



SUCCESS STORY

VICTORY ON THE THIRD LINE: How newly deployed nurse- midwives are saving lives in Musoma, Tanzania.

Musoma, Tanzania: When Otilia Mhagama and other three nurse midwives' colleagues arrived at Nyasho Health Centre in Musoma for their first deployment in January 2021, they were reflecting on what would be their main task at the Health Centre. Little they could had known that their arrival was just a thrill for Dr. Hillary Mohamed, a Medical Officer in-charge, who managed the understaffed health center that have a total of 13 nurses and an average of 11 deliveries per day with less than four nurses in a daily roster; caring for labor & delivery, and post-natal wards.

Otilia and her colleagues are among 93 midwives allocated through the USAID Afya Endelevu Activity implemented by Benjamin Mkapa Foundation to strengthen delivery of quality Reproductive Maternal and Child health services in Mara and Geita regions.

Located at the heart Centre of Musoma municipal, Nyasho facility attracts a high-volume of pregnant women and children who mostly are queued for about an average of 3 hours waiting for services due to shortage of nurses and it serves as Musoma municipal council facility. For the Medical Officer In-charge, Dr. Hillary Mohamed, the support of these four newly deployed nurses including nurse Otilia is a life-changing experience.

"The support came at the right time. Due to shortage of nurse-midwives, we were working under tension especially when there was a Caesarean- Section emergency. But today, we thank God, these staff have improved daily roster and patient care which have also improved client flow and reduced unnecessary referrals. Said Dr. Hillary Mohamed.

Today, with the present of nurses like Otilia and her midwives' colleagues, they have improved service delivery including management of Cesarean Sections from 31 for the period of October to December 2020 to 56 clients for the past three months of January to March 2021. First ANC attendance has improved from 271 to 315 and facility delivery has also increased from 612 to 766 in the same quarter.

"We used to refer clients to the regional referral hospital because we didn't have adequate manpower to conduct thorough clinical assessment of pregnant women including care and support during labor and delivery" added Dr. Hillary.

Clients' confidence and trust on healthcare workers at Nyasho Health Centre have improved because they see changes in how they are receiving services. Waiting time has significantly reduced and all healthcare workers feel appreciated for the work they do from their clients. This is a very rewarding experience, and they hope they can continue to provide quality of care and reach more women and children for reproductive and Child health services. Afya Endelevu identified the needs at Nyasho Health Centre by looking into their unmet services delivery needs using service delivery data, client volume and workload which informed the allocation.

Through the support of the USAID, the Afya Endelevu Activity led by Benjamin Mkapa in close collaboration with the MOHCDGEC, PORALG and LGAs with a goal of Strengthening delivery of quality HIV, TB and reproductive, maternal, and child health (RMCH) services in high-disease burden areas with shortages of health workers through sustainable investments of HRH in Tanzania has managed to allocate 988 HCWs in 16 Region.