



Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team

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Update September 2008 – Kekeli TBA training

Accra 11 September 2008

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Hope that you are well. Warm greetings to all earlier volunteers and friends of the Kekeli program.

We have just concluded a three month training program for TBA's, i.e. Traditional Birth Attendants organized from the Seva Clinic here in Ghana's Volta Region.. Lisa Dalporto, an experienced midwife from Kentucky, USA did a fantastic job directing the program. During the month of July she was assisted by Gillian and Tash, volunteer nurses from Vancouver, BC, Canada. Full day training sessions were held every Thursday from June to September, rotating between Seva, Somekpe and Kpedzeglo. As the project area covered all the corners of the Zongo Water Project area and beyond, our driver Losu assisted the trainees coming from the far away villages, at times squeezing up to 17 into the clinic Landrover. All in all 33 attended, including three male birth attendants.

In a number of villages, Lisa, with help from the TBA's and Seva Clinic staff, conducted collective pre-natal counselling. Many pregnant women in the area hesitate to go for check ups. All too often complications are not discovered until the last hour, and sometimes that's too late. We are hoping to create awareness in the area about the importance of check ups during pregnancy and empower the TBA's and clinic staff to better help monitor the pregnancies.



Practical demonstration at training at Somekpe



Lisa and TBA's Selassie, Mary and Elizabeth with 14 pregnant women at Avikope after full day of check-ups and classes for the pregnant women

The three months allowed Lisa to go more in depth and address new areas for the TBA's. A very good connection was made with the District Health Department, and the midwives at

Adidome Hospital had a meeting with all the TBA's and arrangements are made to follow up and further develop the relationship between the TBA's, Seva Community Clinic and the hospital staff. Most babies are still born at home in the African village, and the TBA's play a crucial role. It's very important that they learn how to recognize the danger signs during pregnancy and the early stages of deliver, so that they know when they need to refer a patient to the hospital.



Selassie from Seva Clinic with TBA Mary measure the fundal height during pre-natal counselling



Lisa leads the pregnant women in some exercises during collect pre-natal check up

In the closing ceremony on 4th September, thirty trainees received Certificates and seventeen TBA's received the delivery kits with equipment and supplies to help them do the deliveries in safe and hygienic conditions. AMURT has now equipped 25 village TBA's, and the staff in two clinics. The eight TBA's trained in 2006 also received restock of their supplies. The ceremony was attended by a five women from the Adidome Hospital and District Health Department, along with four assembly men, and some headmen.

As in all the training session the program was brightened up with games, dance and a special Kekeli TBA song composed by TBA's Lydia and Patience. We decided to attach the TBA program to the Kekeli program, that is the women working as village health promoters. All the TBA's received grey Kekeli TBA t-shirts with the logo. A total of 50 Kekeli women and Kekeli TBA's went on an excursion in early August to Ada where the Volta River enters the sea. For most of them, it was their first time to see the sea.



Health department reps address the Kekeli TBA's at Seva



All the Kekeli TBA's with the certificates and new delivery kits together with guests at the closing program

We are looking for qualified midwives to follow up the work with the TBA's and the maternal health campaign. It's our hope that this effort will help to save lives and improve the health of mothers and babies throughout the project area. We are also looking for nurses and other qualified volunteers to help us move the Kekeli program forward. We can take this program far, but we need to work hard to maintain the momentum from the work of the last two years. As those of you who have been here know well, we can really make a difference!

Hope to hear from all of you when you have time.

All the best

Dada Daneshananda