



Mobilising Access to Maternal  
Health Services in Zambia

Health Partners  
INTERNATIONAL

# **Innovative Community Engagement and Low Technology ETS in Rural Zambia**

Emergency Transport Workshop  
Hilton Doubletree Hotel,  
Dar-es Salam  
26<sup>th</sup> to 27<sup>th</sup> March 2014

# Introduction and Context

- MAMaZ was part of a broad package of DFID funded support to maternal health in Zambia
- MAMaZ was implemented for three years (2010-2013) in six districts.
- Programme had a research component and a community component.
- Implemented in close collaboration with the DHMTs and the central MoH

# Programme Objectives

- Test ways to generate sustainable demand for maternal and newborn health (MNH) services, and improve home-based care of pregnant women and newborns
- Generate evidence of the effectiveness of the interventions
- Identify approaches that can be taken to scale by government in future

*The programme had a community component and a research component*

# MAMaZ Baseline Studies

Qualitative and quantitative studies identified the barriers to routine and emergency MNH in rural communities.

They found a complex set of interdependent factors but most often cited was:

- Distance to facility
- Poor terrain
- Unavailable and unaffordable transport-

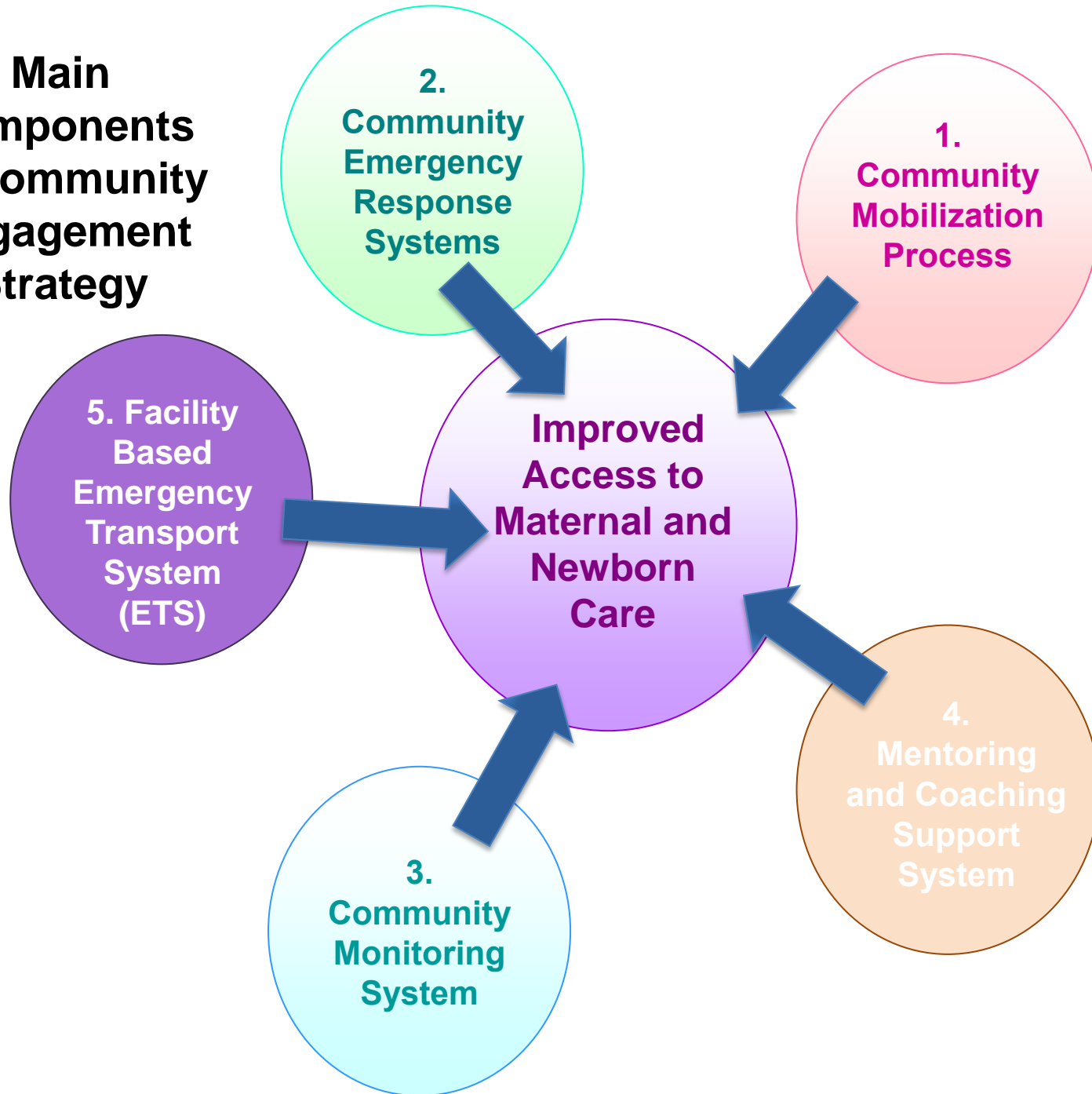
*ETS scoping and design was an important component of the baseline studies*

