

Promoting access to Primary Healthcare through a Healthcare-finance Sustainability Scheme (HFSS)

Background

In April 2019 Value Health Africa conducted a two days cervical and breast cancer free screening and awareness raising campaign in Bamenda. A total of 117 women were screened 53% of them having no/fair knowledge of Non communicable diseases including the aforementioned ones. Furthermore about 28% of the had never being screened for NCDs particularly breast and cervical cancer, 15 women had profuse vagina discharges, 22 had inflamed cervix, 1 had hemorrhagic inflamed cervix. There was a huge call for concern after statistics showed that 70% of the women couldn't access appropriate PHC services mainly due financial constraints which has being worsen by the ongoing sociopolitical crisis in the region.

Health outcomes are constantly been influenced by access to primary health care (PHC) particularly for members of vulnerable populations. Health care Finance sustainability Scheme (HFSS) is a program that seeks to improve appropriate PHC for vulnerable women. It has as objectives to empower vulnerable women (especially those who have developed or are at risk of developing NCDs) with income generating skills as well as seed capital. This program will enable start up income generating activities follow up with their treatment preventing further health complications from NCDs.

The program carried out activities from trainings on entrepreneurship, animal production and saving schemes as well as the establishment of enterprises with materials worth 50000frs.

Program details

This program took effect on the 28th of December 2019 with a meeting meant to sensitize selected number of women on the project details as well as healthy lifestyle tips for the prevention and control of NCDs.



Stories

1. **Mami Grace** who is one of the beneficiaries of this program, was diagnosed of Diabetes in 2012. The outcome of this diagnoses changed her life and the lives of her family forever. A lot was demanded for her treatment including medications and complete change of eating habits. With the help of her children who also struggled financially, she was able to start up of firewood business which to a certain extend helped her to get her medications and do proper followup. In 2017 she had a terrible accident that dislocated her ankle and hip bone and made her bed ridden for 2 years. As explain by her doctor her healing process was slowed down by the disease. Due to her inability to walk and do things on her own her business crumbled. Her children became unable to meet up with her financial needs for treatment because their businesses were also greatly affected by the on going socio political crisis. Her health condition ever since has gotten worse as she even faces difficulties in seeing and other health challenges. She needed immediate medical attention otherwise it could even get worse. The team visited her at home and she

was able to express her worry and demanded for assistance to set up a red oil business where she can sit at home and sell to neighbors given the present state of her health and also because her neighborhood is in great demand for the product.

2. **Mah** is a 45 year old mother of four, who was displaced from her home town of Bali because of the crisis since 2017, was diagnosed of HIV thereafter and is presently suffering from epileptic attacks and have to constantly be on drugs to be okay which has greatly affected her mentally. She is supported by some family members with a roof over head and other basic necessities. She was greatly traumatized over an incident where she was left on her own for a few days because the rest of the family had some pressing issue to attend to. Her drugs got finished and she realized she had no money to do anything for herself, it dawn on her that she needs to create some kind of income generating activity to take care of her own needs and not always have to depend on people for everything and incase no one is there she will be able to followup with her medications comfortably. We took interest in her and she became a beneficiary of the project and is into pig farming for commercial purposes.
3. **Mami Regi** is a 66 year old mother who has being leaving with Hypertension and Diabetes for more than 7years. Due to the huge expenses associated with her treatment, her standard of leaving have greatly dropped and the situation has gotten even worse as she has developed a diabetic foot and is unable to walk requiring more money for her treatment. As a means of following up with her treatment she was given the opportunity to be part of this project and has begun her 'EGUSI' cracking and selling business.
4. **Mami NAH** as she is commonly called is a struggling mother of four who unfortunately were displaced from the village of Ndu due to insecurity reasons since 2018 and have being struggling to meet ends meet. Her husband is a taxi driver who so far has being the sole bread winner of the family but due to the instability in the town characterized by series of ghost towns is unable to fully meet up the needs of the family including basic necessities of the home as well as school fees for their children. She is a great farmer and very industrious woman but due to lack of capital is unable to start up any business of her own. She was on of the participants screened for breast and cervical cancer in April and fortunately was healthy but her last child has being having a lot of health complications and a lot has been spent. Her story caught the hearts of many and she also became one of

the beneficiaries of the HFSS project and have successfully begun a poultry business where she fattens and markets broiler birds for home consumption.

5. **Nene** is a 25year old new mother, who was hit so sad in a business by first the slowness of business due to the crisis and secondly a disease outbreak that hit her poultry so hard killing about 400 chicks bringing her down to zero level. Recently a lump was found on her breast which demands series of scans to fully determine if it is or not cancerous. She became a beneficiary of this project as she was given capital to add to her business to revive and possibly bring back her business to life.