



Emergency Transport Scheme (ETS) in Gombe State, Nigeria (Part 1 – Research and Stakeholder Sensitization)

Project Location:	Billiri, Dukku, Kaltungo and Nafada LGAs, Gombe State, Nigeria
Project Start Date:	2010
Project Duration:	1 Year

Introduction: In Gombe State, Northern Nigeria, a two-year Maternal and Neonatal Health (MNH) Learning Project has been in place since late 2009. This is a two year project that will be concluded in 2011. Recognising that only a small percentage (17%) of births occurs at health facilities across the State, while the large majority of women still give birth at home, the project aims to test different MNH practices at the household level, in order to identify successful models that can be replicated and scaled up.

Key interventions of the project include the training of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) and Federation of Muslim Women's Association of Nigeria (FOMWAN) volunteers at the community level, and the distribution of Clean Delivery Kits through the Patent and Proprietary Medicine Vendors across the State, which can be purchased by families and TBAs. To provide specialist advice to these trained community volunteers in case of a maternal emergency, a call centre staffed with nurses and midwives was established. Finally, emergency transport available at the community level is to be improved, so that women experiencing obstetric emergencies can be transferred to the health facilities across the state.

To improve the availability of appropriate and low-cost emergency transport is an important part of the strategy to improve the call centre's ability to reduce the delay between the onset of an obstetric emergency and the patient receiving appropriate care. Similarly, appropriate and low-cost transport needs to be in place if interventions among TBAs and FOMWAN volunteers are to be successful, since these cannot adequately address emergency situations.

Transaid is therefore working with the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) to implement an Emergency Transport Scheme (ETS) in Gombe State, using its previous experience from the implementation of a similar scheme in the Northern Nigerian States of Katsina, Yobe and Zamfara. To evaluate the relationship of the ETS with the different project models, the ETS was implemented by Transaid in four pilot Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Gombe.

Before the implementation phase, research was carried out to produce information that would support the implementing team. The assessment of the transport situation in Gombe was made in coordination with the wider project research and was designed to assess the transport situation from both the supply and demand sides.

Methodology: Between 18th January and 12th February 2010, Transaid consultant Abdulrahman Idris conducted formative research in each of the 11 LGAs of Gombe State. Outputs of this work were three-fold. Firstly, detailed contextual data from all 11 LGAs was collected to support planning and execution of the emergency transport system. Secondly, analysis of the primary research helped to highlight key findings and potential areas of concern for the implementation team. Thirdly, the completion of this activity served to sensitize NURTW members and other stakeholders about the potential for an Emergency Transport System in Gombe State.

The formative research was completed during three weeks of field work and one week of desk work. Information was collected mainly through discussions and interviews with the relevant stakeholders. Data was collected on the following topics:

- Transport organisations
 - Presence of organisations and their structures
 - Presence of informal transport
 - Number and type of vehicles per organisation
 - Number and size of motorparks
 - Locations of motorparks (both official and unofficial) then marked on maps
 - Percentage of drivers spending the night in their community with their vehicle
- Geography, topography and infrastructure across the LGAs
 - Mapping of road infrastructure (paved, compressed earth, untended track) and road conditions
 - Mapping of accessibility by different types of vehicles
 - Presence of roadblocks/bottlenecks, security issues
- Costs
 - Transport fees per route for passenger transport
 - Transport fees per route for emergency transport (assuming one passenger)
 - Is transport prepaid or post paid?
- Fuel Cost
 - Availability of fuel per LGA
 - Diesel and petrol price per LGA
 - Percentage of drivers with more than ¼ tank fuel upon inspection
- Other relevant information;
 - Literacy levels of drivers
 - Number of drivers carrying a mobile phone
 - Rough mapping of mobile phone signal "black spots" per LGA
 - Percentage of drivers speaking Hausa/English/Other
 - Distance to health facilities?
 - Stakeholder Mapping e.g. (Police, the Federal Road Safety Council (FRSC), vigilante groups etc.)

