

1 **Community-based Field Implementation Scenarios of an SMS Reporting Tool for Lymphatic Filariasis**

2 **Case Estimates in Africa and Asia**

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17 **Abstract**

18 **Background**

19 Lymphatic filariasis (LF) is a neglected tropical disease (NTD) targeted for global elimination by 2020.
20 Currently there is considerable international effort to scale-up morbidity management activities in
21 endemic countries, however there remains a need for rapid, cost-effective methods and adaptable
22 tools for obtaining estimates of people presenting with clinical manifestations of LF, namely
23 lymphoedema and hydrocele. The mHealth tool '*MeasureSMS-Morbidity*' allows health workers in
24 endemic areas to use their own mobile phones to send clinical information in a simple format using
25 short message service (SMS). The experience gained through programmatic use of the tool in five
26 endemic countries across a diversity of settings in Africa and Asia is used here to present
27 implementation scenarios that are suitable for adapting the tool for use in a range of different
28 programmatic, endemic, demographic and health system settings.

29 **Methods**

30 A checklist of five key factors and sub-questions was used to determine and define specific
31 community-based field implementation scenarios for using the *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool in a range
32 of settings. These factors included: i) tool feasibility (acceptability; community access and ownership);
33 ii) LF endemicity (high; low prevalence); iii) population demography (urban; rural); iv) health system
34 structure (human resources; community access); and v) integration with other diseases (co-
35 endemicity).

36 **Results**

37 Based on experiences in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nepal and Tanzania, four implementation
38 scenarios were identified as suitable for using the *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool for searching and
39 reporting LF clinical case data across a range of programmatic, endemic, demographic and health
40 system settings. These include: i) urban, high endemic setting with two-tier reporting; ii) rural, high
41 endemic setting with one-tier reporting; iii) rural, endemic setting with two-tier reporting; and iv) low-
42 endemic, urban and rural setting with one-tier reporting.

43 **Conclusions**

44 A decision-making framework built from the key factors and questions, and the resulting four
45 implementation scenarios is proposed as a means of using the *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool. This
46 framework will help national LF programmes consider appropriate methods to implement a survey
47 using this tool to improve estimates of the clinical burden of LF. Obtaining LF case estimates is a vital
48 step towards the elimination of LF as a public health problem in endemic countries.

49

50 **Key Words:** Lymphatic filariasis, Morbidity mapping, SMS, mHealth, Lymphoedema, Hydrocele,
51 Community health workers

52 **Background**

53 The Global Programme to Eliminate Lymphatic Filariasis (GPELF) has two main components: to
54 interrupt the transmission of lymphatic filariasis (LF) through mass drug administration (MDA), and to
55 manage morbidity and prevent disability (MMDP) for those individuals suffering from the clinical
56 manifestations of the disease (1). As the GPELF moves towards the elimination goal of 2020, many
57 countries are scaling-up surveillance and morbidity management activities to satisfy the WHO dossier
58 components required for certification of LF elimination as a public health problem. For the MMDP
59 aspects of certification, country programmes must report information on the following: (i) the number
60 of LF patients in implementation units (IU), usually defined as a district (2); (ii) the number of facilities
61 providing the recommended package of care to IUs with known patients; and (iii) assessments of the
62 readiness and quality of care in these facilities (3). In 2014, only 24 out of 73 of endemic countries
63 (33%) reported having active MMDP components in their LF programmes and only 30 endemic
64 countries (41%) reported data on the number of lymphoedema patients (4). As there are limited
65 resources available, there is a pressing need for a rapid and adaptable tool for obtaining patient
66 estimates so that country programmes can appropriately forecast, plan and deliver a basic package of
67 care to those suffering from the disabling and debilitating clinical manifestations of LF in an affordable
68 manner.

69

70 There are a number of different methods available for obtaining patient estimates in endemic IUs;
71 these include house-to-house censuses, health facility surveys, cluster surveys, health worker and
72 community informants as well as Mass Drug Administration (MDA) and Transmission Assessment
73 Survey (TAS) registrations (3,5). The recently developed mHealth '*MeasureSMS-Morbidity*' tool offers
74 a rapid and scalable data reporting method which can be utilised to report data collected in any of the
75 aforementioned methods and can be adapted to meet country-specific requirements (6). The
76 *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool was developed at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine specifically
77 to improve and enhance national filarial disease patient estimates (6). Initially designed for use in

78 cross-sectional population surveys, the tool could also be used for ongoing reporting by health
79 facilities.

