Medicine for several neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) is given through mass drug administration (MDA) in affected communities, typically once or twice per year. These diseases include trachoma, soil-transmitted helminthiasis, onchocerciasis, schistosomiasis, and lymphatic filariasis. For the last decade, NTD programs have relied on community drug distributors (CDDs), and (especially for soil-transmitted helminthiasis and schistosomiasis) teachers, to deliver MDA.

The medicines used in MDA are safe. However, although it happens rarely, young children have choked while taking the medicines, and some have died. The factor most associated with these choking deaths has been forcing a child to take the medicine – especially tablets – against their will.

This participation handbook is intended for Community Drug Distributors (CDDs), Health Extension workers (HEWs) and Community Health Workers (CHWs) alike to reinforce safe drug delivery practices to prevent choking related deaths during MDA. The handbook outlines four specific role-playing scenarios frontline community health organizers might experience during MDA, accompanied with targeted skills for each scenario. These scenarios may be adapted as necessary for local context and skill development. Additionally, each scenario can stand alone or build upon the others.

### How to use this handbook

This handbook is organized into 4 sections, each with a scenario, scene-play, and a step-by-step instruction to support CDD role playing activities. Each section will include the following steps to help you interpret the scenarios.

**Step 1: Define the Problem**

In this section you will be asked to think about the scenario and consider what issues may be in conflict with safe drug administration.

**Step 2: Determine the best course of action**

Once you have deliberated on the issues presented within the scenario, you will now consider some solutions.

**Step 3: Take action**

The last step is to take action. You will consider what systems are in place to ensure the desired action is taken that will preserve safe drug administration while enhancing CDD skills.
Case scenario 1:

A young mother accompanies her 2-year-old child 3 km by foot to the nearest MDA distribution site. She joins the long queue trying her best to soothe her child who is tired and hungry from the long journey. When she approaches the CDD, her child refuses the medication kicking and screaming. The CDD impatiently asks her to step aside to calm the child and he moves on to the next person.

The mother protests, saying that she has been standing in line for a while and demands that the CDD just give her the medication to administer to the child herself.

SCENE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Konjo</td>
<td>I have been standing in the queue for 2 hours now, please just give me the drugs so that I can give it to my daughter when we get home and she has calmed down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abel</td>
<td>No please, I cannot give you the medicine to take home because I have been trained to directly administer the medication myself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konjo</td>
<td>Surely you can make an exception, I know how to feed my own child.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abel</td>
<td>Yes, I know that you can feed your child very well, however I have been given specific instructions to ensure that your child is treated safely.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konjo</td>
<td><em>Insistently</em> Just give it to me and I will administer it when I get home!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abel</td>
<td><em>Tries to reason</em> If I give it to you then I will have to do the same for everyone and this is not feasible in documenting everyone who has received medicine. These are the rules, please stand aside and wait or come back tomorrow.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konjo</td>
<td>I cannot wait any longer, I must get home to start cleaning and cooking super! My husband will be very angry!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ End scene and Define the problem.

Step 1: Define the problem

➢ First we must consider what is at stake for each of the characters. Use the following questions as a guide to interpret the scenario and define the problem.
Consider what is at stake for each character? How can each character’s concerns and interests might affect safe drug distribution?

Who else is involved or influencing each character’s decision making?

What priorities ought to take precedent in this scenario?

Step 2: Determine the best course of action

Consider what options would result in the best course of action or resolution. You may work with your colleagues to discuss and deliberate on an appropriate choice.
Step 3: Take action

What was the desired action?

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What systems are in place to ensure the desired action is taken?

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Key Messages:

➢ Acknowledge the conflict and consider competing influences.
➢ Try to meet the needs of the woman and child while preserving safety.
➢ Lower drug coverage is okay.
➢ When all options fail seek support from supervisor on duty.
Case scenario 2:

The community headman approaches a Community Drug Distributor (CDD) during mass drug administration. He notices the numerous boxes of pills and privately asks the CDD for three doses of medication to take home and give to his children. He figures that since the drugs are plentiful, there would be no harm in sparing just three pills.

**Skills: Communication, Leadership, Decision-making**

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**Scenario 2**

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The community headman approaches a Community Drug Distributor (CDD) during mass drug administration. He notices the numerous boxes of pills and privately asks the CDD for three doses of medication to take home and give to his children. He figures that since the drugs are plentiful, there would be no harm in sparing just three pills.

