



CASE STUDY

Igbo-Etiti channels resources strategically to address health priorities

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Igbo-Etiti Health Head of Department Abugo facilitating the workshop for new FHC members

Igbo-Etiti is a Local Government Area (LGA) in Enugu State. Until recently the management of Igbo-Etiti was not accustomed to strategic planning. According to Health Head of Department Abugo Solomon, “In the past the health department did not submit budgets. Health-related line items in the LGA budgets were based on assumptions.”

It was not until 2010 that the Nigerian health sector produced the first National Strategic Health Development Plan, to provide a framework for achieving national health priorities, including the Millennium Development Goals. The process

of translating the national framework into implementation at the state and LGA levels has, however, been slow. Without strategic planning and implementation at all levels of the health sector, channeling resources to respond productively to the priority needs of the poor and vulnerable living in rural Nigeria becomes especially challenging. “We were having several cases of essential drugs being out of stock,” said Abugo.

In December 2012, the UK aid-funded PATHS2 programme trained representatives of the LGA health department on strategic planning. According to Abugo, “After the training, we developed a 2013 work plan and budget, which were then submitted to the budget and planning department for incorporation into the overall LGA budget.” Within seven months, the LGA had successfully implemented a range of activities, in most cases replicating PATHS2 interventions. “We know that PATHS2 renovated some health facilities beginning from Ozara, so the LGA also began renovating health facilities in PATHS2 non-supported areas,” Abugo continued.

The LGA also organised a step-down training for 42 service providers following the training on advanced life-saving skills by PATHS2. “We invited two facilitators from the State Ministry of Health and PATHS2 to support the training. We hold regular meetings with all facility health committee representatives and thereafter brief the LGA chairman on the various developments and challenges faced in the respective health facilities. The LGA has also invested in the procurement of drugs and equipment,” he said.

Bright and early on a Monday morning, 60 women and men excitedly filled the multipurpose hall of the Igbo-Etiti LGA. They had been selected to represent their

respective villages in a training organised by the LGA on the roles of facility health committees (FHCs). According to Abugo, “We were going to launch four recently completed health centres that the LGA built. The LGA Chairman, however, mandated that each of the health centres must have a facility health committee prior to the launch.”

Abugo, who facilitated the workshop, provided an overview of the essence of FHCs, with real-case references to changes in health facility management by community members. “We have witnessed the dramatic changes in several health facilities with FHCs in the LGA, and have come to adopt this as a model for instituting health centres.” The training of new FHCs is one of many activities planned, sponsored and implemented by the LGA. A recent analysis facilitated by PATHS2 revealed that Igbo-Etiti LGA has implemented 70 percent of activities planned for the year. This is a huge feat considering that the LGA was not in the business of strategic planning less than a year before.

“PATHS2 showed us how to use evidence in planning and implementing health activities. Just like PATHS2, we are now documenting our activities with photographs and videos. These are valuable for updating the LGA chairman and asking for further implementation of other planned health activities,” Abugo concludes.

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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.