# MAMaZ's approach:

Based on four core strategies:

1. A '**whole community approach**' which reaches out to men and women and is inclusive of different age groups
2. An emphasis on building wide social approval for behaviour change > community-led and managed by volunteers
3. Working through existing structures, particularly the Safe Motherhood Action Groups (SMAGs)
4. Building sustainable community and district capacity to address MNH demand-side barriers

# Main Components of Community Engagement Strategy



# **ETS Approach**

# ETS Scoping and Design

## Assessment

- Terrain and geography
  - Sand
  - Hills
  - Forest
- Intended use
  - Transportation of pregnant women
- Other dynamics
  - Seasonal
  - Infrastructure



# Two Types of ETS in MAMaZ

- i. Where transport exists in communities or for communities closer to the facility, they develop their own practical, emergency transport scheme through agreements with the transport owners (possibly with funds from the savings scheme)
- ii. For other communities, MAMaZ fills the gap by introducing either Bicycle Ambulances (BAs), ox carts, boats or Motorcycle Ambulances (MCAs), dependent on the terrain and appropriateness of the transport

## **ii. Vehicle based Solutions**

### **Community based;**

- **Bicycle Ambulances:93**
- **Ox Cart :28**
- **Donkey Cart:1**
- **Boat ambulance:1**

### **Facility based;**

- **Motorcycle ambulance (MCA):28**

# Type of Transport: Bicycle Ambulances



# Type of Transport: Motorcycle Ambulance



# Type of Transport: Boat



- Wide and stable structure – ideal for transporting expectant mothers in labour
- High level of stability in the water
- Manually powered with long poles (as with local dugout canoes)

