

The Women's' health and empowerment program

The program objective is to improve the health status of women in the target areas by: reducing maternal and child morbidity and mortality arising from preventable causes; and increasing their role in leadership.

The program focuses on: 1) Families; 2) Adult women; 3) Pregnant women; 4) Children especially the newborns; and 5) the adolescents.

A pregnant mother being transported to Kitagata hospital for ANC visit (courtesy of the project design, where transport to the contracted and trained boda-bodas and bills in the private wing are paid for)



The program and associated projects aim to:

1. Provide vital maternal, child and reproductive health information (including available options/ services and service providers) and knowledge to families through health education sessions and mobile phone text messages. The target is spouses in the target communities
2. Get adult women to actively participate in making decisions related to health care organization and utilization both at home and at community level through: sensitizing men about the role women play in household health, and in organizing health services at community level; negotiating with communities forming community health insurance (CHI) schemes to add constitutional provisions for women leaders in the schemes; training women in leadership skills and encouraging them to take up leadership positions in the CHI schemes.

3. Get pregnant women to: complete all the 4 ANC clinics; prevent malaria in pregnancy by providing them Insecticide Treated Bed nets; deliver from health facilities; and return for PNC services after birth. Transport by boda boda (motor bike) is provided by the CHI scheme to pregnant women to facilitate access.
4. Protect newborn babies from illness and death from preventable causes by providing to their parents skills for healthy child raising and early risk detection; a bed net to every new born baby born to a mother who is a member of a CHI scheme; covering through the CHI schemes all the transport costs to go and complete the immunization doses and other health care needs.
5. Give information about family planning services, methods, and service providers through health education sessions, mobile telephone text messages and public posters.

Achievements by December 2012

- a. 10 CHF schemes have been created with safe motherhood and child survival products in Sheema District. The schemes provide pregnant women with insurance cover for all medical related bills, the pregnant women are transported to and from a health facility using boda-boda bikes to attend all the 4 ANC clinics, to deliver, for immunization of the baby and for one PNC clinic. A free bed net is given to a pregnant woman and another to a new born baby.
- b. Overall, 44% of all leadership positions in the CHF schemes and their networks are occupied by women.
- c. ANC 4 completion in the schemes in Sheema district is 80.4%
- d. Institutional delivery in the 10 CHF schemes in Sheema district is 78%.