- Awareness among stakeholders and drivers of ETS from other states
- Number of women currently being transferred informally

To assess the transport needs of the population (demand side assessment), relevant questions were produced and incorporated in the project baseline household survey. These were designed to evaluate the availability of emergency transport at the community level; the modes of transport available; the cost of emergency transport; and the average travel time between the communities and the health facilities.

Outcomes: Both studies provided an overview of the emergency transport situation in Gombe State, in particular at the rural level. The following outputs were achieved:

- The formative research provided a good opportunity to sensitise the NURTW officials and other relevant stakeholders about the potential implementation of the Emergency Transport Scheme in Gombe State.
- Key findings included:
 - The presence of two key transport sector stakeholders, the National Union of Road Transport Workers (NURTW) and the Amalgamated Motorcycle Riders Association of Nigeria (ACOMORAN).
 - Many communities contained vehicles, or had access to vehicles. The majority of drivers spend the night in their communities with their vehicles.
 - The NURTW operates 36 motor parks across Gombe State's 11 LGAs.
 - The findings showed that each LGA has a considerable number of informal motorparks. Some LGAs (eg. Kaltungo) have up to 40 informal motorparks.
 - The number of vehicles based at each motorpark can range significantly from 15 in Nafada to 65 in Akko.
 - Only a small percentage of communities within Gombe State's LGAs were identified as being unreachable by car during the rainy season
 - A number of routes were identified as being impassable due to crime levels.
 - The average transport cost to move between locations in Gombe State ranges from 120 to 700 Naira per passenger (in 2010 1 USD averaged 150 Naira). Under emergency conditions, and assuming that only one passenger (the patient) travels in public transport the cost of such transport can range from 2,000 to 10,000 Naira depending on the starting location.
 - Almost all drivers were found to be carrying mobile phones upon inspection in the motorparks – however, very few drivers had more than 200 Naira credit on their phone. While no drivers were able to point out specific areas with no mobile signal a number of drivers highlighted that entire mobile phone networks can sometimes fail to operate.

The implementation process benefited largely from the information and analysis conducted during the research phase, as well as from the stakeholder sensitisation conducted during the formative research.

Conclusion: In areas where rural communities are scattered often a long way from health facilities, the conventional health system emergency transport (e.g. ambulances) is frequently under-resourced and unable to cope with the demand. One solution is to implement an alternative emergency transport system, using already established

transport; in the case of this project, commercial taxi drivers under the umbrella of the NURTW.

Tools Utilised: ETS Research Questionnaire and Collation Sheet

Partners: The project is being implemented by the Society for Family Health, an indigenous Nigerian NGO, with funding from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

About Transaid:

Transaid is an international UK development charity that aims to reduce poverty and improve livelihoods across Africa and the developing world through creating better transport. Transaid was founded by Save the Children and the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport. Our Patron is HRH The Princess Royal. Transaid specializes in the following:

- Building the capacity of public health authorities to provide effective, safe and cost efficient transport management systems to promote equitable access to primary health care services.
- Developing and improving logistics and supply chain systems to enhance the delivery of medicines, equipment and relief services to vulnerable communities.
- Promoting effective partnerships to support and enhance community participation in developing sustainable transport solutions in rural areas.
- Developing and delivering transport and logistics training and qualifications for public and private sector operators.

Transaid has the capacity and reach to lead projects throughout the developing world, but is equally capable of providing niche technical assistance to large scale health systems strengthening projects. Transaid maintains strong relationships with a number of leading international organizations including donor agencies such as DfID, DANIDA and USAID, and implementing organizations such as Health Partners International, Options Consulting, John Snow Inc. and Management Sciences for Health.

Contact:

Transaid
137 Euston Road, London NW1 2AA
United Kingdom

t: +44 (0)20 7387 8136
f: +44 (0)20 7387 2669
e: info@transaid.org
www.transaid.org

Transaid Worldwide Services Ltd is registered in England as a company limited by guarantee. Registered no 3511363. Registered charity no 1072105. Patron HRH The Princess Royal.