# Type of Transport: Oxcarts



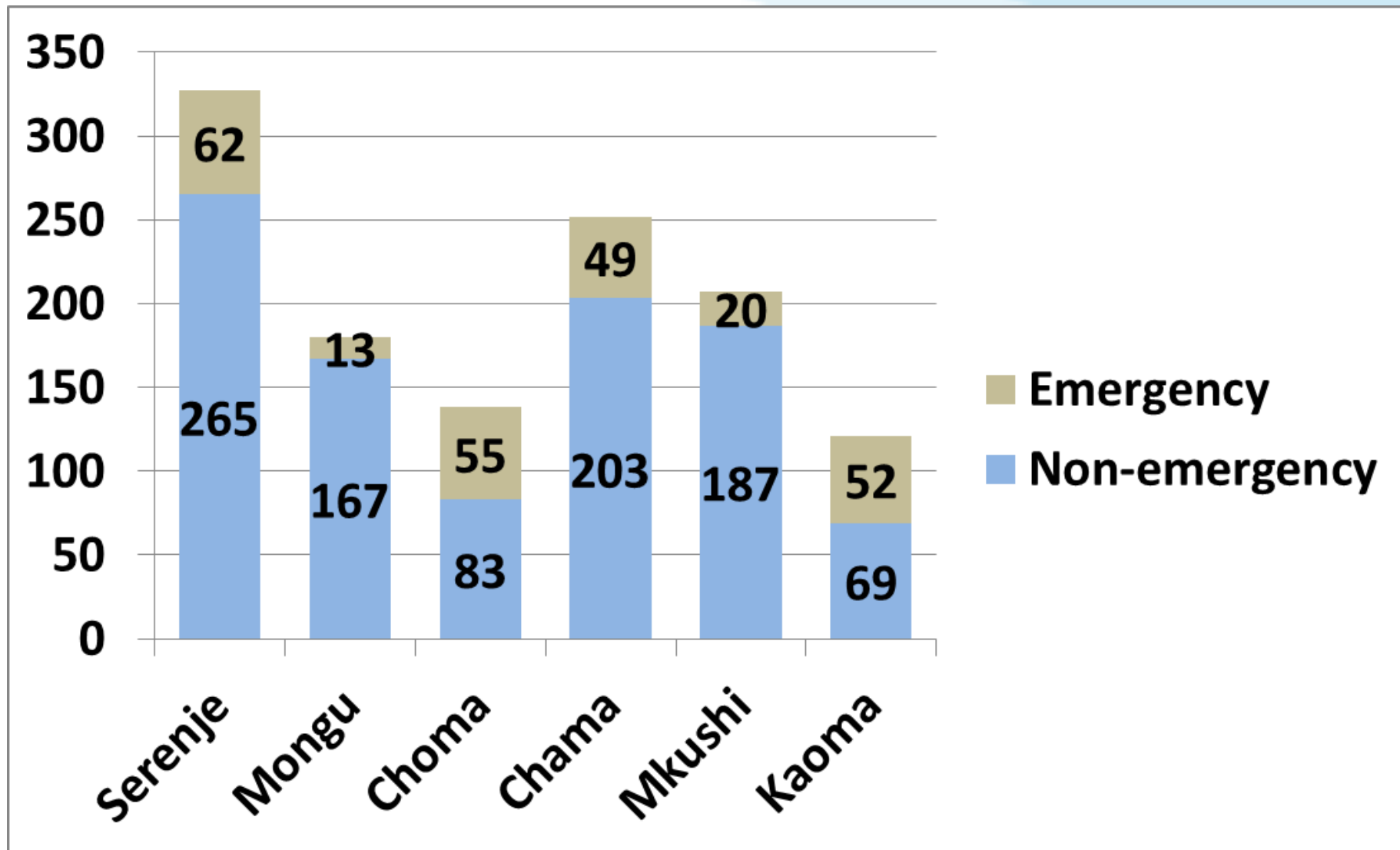
# Training

- BA – assembly, care, basic maintenance & repairs, patient care, documentation
- Ox Cart – documentation
- Boat - documentation
- MCA – controls/riding, basic maintenance & repairs, patient care, documentation

# Results



# Women transported by ETS by District: July 2011 - December 2012



# Results: December 2012



- 1,225 women transported by ETS over the period of July 2011 – December 2012
- 251 women with complications
- 974 women with normal deliveries

(According to Community Monitoring System)

# Related Positive Impacts

**Contribution to Community Cohesion:** The systems and structures established within the community for the management of ETS encouraged a sense of collectiveness

**Women were at the Centre of Decision-making and Support for Access to Maternal Health** - a number of the custodians were female SMAGs. In the event of a maternal emergency, female family members sought out the BA (custodians and riders) and accompanied them to the health facility

**Enhanced Male Involvement:** While men are involved in the whole MAMaZ programme, the introduction of the vehicles encouraged a greater involvement of more men, who may have been more reluctant to get involved initially

# Related Positive Impacts

**Positive Impact on the Riders:** Riders are accorded increased status in their community, thus enhancing their self esteem

**Community Ownership:** Communities are given the vehicles to keep and they take complete responsibility for their maintenance and safe keeping

**Capability to Act:** The ETS empowers community members with the tools to take immediate action if required

**Integration with Other Community Systems:** ETS is much more effective if operated interdependently with other community systems

# Implementation and Issues

- BA – minor repairs, shelters used, additional riders, 1 village head against (now resolved), wheel concerns
- Ox Cart – oxen procurement issues, difficulty in sourcing local oxen, cart manufacturing issues
- Ox cart – some small weak animals (too young), pregnant donkey (using village own now)
- Boat – construction & transportation issues
- Boat – in use, no current issues