

From “Transactional” to “Transformational” Technical Assistance for Maternal and Child Health in South Africa



Authors: I. Odongo, S. Zondi, S. Gwarinda, P. Ziki, M. Teffo

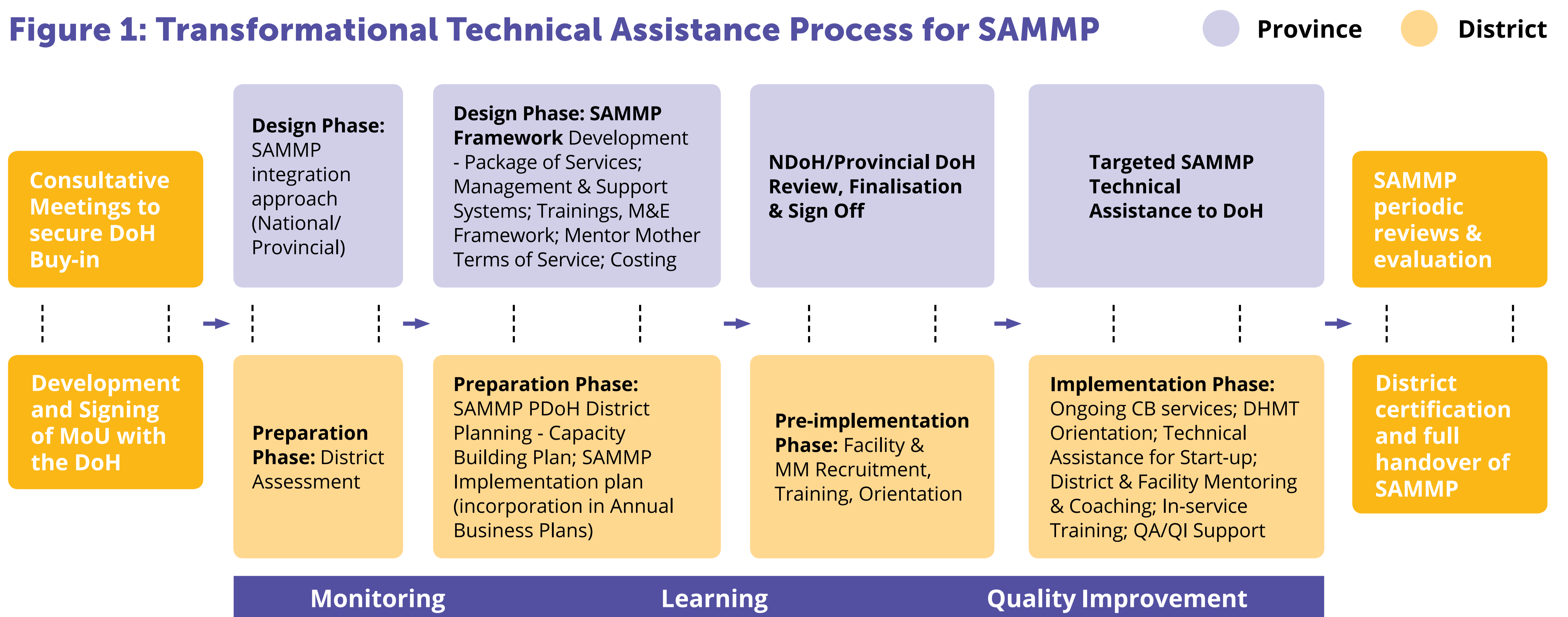
Background

The partnership between the Department of Health and mothers2mothers funded by USAID is aimed at reducing mother to child transmission of HIV which stands at 1.8% (DoH, 2015). Through this partnership, the South Africa Mentor Mother Programme (SAMMP)'s peer education and psychosocial support is integrated into maternal and child health as part of civil society and community involvement as articulated in the National eMTCT Action Framework (2012).

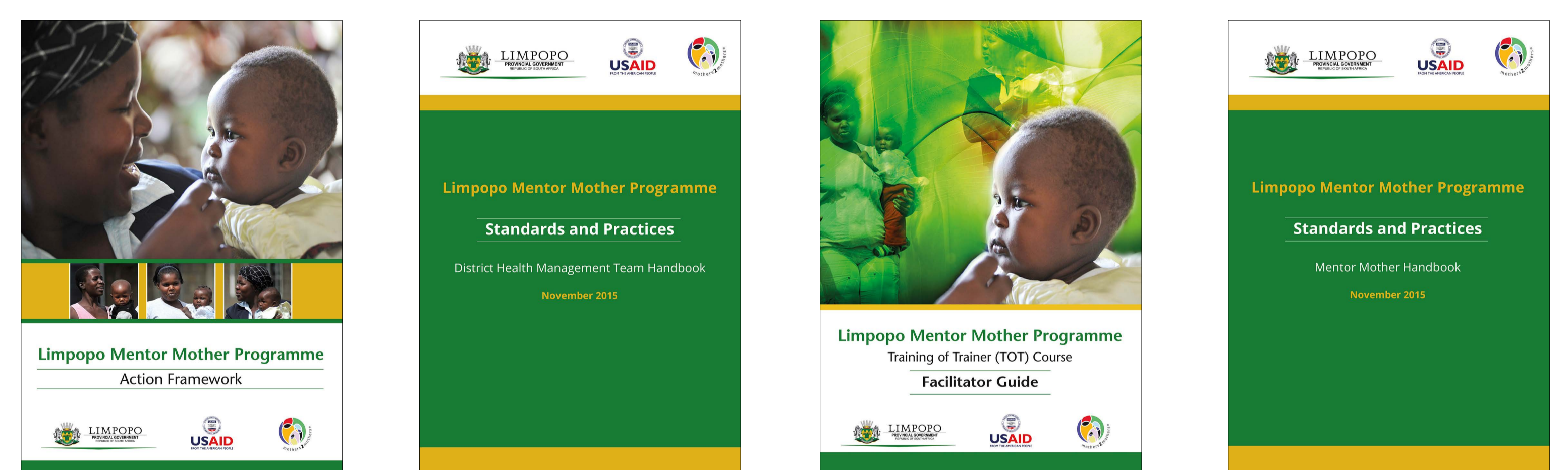
Method

mothers2mothers's technical assistance to the Department of Health is transformational – focusing on government ownership and sustainability with a clear exit strategy – rather than transactional which is hands-on and implementation oriented. The technical assistance is anchored on the principles of partnerships and mutual commitment, sustainability, government ownership and responsiveness, and follows a systematic capacity building process mapped against project phases – Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Transformational Technical Assistance Process for SAMMP



Some of the materials that have been developed to support the Department of Health to integrate SAMMP include the following:



Results

Government-led efforts and buy-in have resulted in the significant scale up and roll out of SAMMP. In Limpopo Province for example, the programme has been rolled out to 69 health facilities where 98 Mentor Mothers have been deployed. A total of 232 District Health Management Teams (DHMTs) from all 5 districts have been capacitated not only to manage programme implementation but also to ensure its integration into Maternal, Neonatal, Child and Women Health and Nutrition (MNCWH&N) programmes.

Conclusion

Implementing government-driven and partner-facilitated technical assistance is critical to achieving sustainable health systems strengthening.

www.m2m.org
@m2mtweets
@mothers2mothers



LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA