

ABSTRACT

TITLE:

Connecting Communities to the Health Facilities Registry (HFR)

Designing a system that enables quick access to health facilities information

BACKGROUND:

The aim of this survey is to do market validation survey for Hospital Info system, a system that will enable a wider and quicker access to the health facility register (HFR) currently available on the internet. Although the HFR represents a major step in open data, the system has several limitations:

- Because the HFR is web-based, users need an internet connection to access the data.
- Data in the HFR is available only in English language, hence citizens who do not understand English, cannot use it.
- The HFR list is not routinely updated. Therefore, when facilities offer new services, the HFR may not reflect these changes.
- The HFR does not provide information about the cost of a service offered by a particular health facility.

Due to these limitations, citizens may not be able to use the HFR to discover which type of health services are available at a given health facility or to decide which facility to visit for a specific type of health service.

METHODOLOGY:

The survey assessed the following questions with 150 residents (91 women and 59 men) in Kyela District Council and Mbeya City Council. (The system is being developed to cover only these two districts as a pilot, before scaling up).

1. What are the important features that the community wants in the system?
2. Is the community willing and able to pay for the Hospital Information System?
3. Are the features of the Hospital Information System needed?

RESULTS:

Most of the responded suggested the system to have the following features: Region and District Facility located, Facility ownership Contact information Location (latitude and longitude) Facility description working days Service description Service cost and Health insurance cards accepted.

Additionally, out of 150 survey respondents, 139 (92.7%) indicated that they would be willing to pay to get information about the health services provided in a health facility, along with other details about a particular health facility. Among the 139 respondents that were willing to pay for the information, all of them said they could afford to pay for the information. When asked to suggest an acceptable price between 50 and 2,000 Tanzanian Shillings (Tshs), 87 respondents (62.5%) said they would be willing to pay between 100 and 200 Tshs.

CONCLUSION

The hospital info system is solving a real problem regarding the availability of information of health facilities and services offered. The potential clients are willing and can afford to pay for the system.