

COMMUNITY HEALTH WATCH

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The Women in Unguwar Duniya Deserve Access to Quality Maternal Care

1st July, 2022

Pregnant women in some rural communities in Nigeria continue to suffer from the lack of adequate and quality maternal care due to lack of access to a healthcare facility or, where there is a healthcare facility, it often lacks the basic amenities to enable it function effectively.

Pregnant women in Unguwar Duniya community, in Dawaki Kudu Local Government Area (LGA) of Kano State are experiencing the later. Even though the community has a Primary Health Centre (PHC), the absence of a labor room makes it difficult to conduct deliveries, and the situation is not helped by the poor access road to the community. As a result, women face the extreme challenge of getting medical care when they are about to give birth.

“Here, we only offer ANC services and then we refer women to other hospitals in other towns for delivery,” said Firdausi Yusuf, a health worker at the clinic.

But a labor room isn't the PHC's only need. Their toilet is in poor shape, making some women reluctant to attend ANC “due to lack of convenience,” said Auwal Abdulmumin, a resident of Unguwar Duniya.

During the rainy season, the community's access roads are usually flooded, making it difficult to convey pregnant women to the hospital. Aminu Dan-Kudihu, a resident, narrated how he lost his wife, on her way to the hospital.

“Recently, due to the bad condition of the road, on her way to the hospital while in labor, the bike carrying her got stuck in mud and was unable to move. While trying to find another route to the hospital, she died in the process”.



Childbearing can only be a wonderful experience for women when it doesn't come with complications or cost them their lives. Delays in getting to health facilities and accessing services at the health facilities are some of the causes of maternal complications. The women of Unguwar Duniya Community deserve access to quality maternal care, to achieve this, they are requesting for the following:



What the community wants

1. Build and equip a labor room for the clinic.
2. Renovate the toilet and build an additional toilet.
3. Reconstruct the poor access road to the clinic.

Kawo Clinic: A Ward is Not a Labour Room

8th July, 2022

If Primary Health Centres (PHC) operate at optimal capacity, they can cater to more than 80% of an individual's healthcare needs. Sadly, Nigeria's PHC system is riddled with so many challenges that this is hardly the case.

Kawo is a rural community in Kontagora Local Government Area of Niger State. The community has a health clinic that was built to meet the health needs of Kowa and other surrounding communities. In 2020, Kontagora LGA renovated the clinic, giving it a total facelift, however, it still has three major challenges which severely hinder the quality of service they offer, particularly maternal care.

Maryam Shehu, the officer in charge of the clinic said there are only two permanent staff in the clinic and three voluntary staff. This makes it virtually impossible to provide quality care and offer 24 hour services. "We can't run a shift with only two staff. The voluntary staff cannot work at night. Even during the day, they only come when they don't have other things to do. It's not every day," she said.

Shehu added that the facility lacks a perimeter fence which is an issue as the facility has been burgled several times. The clinic also lacks a labor room. Currently the female ward has been converted into a labour room which means that female patients no longer have a dedicated ward.



Health workers are an integral part of healthcare delivery. No health facility can provide effective and quality healthcare, as well as offer 24-hour service, without adequate, well trained, and motivated staff. Moreover, a PHC must have a labor room as maternal care is an essential part of primary healthcare. A ward can never be an effective labour room as it is equipped to provide a resting place for recovering women and not for birthing babies.

Finally, all possible measures must be put in place to ensure that health workers and patients go about the business of providing and accessing health care in safety.



What the community wants

1. Recruitment and deployment of more health workers to Kawo Clinic
2. Construction of a labor room in the clinic
3. Construction of a perimeter fence to secure the clinic.

Tungan Gari Clinic: When it Rains, it Pours

29th July, 2022

The Tungan Gari clinic in Tungan Gari, a rural community in Kontagora Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State, was built 30 years ago. According to Bashar Mohammed, the officer in charge of the facility, it is in a deplorable state, with so many challenges that it is no longer able to provide quality healthcare services to the community members.

Muhammad said almost every infrastructure and equipment the clinic has is either broken or unavailable. "The facility has no delivery room and no delivery couch; the toilet is not functioning; the ceiling has fallen and when it rains falls, it pours into the clinic. We have only two beds which are damaged, and there are no mattresses".

In addition, there is no source of water supply at the clinic; pregnant women do not always get their routine antenatal drugs due to constant stock outs because of inadequate supply from the Kontagora LGA; and because the facility is not fenced, patients, especially women, do not feel comfortable seeking care there.

Ibrahim Garba, a resident of Tungan Gari community said the challenges facing their clinic is forcing residents to travel to Kontagora town to seek health care. This particularly affects women who must travel to Kontagora to give birth, and this is a risk as the distance and bad roads jeopardises their health.

Tungan Gari community members recognise that to effectively meet their health needs, their clinic must have all the necessary infrastructure and equipment. They are therefore asking for the following,



What the community wants

1. A complete rehabilitation of Tungan Gari Clinic
2. Provision of a source of onsite water supply at the clinic
3. Rehabilitation of the toilet facilities in the clinic
4. Provision of a delivery couch, functional beds and mattresses and other equipment for safe delivery at the clinic
5. Adequate and constant supply of antenatal and other essential medications to the clinic.



Nigeria Health Watch is a not-for-profit health communication and advocacy organisation that seeks to advocate for better health for Nigerians. We have worked to actively engage and support the government in raising awareness and increasing knowledge on a wide range of health issues in Nigeria. We aim to hold duty bearers accountable for delivering affordable and quality healthcare to Nigerians. The unique capacity of Nigeria Health Watch lies in the combination of its communication and health expertise, which enables the organisation to provide solutions for evidence-based communications and advocacy in the health sector.

