

COMMUNITY HEALTH WATCH

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Informed commentary, intelligence and insights on the Nigerian health sector

Rofia Community: Where Healthcare Access is an Ordeal

1st October, 2022

The Primary health Centre (PHC) in Rofia, a rural community in Agwara Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State, was built several years ago to meet the healthcare needs of community members. However, after years of neglect, this health facility has been abandoned by health workers, forcing community members to seek healthcare in faraway Kebbi State.

Bello Usman Gidi, a community member said Rofia PHC has been in this state for about three years. *“The ceiling is completely broken. During the rainy season, everywhere leaks. Right now, bats and birds have made the health facility a home,”* he added. As a result, the health workers posted there abandoned it as most of them are not from the community. He said that when a woman is in labour, she must be taken to Yauri town, in Kabbi State. This can only be done by crossing a river. The other alternative according to Gidi is Agwara town which is more than nine kilometers away and has bad access roads. Some pregnant women don't survive this ordeal, Gidi said as they end up dying on the way to either Yauri or Agwara.

These deaths can be prevented if the government of Niger State meets the demands of Rofia community members. They are asking the government to,



What the community wants

1. Carry out a complete rehabilitation of the PHC
2. Provide proper equipment such as beds, mattresses, and diagnostics for the PHC
3. Make available adequate essential medications for the PHC
4. Recruit and deploy health workers to the PHC
5. Construct staff quarters to ensure that the PHC runs a 24-hour service

Sommazhiko PHC: Renovated But Still More Work to Do

8th October, 2022

It is safe to say that Sommazhiko community in Gbako Local Government Area, Niger State, is one fortunate community as the Sommazhiko Primary Healthcare Centre (PHC) was recently renovated using funds from the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF) and the Niger State Contributory Health Care Agency (NiCARE). However, the facility is still facing challenges.

According to the Officer-in-Charge (OIC), although the facility was outfitted with such equipment as a solar power system, fridges and a birthing couch, it still lacks some essential services. For example, referring critically ill patients to a secondary health facility is often difficult because they do not have an ambulance. Also, the PHC doesn't have enough health workers and so they are unable to provide quality healthcare to the many communities the facility serves. *"The absence of a staff does not give us the opportunity to provide 24hours services. We need accommodation for staff to be always around, so that in times of emergencies like labour at night, patients can be attended to,"* he lamented. There is also no source of water supply within the PHC.



For Mathew Nmadu, the assistant OIC of Sommazhiko PHC, the constant stock out of essential medicine greatly impedes their ability to provide the quality of care needed. *"We particularly run out of malaria drugs and antenatal medications"* he said.

The renovations carried out by the BHCPF and NiCARE is highly commendable. However, it is troubling that a PHC under both the BHCPF and Nicare does not have any source of water supply, runs out of essential medications like antimalarial and antenatal drugs and has inadequate staff strength. There is a need for accountability across board to ensure efficient and transparent disbursement in the administration and expenditure of the BHCPF, from the federal level down to the PHC.

What the community wants

1. Constructing staff quarters
2. Recruiting and deploying more health workers to the PHC
3. Ensuring a constant supply of, especially, essential medications
4. Constructing a borehole inside the facility

NiCare and The BHCPF Give Edokota PHC a New Look

15th October, 2022

After years of wear and tear, the Primary Health Centre (PHC) in Edokota, a farming community in Gbako Local Government Area (LGA) of Niger State was renovated in 2022 with funds from the Niger State Contributory Health Care Management Agency (NiCare) and the Basic Health Care Provision Fund (BHCPF).

Before then, the PHC which provides healthcare services to Edokota and other surrounding communities was so dilapidated that community members travelled to Gbako town to access healthcare.

According to Yusuf Muhammad, the officer in charge of the facility, "NiCare and BHCPF carried out an extensive renovation of the centre, while also adding some sections and equipment". A maternity ward, delivery beds, and waste disposal bins were provided by the two schemes. They also fixed one of the two toilets in the health facility. The schemes also put systems in place to ensure that essential drugs are always available. In addition, the Saving One Million Lives for Results project installed a solar powered freezer which enables the PHC store vaccines at the right temperature.

However, despite the new look and equipment, Edokota PHC is still experiencing some service delivery and structural challenges, Muhammad said. These include the lack of a dedicated source of water supply in the PHC, the health workers are forced to source for water around the community. The facility is also not fenced, and the only toilet fixed by NiCare and the BHCPF cannot meet the sanitary needs of both health workers and patients.

Edokota community members commend NiCare and the BHCPF for giving the Edokota PHC a new look and improving health service delivery to the community and its environs. However, to enjoy optimal service delivery they are asking for



What the community wants

1. Construction of a borehole in the health facility
2. Construction of a perimeter fence around the health facility
3. Construction of additional gender equitable toilets inside the health facility.

Who Can Address the Healthcare Needs of Emituwa Community?

22nd October, 2022

Emituwa Basic Health Clinic was built to meet the health needs of the residents of Emituwa, a rural community in Gbako Local Government Area of Niger State. However, it has so many challenges, it is no longer functioning optimally. Consequently, the community members cannot access the health services they need when they need them.

Yahaya Aliyu, assistant to the officer in charge of the facility, said the facility has no source of electricity supply which makes it impossible to offer 24-hour services. There is also the inadequate staff strength which means that available health workers are overburdened, resulting in poor service delivery. "The delivery couches, beds, tables, and chairs are all broken. The walls have cracks. Birds are living inside our delivery room because they are no windows to keep them out and the delivery room smells bad," Aliyu lamented. He added that the health facility does not have a toilet or portable water supply.

Suleiman Muhammad, the chairman of the health facility management committee and member of the community said, in addition to the many challenges Aliyu already listed, the clinic does not have a perimeter fence. Also, "the clinic is always running out



of drugs. Sometimes even Malaria drugs are not available," he said, adding that community members are disturbed by the lack of quality healthcare delivery in the health facility.

Emituwa community members deserve access to the health services they need, when and where they need them, without suffering financial or any other hardship. They are therefore requesting for



What the community wants

1. Complete renovation of Emituwa Basic Health Clinic
2. Provision of equipment such as beds and mattresses and delivery couches
3. Construction of gender equitable toilet facilities in the clinic
4. Construction of a perimeter fence for 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.