80

81 *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* enables trained health workers to use their own mobile phones to send
82 patient data in the form of a simple short message service (SMS) to a smartphone, which is locally
83 situated and acts as a server. Provided the smartphone is connected to a mobile phone network,
84 health workers will receive an automated response to the data received; once the smartphone is
85 connected to the internet via WIFI or a local network connection, this patient information is then
86 relayed to a central cloud-based server (6). By empowering health workers, this tool gives country
87 programmes a rapid method of collecting and collating information on LF patients including their
88 location, age, gender, clinical condition (hydrocele, lymphoedema, or both), severity of the condition
89 (mild, moderate, or severe) and episodes of acute attacks. First piloted in Malawi and Ghana (7), this
90 tool has now been refined and scaled-up for programmatic use in various settings to search and report
91 cases in endemic areas across Africa and Asia, covering a population of over 30 million people. The
92 aim of this communication is to use our experiences in implementing community-based patient
93 searching in Africa and Asia to present implementation scenarios for the tool that could be utilised by
94 national LF programmes in order to scale-up searching and reporting of LF clinical cases.

95

96 **Methods**

97 **Checklist of factors**

98 Several key development factors have been used when considering the design and planning of the
99 *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* survey in any given setting. The five key factors (feasibility of the tool,
100 endemicity, population demography, health system structure, and integration with other diseases)
101 are summarised with corresponding questions in Table 1.

102

103 **1. Feasibility of the Tool**

104 *LF programme acceptability*

105 In-country support and logistic capacity are critical factors in deciding the feasibility and usage of an
106 mHealth tool such as *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* for estimating patient numbers. At the country level,
107 *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* must support the programme needs and a technical capacity must be present
108 in-country to manage the survey for it to be both scalable and cost-effective. The availability of funds
109 and resources is also an influencing factor in this decision due to the number of personnel that will be
110 required to take part in the surveys.

111

112 Related questions to determine the acceptability of the tool are:

- 113 ✓ Does the use of the tool support the programme needs?
- 114 ✓ Are there appropriate in-country personnel to implement the survey and manage data?
- 115 ✓ Are funds and resources available to implement the survey and SMS reporting?

116

117 *Community access and ownership*

118 As a community-led mobile phone technology tool, health worker access to and knowledge of mobile
119 phones is essential for implementation of *MeasureSMS-Morbidity*. Mobile phone ownership at the
120 health worker level both country-wide and in specific IUs should be anticipated. For the survey data
121 to be successfully reported, the availability of network coverage in survey areas is an important factor
122 in deciding how the reporting system will be structured. For instance, is it feasible to send SMS from
123 all survey locations, or is a central reporting system needed?

124

125 Like network coverage, access to a reliable power supply is crucial in deciding the feasibility of the tool
126 as data reporters must be able to charge their mobile phones in order to send the SMS. In areas where
127 prolonged power cuts lasting several days are common, an mHealth tool may not be the most
128 appropriate method of obtaining patient estimates in a pre-defined time period.

129

130 Related questions are:

131 ✓ Do health workers have access to, and knowledge of mobile phones?

132 ✓ Is there adequate network coverage in the selected IUs?

133 ✓ Are there reliable power supplies in the selected IUs?

134

135 **2. Endemicity**

136 In order to utilise available resources effectively and equitably within the LF programme, the IUs with
137 a higher level of historic endemicity should be prioritised, so that patient care can be targeted
138 effectively within these areas. Data may be collected and reported two ways, either one tier system
139 in which the healthcare worker both collects and reports the data with SMS, or a two tier system in
140 which a community healthcare worker is the data collector, and collects the data on paper forms; the
141 paper forms are delivered to a healthcare worker (supervisor) who then sends the data via SMS. If a
142 high number of patients is anticipated in an IU, a one tier reporting system may be the most
143 appropriate method due to the high number of SMS that will be required to be sent; meaning one
144 health worker will act as both the data collector and data reporter. A two tier system where a centrally
145 located health worker collates the data from multiple data collectors to send the SMS for all patients
146 in a defined area may result in a high work load for the data reporters.

