

Digital Transformation of Grants Management for TB, Leprosy, and Lung Disease Programs in Kenya

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Abstract

Kenya continues to face challenges in community-based TB case finding, compounded by manual grants management processes that delay fund disbursement, weaken financial oversight, and slow implementation of TB interventions.

To address these challenges, Amref Health Africa, the Global Fund's non-state Principal Recipient, deployed Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central across 38 subrecipients operating in all 47 counties between 2021 and 2023.

The transition to digital grants management was associated with improved financial performance. Financial cost eligibility increased from 50% to 76%, while fund absorption rose from 63% to 98%. TB notifications also increased by 25% during the same period.

Digital grants management can strengthen accountability, improve resource tracking, and support timely implementation of TB interventions. Strengthening digital systems alongside continued capacity building can contribute to more effective programme delivery and progress towards ending TB and achieving universal health coverage.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Lung Diseases, Healthcare Innovation and Disease Control Programs.

Business Central as a digital grants management system across 38 subrecipients operating in all 47 counties.

Background and Challenges to Implementation

Kenya continues to face challenges in community-based TB case finding, particularly in reaching people who are missed by routine TB services. Donor-funded programmes have played an important role in supporting TB prevention, diagnosis, and treatment interventions across the country. However, effective implementation can be affected by weaknesses in grants management systems. Manual grant management processes may result in delays in fund disbursement, financial reporting gaps, and limited visibility of subrecipient performance. These challenges can slow the implementation of planned activities, delay procurement, and affect the timely availability of essential commodities, tools, and other resources required for TB interventions.

To address these challenges and strengthen grants accountability, Amref Health Africa, the Global Fund's non-state Principal Recipient in Kenya, introduced Microsoft Dynamics 365

Approach and Description of the Intervention

Before the introduction of Business Central, sub-grant management relied largely on manual processes. This created challenges in tracking financial performance, monitoring expenditure, managing reporting timelines, and providing timely oversight of subrecipients. The digital system was introduced to provide a more structured and transparent approach to grants management.

The rollout was implemented in phases between 2021 and 2023 and included user training, data migration, system testing, and implementation support. All 38 subrecipients were transitioned to the digital grants management platform. The system enabled improved tracking of financial transactions, reporting, fund utilization, and subrecipient performance. System-generated information and dashboards were used to monitor key indicators, while quarterly reports and regular feedback sessions helped identify and address implementation challenges.

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Key performance measures included financial cost eligibility, reporting accuracy, submission errors, disbursement turnaround time, and fund absorption. These indicators provided a basis for assessing improvements in grants management and identifying areas requiring further support.

Results and Impact

The transition to digital grants management was completed across all 38 subrecipients. Financial cost eligibility increased from 50% in 2021 to 76% in 2023, while financial submission errors decreased by 24%. Quarterly cash disbursement delays were reduced by 50%, and fund absorption increased from 63% to 98% by the second year.

These improvements strengthened financial oversight and supported more timely implementation of programme activities, including procurement and delivery of TB interventions. During the same period, Kenya recorded a 25% increase in TB notifications between 2021 and 2023.

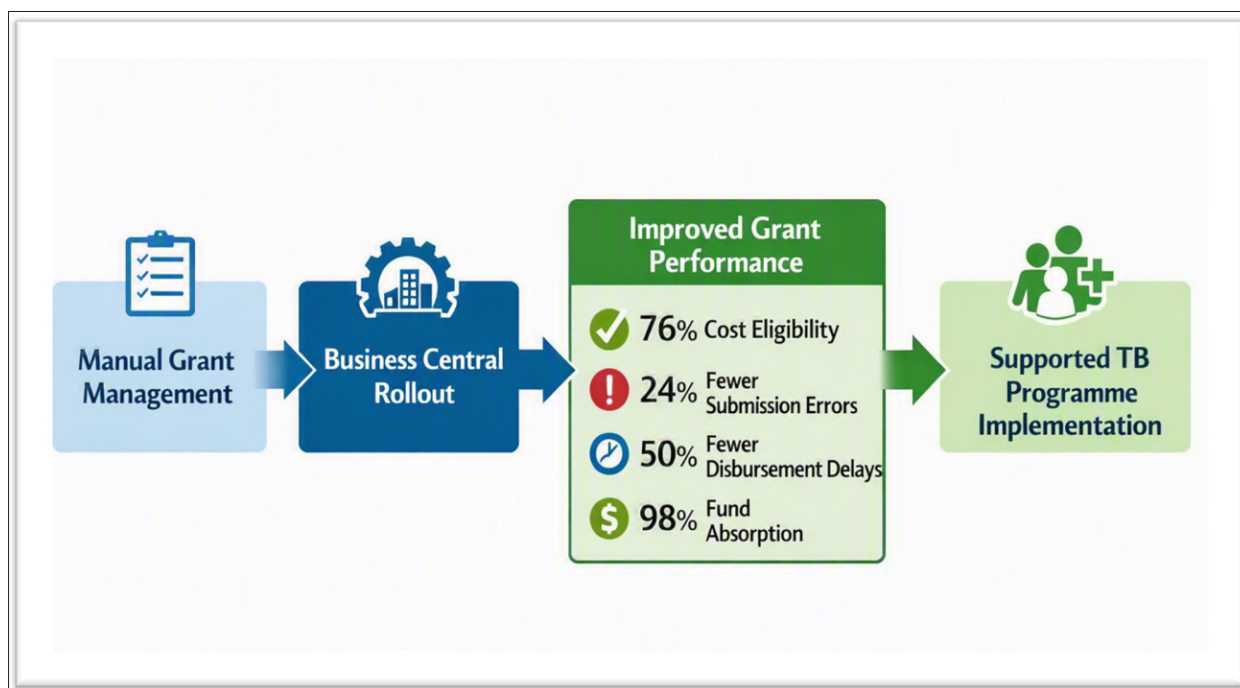


Figure 1: Grant Management Implementation Flow

At national level, TB mortality declined from 37 to 27, TB/HIV mortality declined from 24 to 14, and TB incidence declined from 267 to 223 per 100,000 population between 2019 and 2023. While these national TB outcomes cannot be attributed to the Business Central intervention alone, the improvements in grants management provided stronger financial visibility, more timely access to program resources, and better oversight of subrecipient implementation. These factors are important for supporting effective delivery of TB interventions [1-6].

Lessons Learned

The experience demonstrates that digital grants management can address some of the operational challenges associated with manual grant administration. Providing real-time financial information and improving visibility of expenditure and subrecipient performance enabled more timely identification of issues and follow-up. However, technology alone is not sufficient. Continuous user support, capacity building, data quality management, and regular engagement with subrecipients are essential to sustain the benefits of digital systems.

Conclusion

The introduction of Microsoft Dynamics 365 Business Central strengthened grants management across 38 subrecipients implementing TB activities in all 47 counties of Kenya.

Improvements in financial cost eligibility, reporting accuracy, disbursement timelines, and fund absorption demonstrate the potential of digital systems to improve grant accountability and support timely program implementation.

Digital grants management should therefore be considered as part of broader efforts to strengthen health program systems. Continued capacity building and expansion of appropriate digital solutions to other programs could further improve financial accountability, resource tracking, and timely implementation, contributing to Kenya's efforts to end TB and advance universal health coverage.

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