**Skills: Communication, Leadership, Decision-making**

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**SCENE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>David how are you? I need your help. I have 3 small boys at home, and they have not received any drugs yet. Why don’t you give me 3 tablets for my children at home eh?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Realizing the headman’s role in the community, David ponders what to say. After a long pause he shakes his head indicating that he cannot spare any pills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>Rather than arguing with David, you demand to speak with the supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Boss will not agree either. We want <strong>our</strong> community to be protected from illness. In order to do this, we must work together to ensure only trained personnel provide the drugs during administration. Please bring the children back tomorrow and I will make sure they receive the doses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephen</td>
<td>Unsatisfied, starts to walk away in search of the supervisor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David</td>
<td>Motions for Stephen to wait.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ End scene and **Define the problem.**

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**Step 1: Define the problem**

➢ First we must consider what is at stake for each of the characters. Use the following questions as a guide to interpret the scenario and define the problem.

How does David’s relationship to the community headman affect his decision in this situation?

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Consider if David decided to slip 3 pills to the headman, does it really matter? What are the competing moral goods here?

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How is David’s role as a leader demonstrated in this scenario?

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**Step 2: Determine the best course of action**

Consider what options would result in the best course of action or resolution. You may work with your colleagues to discuss and deliberate on an appropriate choice.

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**Step 3: Take action**

What was the desired action?

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What systems are in place to ensure the desired action is taken?
Key Messages:

- Directly observe all treatments with Zithromax®.
- Suggest an alternative day to bring the children for MDA service.
- Lower drug coverage is okay.
- When all options fail seek support from supervisor on duty.
Case scenario 3:

CDD is being reprimanded by his or her supervisor for not achieving a high enough drug coverage, especially among young children, yet the CDD is simply “following the new guidelines” that encourage CDDs not to force medication upon children who resist taking it.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCENE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Actor</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ahmed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Juliet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Juliet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ End scene and Define the problem.

**Step 1: Define the problem**

➢ First we must consider what is at stake for each of the characters. Use the following questions as a guide to interpret the scenario and define the problem.

What are Juliet’s concerns? What are Ahmed’s concerns?
Step 2: Determine the best course of action

Consider what options would result in the best course of action or resolution. You may work with your colleagues to discuss and deliberate on an appropriate choice.

Step 3: Take action

What was the desired action?
What systems are in place to ensure the desired action is taken?

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Key Messages:

- Avoid challenging the supervisor.
- Clearly communicate drug safety protocol.
- Lower drug coverage is okay in order to preserve safety.
- Suggest ways to increase coverage while preserving drug safety.
Case scenario 4:

A man and his 5-year old child approach the CDD who is giving Zithromax© for trachoma. CDD begins to prepare Zithromax© oral solution for the child when another CDD asserts that “this boy is big enough for a tablet.” The boy’s father interjects saying that his child is a big boy and that the oral solution is only for babies and small children.

SCENE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yonas</td>
<td>Yells “Next”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Approaches Yonas with his 5-year old child by his side. “Good day boss”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonas</td>
<td>Takes note of the child and begins to prepare Zithromax oral solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Hello, is that solution for my boy here?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonas</td>
<td>Yes sir, It is.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed</td>
<td>Isn’t the boy too big for the oral solution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yonas</td>
<td>No he is not. Besides, according to the new guidelines I would prefer to be safe than to take any risks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ahmed</td>
<td>The child is not a baby and is capable of chewing a tablet, there is no need to prepare a solution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>I agree with Ahmed, my boy is too big.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

➢ End scene and **Define the problem**.

**Step 1: Define the problem**

➢ First we must consider what is at stake for each of the characters. Use the following questions as a guide to interpret the scenario and **define the problem**.

What moral goods are in conflict?

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Why or how are they in conflict?
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How can CDD exercise discernment in managing quick “in the moment” decision making?
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Step 2: Determine the best course of action
Consider what options would result in the best course of action or resolution. You may work with your colleagues to discuss and deliberate on an appropriate choice.
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Step 3: Take action
What was the desired action?
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What systems are in place to ensure the desired action is taken?

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**Key Messages:**

- Avoid exchanging with the co-worker during MDA process.
- Reassure the father that a decision will be made for his child.
- Lower drug coverage is okay.
- When all options fail seek support from supervisor on duty.