

SUCCESS STORY

Integrated community outreaches bring Maternal neonatal health services closer to the people of Bujaaja village.



“I heard the Bujaaja Parish coordinator announcing on a megaphone that IDI- Saving Mothers Giving Life (SMGL) project had organized a community integrated static clinical outreach at the church and was bringing maternal neonatal health services including HIV testing services, antenatal care and immunization closer to the people,” said Alice.

Alice, a 29-year-old woman married to Sarapiyo Ndunguse lives in a remote area plagued by bad roads with limited access to health services. The closest health facility, Nkooko health centre (HC) III is 20 km away. Alice had previously lost two babies which were delivered by a traditional birth attendant (TBA) in her sub county.

In order to prevent more mothers from losing their children at birth while also saving mothers, the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI)-Saving Mothers Giving Life (SMGL) project funded by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) organized a community outreach providing maternal neonatal services to the women in Bujaaja village.

“The Parish coordinator mobilized pregnant women, and mothers with babies in need of immunization as well as men to come at Bujaaja church for all those services,” said Alice.

At that time, being five months pregnant, Alice and other women received a health education talk, were registered before receiving services such as physical examinations, HTC services, and Tetanus Toxoid (TT) vaccination. Alice also received some medicines such as malaria drugs and iron folic tablets to prevent anemia and was advised to return at seven months.

“I honored the health worker’s advice and returned at 7 months. Again, I received health education about the importance of antenatal care services (ANC) to pregnant mothers, birth preparedness, and the benefits of health facility delivery. We were also asked to come back with our partners at the next

visit,” said Alice.

At eight months, Alice returned with her husband during which both tested for HIV as part of the ANC services package. Sarapiyo also joined a group of men who were separately receiving paternal health education about their roles and responsibilities in birth preparedness. Alice was also given a subsequent return date for her 4th visit which was not met because she went into labor early.

The couple wasted no time in travelling to Nkooko HC III, where Alice delivered a healthy baby girl. As a result of the IDI led outreaches, since January 2016, 842 clients have received ANC and a total of 2190 babies have been immunized.

“I thought that TBAs were the direct representatives of health workers in the community not until I was educated about the dangers of TBA delivery and the advantages of health facility delivery”, said Sarapiyo.

In September last year, Alice found out she was pregnant with her 3rd child. During her pregnancy, Alice faithfully continued to attend community outreaches with the support of her husband. The couple engaged in early preparations for child birth and transport savings to the HC before her anticipated delivery date of 15th May 2017.

“We bought most of the things required for delivery like gloves, basin, kiveera, baby’s clothes, bed sheets and saved some money for transport and emergencies at the health facility”, said Alice and her husband.

On Sunday 21st May, 2017 at Nkooko HC III, Alice gave birth to her 3rd child - a bouncing baby boy. She is so grateful to SMGL for providing accessible MNH services to her community. Alice currently has 3 children the aged nine, three, and a newborn of 8 days, two of which are fondly termed as SMGL children. *“We now have 2 kids from the Bujaaja outreach services,”* says the proud couple.

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