147

148 In areas where the prevalence of clinical disease is likely to be low, a house-to-house survey will not
149 be cost-effective (cost per case identified). If MDA has not been implemented in these low endemic
150 IUs, then patient registration during a campaign is not possible. Therefore, a less intensive method is
151 appropriate in these areas where fewer patients are anticipated, and it may be possible to conduct a
152 survey using a team of data reporters who visit the IU and gather information through a combination
153 of health facility data, healthcare worker informants and community informants. In low endemic IUs

154 where other clinical diseases are being mapped, it may be possible to integrate the surveys so that a
155 house-to-house census can be utilised, thus reducing the risk of under-reporting.

156

157 The key questions relating to endemicity are:

158 ✓ Are the survey locations high or low endemic?

159 ✓ Is a high number of patients anticipated?

160

161 **3. Population Demography**

162 The scale and density of the population in an IU will impact the nature of the survey to obtain patient
163 estimates. In short, irrespective of endemicity, it will determine the number of data collectors and/or
164 reporters, and the length of time required to survey the population.

165

166 A large, urban population may result in health facilities having sizeable catchment populations that
167 require a vast number of man-hours to cover the catchment population. By engaging data collectors
168 as an additional tier of the reporting system, it will be possible to reach the whole population within
169 a shorter time-frame. In rural settings, where populations are more dispersed, but catchments of
170 healthcare workers are more defined, the survey time will be dependent on the length of time
171 required to physically reach the population.

172

173 Key questions related to population demography are:

174 ✓ Is the IU urban or rural?

175 ✓ Is the catchment of healthcare workers clearly defined?

176

177 **4. Health System Structure**

178 *Human Resources*

179 In planning the use of the *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool it is important to consider if there is an in-
180 country healthcare structure in place that can be utilised for data collecting and reporting, such as a
181 community health worker (CHW) network, and if so, how can this be harnessed. In both one- and
182 two-tier reporting systems, it is important to identify the most appropriate data collector and data
183 reporter to ensure case identification and reporting is accurate.

184

185 The key question when considering which personnel should be defined as the data collectors and
186 reporters is:

187 ✓ Is there an in-country healthcare worker structure in place that can be utilised for data
188 collection and reporting?

189

190 *Community access to healthcare*

191 The population demographics may also influence the survey design based on the relationships of the
192 health workers with the population. In urban settings, the population will have access to a greater
193 number of healthcare providers, and may access a range of healthcare facilities, in comparison to rural
194 settings, where a limited number of healthcare facilities are available to the population (8). Hence, in
195 rural areas, people are more likely to have a close relationship with the healthcare workers in their
196 local area due to repeated access. This may influence the selection of the healthcare workers who
197 will take part in the survey as it is important to select the healthcare workers that will have the greatest
198 knowledge of patients' conditions to act as the data collector. Additionally, where healthcare workers
199 have defined catchment areas, these should be utilised to harness the existing relationships between
200 healthcare workers and the catchment population, as well as the pre-existing knowledge of conditions
201 with said population. Where healthcare workers do not have a defined catchment, or catchments
202 overlap, catchments should be assigned based on population size and timeframe for the survey to
203 ensure the entire population is covered and that there is no duplication of reporting of cases.

204

205 The key question when considering the healthcare system structure in the IU is:

206 ✓ What access to healthcare do the population in the IU have?

207 ✓ Do healthcare workers have a defined catchment population?

208

209 **5. Integration with other diseases**

210 *Co-endemicity*

211 Integrated mapping of clinical disease can be cost-effective and allow for efficient use of resources.

212 Appropriate examples include LF and leprosy co-endemic areas and; LF and podoconiosis co-endemic

213 areas as exemplified in the integrated disease mapping of LF and podoconiosis in Ethiopia (9). In co-

214 endemic areas, it allows the disease to be more precisely identified. This is particularly important for

215 diseases in which the same clinical symptoms arise; for example, lymphoedema as a clinical

216 manifestation for both lymphatic filariasis and podoconiosis patients.

217

218 The key question is:

219 ✓ Can the data collection and reporting be integrated with other diseases endemic in the IU?

220

221 **Field implementation**

222 The checklist has been utilised as a programmatic tool to develop LF clinical case estimates in a total

223 of 17 IU in five LF endemic countries, to survey a total of 22 million people (table 2). The methods of

224 implementation from these IU will be reviewed.

225

226 **Results**

227 **Implementation scenarios**

228 Four implementation scenarios were identified and the suitable approaches for using the

229 *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool; this being based on experiences of programmatic implementation in 17

230 IUs in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Malawi, Nepal and Tanzania. Scenarios 1-3 use a house-to-house census

231 data collection method in endemic IUs, and model four implemented in low endemic IUs using active
232 case finding to locate patients. Within the four scenarios data collection and reporting that may be
233 conducted using either one- or two-tier reporting.

