

Kibuuba's key influencer: promoting change from within

Moses, a voluntary community health worker and key influencer from Kibuuba village, Uganda, is promoting essential malaria prevention and control behaviors. He is creating sustainable change from within his community and district by working with local and district leaders to find solutions to common health issues.



Moses urges mothers to have their children to go to health facilities to get tested instead of self-diagnosing.

MALARIA IN UGANDA

Malaria is the leading cause of death in Uganda and is endemic in 95 percent of the country. According to the World Malaria Report 2017, there were over 7.7 million cases in Uganda in 2016, resulting in over 12,000 deaths.

To reduce the malaria burden in the country, Malaria Consortium has been training voluntary community health workers to diagnose and treat children for malaria, pneumonia and diarrhoea or to refer severe cases as part of USAID's Malaria Action Program for Districts (MAPD) project. This approach is known as integrated community case management, or iCCM, and is supported by Uganda's National Malaria Control Program.

Moses, a father of five, works as an HIV/ AIDS counsellor in Kibuuba village, Uganda. He has also been a dedicated voluntary community health worker for over 15 years, using his iCCM training and professional knowledge to address key health issues in his community.

KEY INFLUENCERS

MAPD also identifies key influencers in malaria endemic villages and trains them to promote the uptake of preventive measures and correct care-seeking behaviors in their communities.

Moses's dedication and experience were noticed by the district leaders when they came to Kibuuba village to select key influencers for the project.

With his experience in iCCM, Moses is recognised as an all-round health provider in his village and has the knowledge and authority to promote best practice and create long term behavioural change. Moses underwent a series of interviews before being chosen by the district.

COMMUNITY DIALOGUES

Key influencers like Moses conduct community dialogues and serve as links between districts and communities around health related challenges. Community dialogues are engaging conversations where key influencers use flipcharts and other visual tools to illustrate important messages around malaria prevention and treatment.

This community level engagement uses easy to understand visual aids to explain complicated health issues and provides a space to share and address misconceptions and myths from members of all ages.

Moses draws up plans to promote the uptake of preventive measures and agrees action points for people to commit to, with input from the local community.

When they meet again, Moses looks back at the agreed action points to identify areas where further progress is needed.



Visual flipcharts engage both young and older members of the community

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE CHANGE

Kibuuba village members now regularly attend Moses' community dialogue meetings to discuss and learn about health issues and brainstorm solutions.

Moses writes regular meeting reports which are given to MAPD staff and shared with districts to ensure that local health challenges are also addressed at the district level.

Moses' key influencer training has enabled him to promote good healthcare habits in his community, and change is already taking place.

"Changes are there. I conduct home visits and see that the mosquito nets that were distributed are being used correctly. People also seek healthcare within the community more often and more quickly."

MAPD is promoting long-term change from within communities and districts by working with district leaders and influential community members to draw up locally relevant actions and solutions to health issues.



This success story is published as part of a series from the USAID's Malaria Action Program for Districts project. For more information, see www.malariaconsortium.org/resources/publications/977/ or contact: Dr Sam Gudoi, s.gudoi@malariaconsortium.org

USAID's Malaria Action Program for Districts aims to improve the health status of the Ugandan population by reducing childhood and maternal morbidity and mortality due to malaria. The project will support the Government of Uganda for a period of five years, focusing in particular on children under five years of age and pregnant women.

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