



## CASE STUDY

# Community Outreach Boosts Attendance at Enugu Health Centre

Enugu • September 2012

“Attendance at antenatal care has increased,” says Eucharía Agu, the Assistant Officer-in-Charge at the Nara Community Health Centre. “More women now come to the health center for delivery instead of going to the traditional birth attendants.” Mrs. Agu is happy that more women are now patronising the Nara health facility after the PATHS2-supported Facility Community Outreach (FCO). And data from a survey conducted before the outreach showed that no one in the Nara community—literally 0% of its members—knew about the danger signs of pregnancy. Data collected after the community outreach showed that 80% of them now know at least four danger signs of pregnancy.

Nara is a rural community located in the Nkanu East Local Government Area of Enugu State. On 6 February 2012, for the first time in Nkanu’s history a community-wide outreach was conducted. More than 250 community members participated, including both women and men. Dramas and health promotion songs were performed to raise awareness of danger signs in pregnancy and delivery, and to show the benefits of antenatal care (ANC) attendance and the importance of giving birth in a health facility and not at home.

When a PATHS2 team visited Nkanu a month after the outreach they found that about 30 health care seekers were receiving care at the Nara health centre. Victoria Kalu, a nurse at the centre, confirmed that the outreach has encouraged more people to visit the facility for medical attention. She explained that



Clients waiting to receive health care services at the Nara Health Centre

the outreach helped people to understand that a traditional birth attendant is not the best option for childbirth. She added that the facility now runs a 24-hour service to provide uninterrupted medical care for residents of the community.

One of the beneficiaries of the community outreach and improved facility, Mrs. Chibueze Nnenna Anne, said the outreach was educational, and encouraged more people to visit the health facility and have better knowledge of ANC as well as danger signs. Mrs. Chibueze, who is 33, added that during her pregnancy she visited the health facility and that the ANC was very useful to her and other pregnant women. She

also commended the efforts of the nurses in taking care of medical needs of pregnant women: “I don’t use traditional birth attendants because they are not good, and there are enough health workers at the health facility to attend to us. The nurses put in effort to help me during delivery. They don’t shout during labour. They show the women they care.” She advised that the nurses working at the facility should be provided with better shelter and also a refrigerator for the clinic to store vaccines.

Mrs. Chibueze said that the outreach helped her to know about the danger signs of pregnancy, such as swelling of the legs, or the baby presenting for delivery other than head first. This new information is contrary to the traditionally held belief that when a baby comes out with legs first, he or she is destined to be a chief.

Mother of two, Modesta Onyeabu said that one of the main things she learnt from the outreach programme is the importance of ANC to ensuring safe motherhood. She added that when she goes to the health centre, they treat her well and that after attending ANC, she always wants to go back because of what she has learned.

She explained, “Dem teach breastfeeding and family planning. It make me know say I no suppose get

plenty children” –in other words, the education on family planning made her understand that she doesn’t have to give birth to so many children.

The outreaches are community health promotion interventions that reach people in their social groups using community volunteers and health workers trained by PATHS2. Each outreach is led by the facility Officer-in-charge and has in attendance traditional, religious leaders and members of the Facility Health Committees.

Since November 2011, PATHS2 has conducted 90 community outreach activities in Enugu and Lagos states and reached more than 13,200 people, mostly women. To facilitate this process, 136 health workers have been trained in community health promotion techniques and interpersonal communication while more than 1000 community volunteers have been trained to communicate health promotion through drama and songs during these outreaches.

With the conduct of the outreach events, PATHS2 aims to improve the capacity of health workers and community members to implement communication and mobilisation activities during these outreach events. These events will saturate communities with the right information to make informed maternal health decisions.

**For more information, please contact: Chigbo Chikwendu ([c.chikwendu@paths2.org](mailto:c.chikwendu@paths2.org))**

**FOLLOW US ON-LINE:**

[www.facebook.com/paths2nigeria](http://www.facebook.com/paths2nigeria) • [www.youtube.com/paths2nigeria](http://www.youtube.com/paths2nigeria)  
[www.flickr.com/paths2nigeria](http://www.flickr.com/paths2nigeria) • [www.twitter.com/paths2\\_](http://www.twitter.com/paths2_)

**The Partnership for Transforming Health Systems Phase Two (PATHS2)** is a six-year development initiative that aims to ensure Nigeria achieves important health-related Millennium Development Goals.

Funded by UKAID from the Department for International Development, PATHS2 is working in partnership with the Government of Nigeria and other stakeholders to improve the planning, financing, and delivery of sustainable health services for those most in need. In addition to its work at the Federal level, the PATHS2 programme is implemented in the five states of Enugu, Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, and Lagos. PATHS2 follows the successful PATHS programme, which was implemented from 2002 to 2008.

PATHS2 is managed by Abt Associates, in association with Options, Mannion Daniels, and the Axios Foundation.



Options



Mannion Daniels