234

235 ***Scenario 1. High endemic, rural, one tier reporting***

236 In rural, endemic IUs with small, sparsely distributed populations in which a high number of patients
237 are expected to be reported a one-tier system can be implemented (figure 1). This scenario was
238 implemented in selected IUs in Malawi and Ethiopia. In such a system, one person acts as both the
239 'data collector' and 'data reporter'. This system can be used in the absence of an established, tiered
240 CHW system, whereby the health workers at the facility level both collect and report the data.

241

242 A one-tier system can also be implemented in IUs where CHWs have access to mobile phones with
243 adequate network and power supplies and thus are able to collect and report data by SMS. A one-tier
244 system will improve efficiency of data reporting as the CHWs will not need to report to a central
245 location with patient information.

246

247 ***Scenario 2. High endemic, rural, two tier reporting***

248 In rural, endemic areas where there is an appropriate hierarchical health worker structure in place, a
249 two-tier method of reporting can be implemented. Additionally, in some IUs, it may become apparent
250 when planning, designing and piloting the survey that there are issues with limited mobile phone and
251 SMS use for the CHWs, limited literacy or that there are network issues or power issues that limit the
252 ability of the data collectors to send the data from the field. Such scenarios require two cadres of
253 health workers to be involved in the patient searching; those who 'identify' patients in the
254 communities (data collectors) and those who use SMS to 'report' the identified patients (data
255 reporters), resulting in a two-tier reporting system (figure 2). This scenario was selected for
256 implementation in Nepal, where an existing tiered network of health workers exists.

257

258 A two-tier system can be employed where a health worker who is centrally located and has consistent
259 access to power and network coverage is more appropriate to report the data by SMS. If, however,
260 high numbers of patients are identified, in a two-tier system with a centrally located data reporter
261 would have a large workload sending the SMS for all patients. This should be considered and
262 accounted for when planning the survey, for example, increased regularity of reporting of cases by
263 the CHW data collectors to the data reporter will reduce the number of SMS that need to be sent each
264 day by the data reporters during the survey. Alternatively, increasing the number of centrally located
265 data reporters will reduce the workload of each reporter.

266

267 ***Scenario 3. High endemic, urban, two tier reporting***

268 In endemic urban IUs with large populations in which a high number of LF patients are expected to be
269 identified, there is a need for a two-tier reporting system due to the high number of data collectors
270 that are required to cover the large population (figure 3). This scenario was selected and implemented
271 in Tanzania. This enables the population to be mapped in a reasonable timescale, with a reasonable
272 workload distributed between the data collectors and data reporters, and reduced training expenses
273 due to a smaller number of health workers requiring training in reporting.

274

275 If there is not an established system of CHWs, then selected health facility workers within the IU can
276 be trained as data reporters and report cases collected by other health workers from the health
277 facility. Training a selected number of healthcare workers to act as data reporters and oversee the
278 work of the data collectors reduces training time and costs, while ensuring the survey remains
279 effective. It is appropriate to use a two-tier reporting system in urban areas to increase the reach of
280 the survey in an efficient way.

281

282 **Scenario 4. Low endemic, urban and rural, active case finding and one tier reporting**

283 In low endemic areas where few patients are anticipated, there is a need to make the patient searching
284 both more targeted, and more cost effective. Use of a smaller team of data reporters who conduct
285 'active case finding' using health workers and community members as key informants to identify
286 patients in the IU, is the most appropriate model (figure 4). This model can be implemented in both
287 urban and rural settings, and was selected and implemented in low endemic IUs in Bangladesh.

288

289 **Discussion**

290 Following the pilot of *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* in Malawi and Ghana (7), the use of a checklist of key
291 factors and questions enabled planning and design of the most appropriate scenarios of programmatic
292 implementation of patient searching and reporting using *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* in 17 IUs in five
293 countries. Based on experiences of utilising the checklist to design and implement the four scenarios,
294 a stepwise framework has been developed using the first four key factors (figure 5). The framework
295 can be used to determine the most appropriate method of implementation in other countries or IUs,
296 and highlights the adaptability of the tool.

