

Social Engagement as an element of CTC: Dowa District, Malawi

James Lee

Social Development Consultant,
Valid International

Objectives

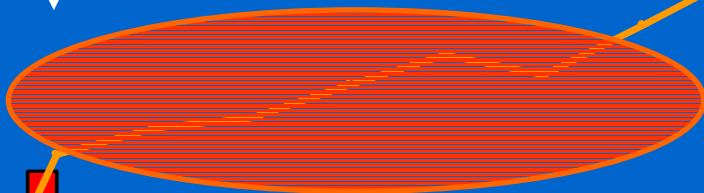
- ***Original:*** examine local social institutions as basis for nutritional rehab at village level
- ***Revised:*** help project understand and address low coverage.

CTC in Malawi 2002 - 3

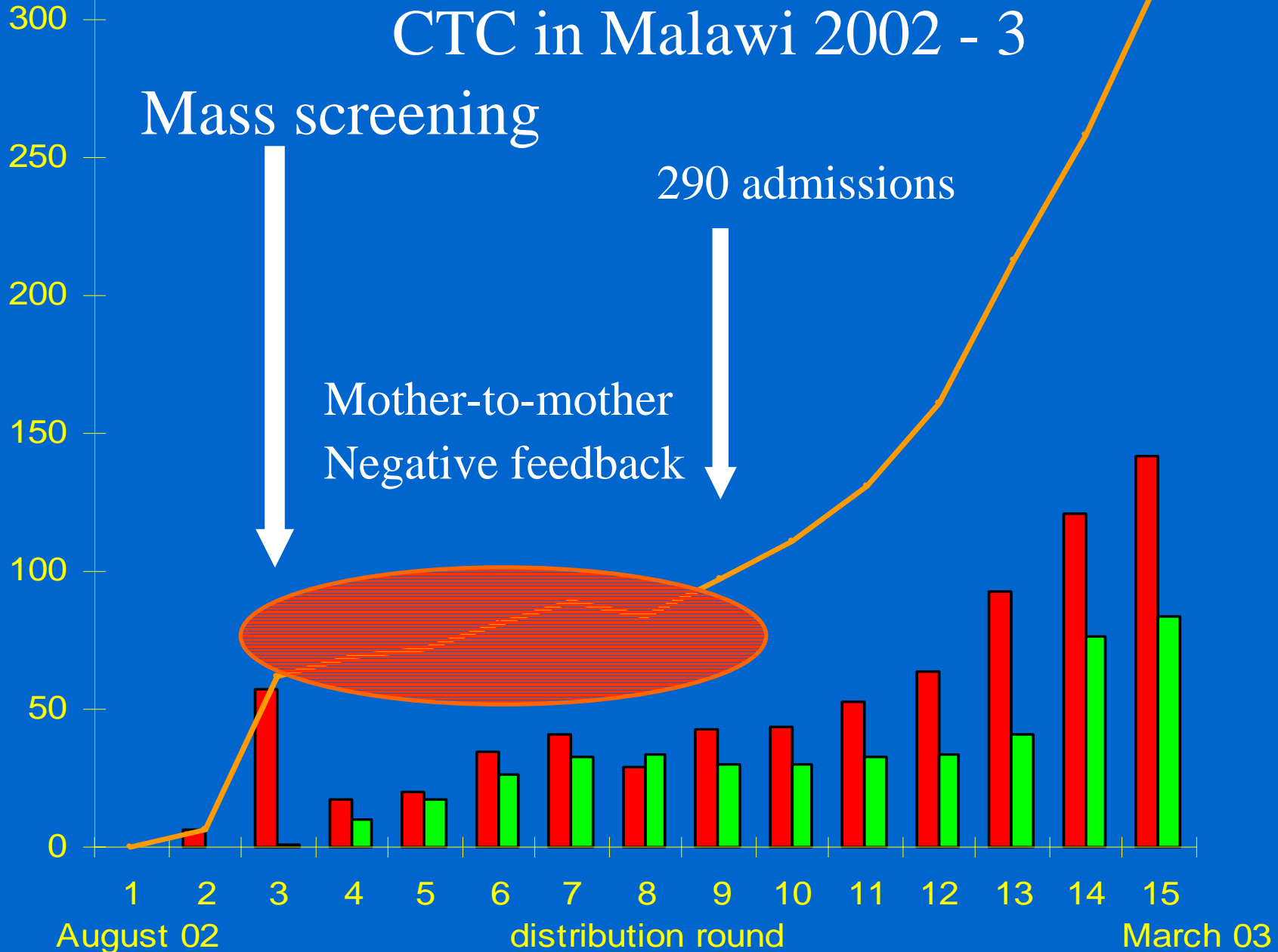
Mass screening

290 admissions

Mother-to-mother
Negative feedback



numbers



ADMISSIONS

EXITS

TOTAL IN PROGRAM

Methods

Structured Interviews

- Project staff
- District Officials
- HC staff
- Parents
- Village leaders
- Healers and midwives

Observation

- Screenings
- Distributions
- Stabilisation Centers
- HC check-ups

Key findings relating to coverage problem

- 1. Discontent with the experience and outcome of screenings among women who attended**
- 2. Local understanding of disease/nutrition differs significantly from a bio-medical model**

Aspects of Discontent

- **Conditions at screenings**
- **Anxiety at removals to stabilisation centre**
- **Rejection of children by programme**
 - **distance, time**
 - **expectations**
 - **previous advice from HC (weight-for-age)**
 - **instructions from chiefs**

How information on screenings reached villagers

project → health centre → (chiefs) → villagers

Direct approach to chiefs

- **Courtesy**
- **Clarity**
- **Minimise Harm**

Traditional Authority

- **Powerful force**
- **Profound**

Network of Traditional Authority, Dowa District

Traditional Authorities (x 7)

```
graph TD; A[Traditional Authorities ( x 7)] --- B[Group Village Headmen (x 25 - 30 per TA)]; B --- C[Village Headmen (x approx. 10 per G.V.H)]
```

Group Village Headmen (x 25 - 30 per TA)

Village Headmen (x approx. 10 per G.V.H)

Traditional Authority

- **Powerful force**
- **Profound**
- **Easy to harness**
- **Easy to abuse**

Local Disease Classification

- Rich variety of causation ideas relating to swelling and wasting
- These are not encompassed by translation of term “malnutrition”
- Strong moral element in causation ideas around swelling
- Many swollen children probably seeing a traditional practitioner first

Operational Significance

- Rich variety of causation ideas relating to swelling and wasting. These are not encompassed by translation of term “malnutrition”

Project messages must describe symptoms

- Strong moral element to causation ideas around swelling

Caution with outreach, casefinding

- Many swollen children probably seeing a traditional practitioner first

Traditional practitioners are potential allies

Handbill for use by project staff

- **Standardized project messages**
- **Offered a structure for meetings with GVHs**
- **Referred specifically to local names of diseases of wasting and swelling**
- **Provided GVH with official statement to take to meetings with own VHs and villagers**

Guidelines for GVH meetings

- **Inform**
- **Address concerns**
- **Seek their assistance**
- **Use local disease terms**
- **Short and user friendly**

Outcomes

**Clarification of language,
communications**

**Commitment to early consultation,
mobilization in subsequent projects**

**Spotlight on admission criteria,
incentives, outreach**