

Equipped with New Skills to Save Women's Lives in Jigawa State



Students of the Jigawa school of midwifery with some PATHS2 officials.

The Jigawa State School of Midwifery was officially opened in March for business by Dr Ibrahim Nashabaru, the Honourable Commissioner for Health. The opening of the college marks a key achievement in the ongoing work to address the severe shortage of Midwives within Jigawa. PATHS2, led by Abubakar Kende, the Jigawa state team leader, worked closely with the Nursing and Midwifery Council of Nigeria (N&MCN) to help bring about this success.



"The midwifery programme started in March 2010 in Jigawa State, thanks to PATHS2. They have been of great help to us because they are the one sponsoring our going to other schools of midwifery to understudy them so that we can establish our own. PATHS2 is always there to give us support. Without that support, all these things might have not been possible for us."

Aisha Moh'd Kazaure,
Principal, Jigawa State School of Midwifery

With an annual intake of 50 students from within and outside the State, the College joins the State's Schools of Nursing and of Health Technology in their determination to recruit, train and develop skilled healthcare professionals in order to improve Jigawa's poor health record.

The Demographic and Health Survey 2008 conducted by the National Population Commission ranked Jigawa as Nigeria's poorest State. With

over 90% of its population of 4.5 million (2006 Census) living in rural areas, access to healthcare facilities is restricted, leading to further stark health statistics. Whilst one in 10 newborns will not survive, and 7 out of 100 children will not make it to their fifth birthday, Jigawa also has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in Nigeria with 2 per 100 live births.

The number of health professionals working in Jigawa State is grossly inadequate in terms of numbers, skills

and gender balance. The most recent figures available from the Gunduma Health Systems Board (GHSB) show that in October 2009 there were 72 male and 9 female doctors; 219 male and 108 female nurses; and only 14 female midwives in the State.

The national average for doctors is 20 per 100,000, Jigawa had 1.29 per 100,000; the national average for nurses is 50 per 100,000, and 10.84 in Jigawa; and for pharmacists it is 4 per 100,000 and 0.76 in Jigawa.

Recognising the urgent need for healthcare professionals, PATHS2 worked with the State Ministry of Health (SMOH) to establish a department for Human Resource Development. The PATHS2 State team closely collaborated with the SMOH to develop a state-specific Human Resource for Health (HRH) Policy, which was fully aligned with the National Human Resources for Health Policy and Strategic Health Plan.

Jigawa's HRH Policy is expected to be ready for ratification by the end of June 2010 and subsequent approval by the State Executive Council in September 2010. Additionally, the team ensured that the State-wide recruitment embargo was successfully lifted for the health sector.

In 2009, the State Government approved the recruitment of 538 various healthcare professionals into the health service. Further requests have been made to the Government for the recruitment of more health workers in 2010.



Dr Ibrahim Nashabaru,
Jigawa
commissioner
for Health

As part of this new recruitment drive, PATHS2 helped to establish the school of midwifery. *"Advocacy was used to create the change. Opening a school needs a lot of hard work to get it started; Human resources, Material resources, structures and a lot of travelling to the nursing and midwifery council both at Abuja and Lagos offices in order to get information on how to get started properly"* **Abubakar Kende**, PATHS2 State Team Leader, Jigawa State.



The permanent site of the Jigawa school of midwifery under development

Opened in March 2010, the Jigawa State School of Midwifery based in Birnin-Kudu, has an annual intake of 50 students, each qualifying as a Midwife after three years of intensive training.

There are already two established Schools within Jigawa, one of Nursing and the other of Health Technology. The School of Nursing was established in 1996 and has seen over 300 students graduate since then, most of whom have left to work outside of the State. The School of Health Technology was established in 1989 and provides training in Community Health, Public



Abubakar Kende
PATHS2 State
Team Leader,
Jigawa State

Health, Pharmacy Technician and Laboratory Technician work.

"The establishment of this school has helped us get focused and this increases our interest towards life saving seeing the level of maternal mortality in the state" - Midwife in training, **Safara'u Aliyu.**

"Now I will have the skills I need to help our mothers so they will not die in the process of child birth" - Midwife in training, **Safiya Adahama.**

PATHS2 continues to support the SMOH in the recruitment and training of much-needed healthcare professionals. In the past 12 months, the number of trained health professionals has risen from 1,770 to 3,105 (Source: Gunduma Departmental Quarterly Report).

Given such positive achievements, PATHS2 has helped to ensure that Jigawa State is on course to address the requirements of the National Health Development Plan and Millennium Development Goals regarding infant and maternal mortality.

Source: Gunduma Departmental Quarterly Report

ABOUT 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, through the UK's Department of 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 in most need.

Apart from working at a Federal level, PATHS2 is working in the five States of Enugu, Jigawa, Kano, Kaduna and Lagos.

PATHS2 follows the successful PATHS1, which ran from 2002 to 2008, and was also funded by UKaid.

CONTACT

Abubakar Kende
State Team Leader
a.kende@paths2.org
08066060715, 08023085022
www.paths2.org