297

298 Integration with other disease conditions, the fifth factor, may not impact on the implementation
299 scenario as data on other conditions within the survey population can be recorded at the same time
300 as LF clinical conditions and only data for LF sent in SMS by the data reporters. When the survey is
301 integrated, the type of information that will be collected as well as the decisions that will be informed
302 by the survey data should be considered. For example, in collecting data on lymphoedema cases in LF-
303 podoconiosis co-endemic areas if the aim is to determine the prevalence of clinical disease for
304 morbidity management activities then lymphoedema only needs to be recorded and the CHWs are
305 appropriate data collectors in any implementation scenario. However, if the cause of the
306 lymphoedema is also of interest then a clinical officer may be required to make a differential diagnosis
307 of the lymphoedema and provide appropriate treatment for infection. If mapping of cases of clinical

308 disease due to LF is integrated with leprosy, the complexity of diagnosing leprosy means that CHWs
309 would be able to report suspect cases that would require follow up from a trained clinical officer, or a
310 clinical officer would need to be the data collector; if the latter is the selected model of
311 implementation, then the survey costs may increase. In cases where the data collectors and
312 implementation scenario is not impacted, integration may increase cost-effectiveness and efficiency
313 of the patient estimate surveys. Future development of the tool to enable additional diseases to be
314 reported by SMS will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of integration. Additionally, data
315 collected through an integrated survey using different approaches to those described here can be
316 extracted and sent by SMS by the data collectors.

317

318 Following the framework and considering four of the key factors, there are two main methods of data
319 collection and reporting that may be used. Firstly, the one-tier system in which the healthcare worker
320 both collects and reports the data with SMS. Secondly, a two-tier system in which a community
321 healthcare worker is the data collector, and collects the data on paper forms; the paper forms are
322 delivered to a healthcare worker (supervisor) who then sends the data via SMS.

323

324 Implementation of patient searching and reporting using *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* is not limited to the
325 four scenarios described, however these scenarios were the most appropriate and effective
326 mechanisms for implementation in the five countries tested to date. For example, where MDA is
327 implemented using house-to-house delivery, it may be possible to collect patient data during the MDA
328 registration or delivery (3,10). However, in IUs where community distribution posts are used to deliver
329 treatments to the community, using the MDA to record patient data may result in under-reporting as
330 relies on the patients presenting at the distribution posts and reporting their conditions.

331

332 A one-tier data collection and reporting mechanism, such as Scenario one is the simplest form of
333 *MeasureSMS-Morbidity*. When considering the population demographics and relationships with

334 healthcare workers, CHWs or community volunteers will often be the most appropriate personnel to
335 act as the data collector due to the closer relationships with the community. CHWs across the world
336 play a crucial role in health systems achieving their potential, regardless of a countries development
337 status (11). Integrating patient estimate surveys into these pre-existing health system structures is a
338 strength of the implementation of the *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool and is crucial for its feasibility and
339 success. As healthcare workers are usually already overburdened by community health activities (12),
340 it is important that the survey is timed appropriately so as not to compete with other health activities
341 and needs.

342

343 This system is feasible in rural IUs in which health workers have a defined population within the
344 catchment of their health facility. In rural scenarios, such as scenario 1, there are several factors that
345 are linked to community ownership and access which will influence whether it is appropriate for
346 health workers to be the data reporters, or to simply be the data collectors. Firstly, how familiar are
347 the local healthcare workers with sending an SMS? Experience has shown that in more rural settings,
348 SMS use is less common than in urban settings (13), and personnel may therefore need to be trained
349 in sending SMS, in addition to specifically reporting LF data through SMS. Secondly, how reliable is
350 the phone network coverage? In remote rural areas, the coverage may be limited, restricting the
351 frequency of data sending. Thirdly, how reliable is the power supply? If the survey is being
352 implemented in an IU which experiences frequent power cuts, and access to generators is limited, the
353 opportunities for charging a mobile phone will also be limited, again restricting the frequency of data
354 sending. If any of these factors are likely, then it is necessary to identify additional personnel who will
355 be more appropriate to act as the data reporters. As access to mobile phones is generally considered
356 to be greater in urban areas (14), health facility workers located in a more 'urban' area within an IU
357 with greater access to mobile phones and mobile phone network would be the appropriate data
358 reporters.

