzania

BACKGROUND

C-Sema is a national organization focused on providing social welfare services to children in Tanzania. Their mission is to ensure that parents are informed about their roles and responsibilities, children are free to express themselves, and communities actively support the growth and development of all children. In pursuit of that mission, C-Sema works directly with children as well as with parents, communities, and local government in order to provide child protection and care services.

As part of its services, C-Sema is currently managing the National Child Helpline in collaboration with the Government of Tanzania. The National Child Helpline service is provided through a toll-free number (116) available across all networks in Tanzania. Witnesses to Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation (VANE) against children are able to make a report through the Helpline, where they are connected to C-Sema counselors who evaluate cases as they are reported and provide advice to the caller, forward the incident to appropriate government agencies, or assign specialized C-Sema staff to follow up. The calls are recorded in a decentralized standalone system, which the organization shares with the government to highlight challenges and lessons learned in the provision of child services.

PROBLEM

C-Sema has collected a wealth of data over the past 4 years on Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation (VANE) incidences reported via their Helpline. However, to optimally monitor and evaluate the success of their program and to provide decision support as the organization sets its priorities and strategic direction, C-SEMA needs data analytics capacity to put this potentially valuable data to good use.
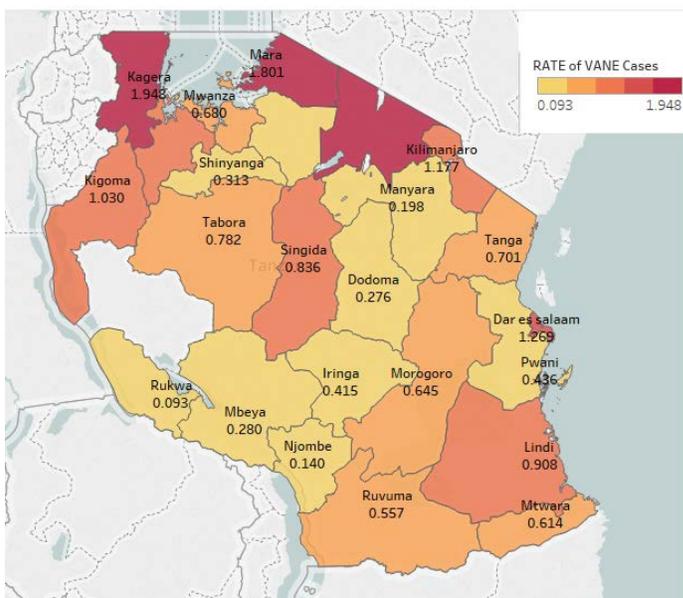
SOLUTION

By developing internal data analytics and visualization capacity, C-Sema will be able to use the data that they have collected from the calls received at the Helpline to monitor prevalence of VANE incidents. With the help of the dLab, C-Sema is finding the right questions to ask in order to uncover trends over time in VANE reports by victim age and

gender, abuser profile, and geographic region. While working with the Data Science team to demonstrate the utility of this analysis, C-Sema is concurrently taking advantage of resources at the dLab to develop the capacity to do these analyses in house in the future. The organization will ultimately be able to use their knowledge of how VANE reports have evolved - and continue to evolve - over time to inform and adjust priority areas for advocacy and intervention.

PROCESS

C-Sema's data were housed in a decentralized, Excel-based system that the organization used to track calls from 2013 to 2016.By integrating data across multiple years into a single database, the organization was able to see how reports to their system were changing over time. For example, a surprising decrease in the rate of reporting was observed in 2015 and 2016 as compared to the two years prior, a change that can only be investigated now that it has been identified. Not only did these data in themselves yield insights into changes in VANE reporting, but combining the Helpline data with population and geographic data has allowed C-Sema to ascertain and visualize where the highest number of VANE reports were being generated per capita, with Kagera, Mara, Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Kilimanjaro, and Kigoma generating the most reported incidents. In addition to assisting in the identification of trends in VANE reporting over time, this kind of data can point C-Sema to regions that could benefit from outreach campaigns to increase awareness of the National Child Helpline.

As part of this process, the analytical team was able to identify several gaps in the detail or completeness of record-keeping that could allow for a more robust analysis. For example, missing location and victim gender data in some reports prevents their inclusion in geographically- or gender-disaggregated analyses. By flagging these gaps as areas for future improvement, C-SEMA can ensure that it collects data appropriate for an iteratively more refined analytical process.

Violence, Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation (VANE) cases reported per 100,000 people by region (2013-2016)

OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

The work finished to date both informs C-SEMA and provides the organization with the tools to carry out similar analyses for themselves in the future. Based on the work done thus far, C-SEMA will be able to

- Identify and monitor trends in violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation (VANE) reports against children, and use this information to respond more rapidly to emerging victim demographic profiles;
- Visualize incidents of VANE reports regionally to inform geographic priority regions for VANE interventions and advocacy; and
- Monitor the impact of child protection programs.

Using the data collected through their Helpline will not only assist C-SEMA in their own strategic planning, but it will provide a compelling case as they advocate for children's rights with decision-makers at both national and local government authority (LGA) level in Tanzania.

KEY COLLABORATORS

C-SEMA implements a National Helpline service as part of its child protection program in the Tanzanian Mainland and Zanzibar. Visit them at www.sematanzania.org, on Twitter at: @sematanzania, and on Facebook at Sematanzania.

Tanzania Data Lab (dLab) is a national data hub that promotes data innovations, literacy, data use and multi-stakeholder data collaborators. The dLab is promoting innovation and data literacy through a premier center of excellence. http://www.dlab.or.tz

DATA COLLABORATIVES FOR LOCAL IMPACT

DCLI, a partnership between MCC and PEPFAR is enabling the use of data for better policies, programs, greater accountability and progress towards sustainable development goals.