359

360 Two-tier reporting mechanisms such as Scenarios 2 and 3 will reduce the number of people that need
361 to be trained in SMS reporting, as data collectors will only need to be trained in the identification of
362 LF clinical conditions and only data reporters trained on sending the SMS. Additionally, implementing
363 a two-tier reporting system reduces the burden of the survey on healthcare service by sharing the
364 workload of data collection and reporting between healthcare workers. This is especially important
365 in areas with large population such as urban IUs, as implementing a two-tier reporting system will
366 reduce the number of households that each CHW will need to visit and therefore reduce the length of
367 time for the survey.

368

369 House-to-house census methods used in highly endemic areas provide an accurate estimate of patient
370 numbers in an IU which enables countries to effectively plan and target resources equitably. However,
371 in low endemic districts, in which low patient numbers are anticipated, it is important to have a more
372 cost- and time-effective implementation scenario, such as Scenario 4. Use of patient records, health
373 worker and community informants are all alternative methods for developing LF patient estimates.
374 Scenario 4 combines these approaches using a small team of data reporters to enable more efficient
375 data collection. This scenario is appropriate for use in IUs in which low numbers of patients are
376 anticipated. While this method is not as vigorous as house-to-house patient searching, it will enable
377 the programmes to determine the level of access to care that is required within each IU. In highly
378 endemic districts in which high numbers of patients are anticipated, this method may lead to under-
379 reporting which may lead to inadequate levels of care being planned and provided.

380

381 **Conclusion**

382 The *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* tool can fill the need of that can be used with different approaches to
383 obtaining patient estimates. Using the data sent through SMS, the LF programme is able to map
384 prevalence of clinical disease and identify priority areas in need of MMDP interventions, thus ensuring
385 equitable access to care. Through experiences in five countries, four recommended implementation

386 scenarios and a framework for effective application of the tool have been developed. To date, the
387 tool has been used to report LF clinical case data obtained through house-to-house census, and active
388 case finding using community and healthcare worker informants.

389

390 Key factors have been described that should be considered when planning surveys in order to
391 determine the most appropriate and effective method for each IU. While the scenarios have been
392 developed based on experiences in African and Asian LF programmes, application of *MeasureSMS-*
393 *Morbidity* is not limited to these four scenarios; it is feasible to utilise the tool to report patient
394 information obtained through other survey types.

395

396 With only 41% of LF endemic countries reporting data on LF patients, and only 14% monitoring MMDP
397 activities at the IU level [3], mechanisms to support country programmes to collect and report such
398 data at the IU level, as required to meet elimination criteria, are essential to scale up MMDP activities.
399 Reporting of LF clinical cases using *MeasureSMS-Morbidity* is an adaptable and rapid reporting system
400 that can support country programmes to develop databases of patient estimates at any geographical
401 level. As countries scale-up surveillance and MMDP activities, a tool such as *MeasureSMS-Morbidity*
402 provides a mechanism to develop patient estimate databases within LF endemic areas, thus fulfilling
403 one component of the elimination requirements.

404

405

406 **Disclosure**

407 **Ethics approval and consent to participate**

408 Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee at the Liverpool
409 School of Tropical Medicine, UK.

410

411 **Consent for publication**

412 Not applicable.

413

414 **Availability of data and material**

415 Data sharing not applicable to this article as no numerical datasets were generated or analysed during
416 the current study.

417

418 **Competing/Conflicting interests**

419 The authors declare no competing or conflicting interests.

420

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427 (1) Conception and design: all authors

428 (2) Administrative support: all authors

429 (3) Provision of study material or patients: all authors

430 (4) Collection and assembly of data: all authors

431 (5) Data analysis and interpretation: all authors

432 (6) Manuscript writing: all authors

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439

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487 **Figure Legends**

488 *Figure 1: patient searching and reporting scenario 1 in a high endemic, rural IU in which one-tier*
489 *reporting is implemented*

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491 *Figure 2: patient searching and reporting scenario 2 in a high endemic, rural IU in which two-tier*
492 *reporting is implemented*

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494 *Figure 3: patient searching and reporting scenario 3 in a high endemic, urban IU in which two-tier*
495 *reporting is implemented*

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497 *Figure 4: patient searching and reporting scenario 4 in a low endemic, urban or rural IU in which active*
498 *case finding and reporting is implemented*

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500 *Figure 5: Framework for decision making on the implementation model used for the MeasureSMS-*
501 *Morbidity tool*

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513 **Table Legends**

514 *Table 1: Checklist of key factors and questions to address*

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516 *Table 2: Countries, and corresponding MeasureSMS-Morbidity IUs*

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