

DECLARATION

I, Nyirenda Chileya Alice declare that this report:

(a) Represents my own work;

(b) Has not been submitted for a degree at this or any other university; and

(c) Has not incorporated any published work or material from another report

Signed

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This report of Nyirenda Chileya Alice is approved as fulfilling the partial requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Communication for Development by the University of Zambia.

Supervisor:

Signature:

Date:

ABSTRACT

Male involvement in ante natal care has gained considerable attention in the recent past. There has been global acknowledgement that male involvement in reproductive health offers benefits for both women and men. Involving men in reproductive healthcare could help Zambia achieve some major development goals, such as a decreased maternal mortality rate and increased ante natal coverage. Involving men could also help reduce the overall prevalence of HIV and AIDS. This will only be possible if men are involved not just as ante natal clients but also as partners, service providers, policymakers, teachers, and project managers. Until recently male involvement in ante natal care in Zambia has been relatively underdeveloped. Despite the availability of the services there is still a low turnout of men attending ante natal clinics with their partners. The promotion of male involvement in ante natal care requires coming up with well-planned communication interventions in order to meet the set objectives.

This research was carried out to evaluate communication strategies employed by the Mkushi district community medical office under the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health in promoting male involvement in ante natal care among health care providers, men and women. This report is based on field work conducted at Chibefwe and Chalata health centres of Mkushi district between October 2013 and January 2014. The research set out to find out what the people especially the men knew about male involvement in ante natal care. The results revealed that the majority thought male involvement in ante natal care was accompanying their partners for ante natal in order to get tested for HIV. The majority of men in this community think male involvement is all about Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission (PMTCT). In reality, this is not the case as male involvement in ante natal care is a package which comprises several components and PMTCT is only a component of the program and not the only essence of the program. The study found out that the major communication strategy used to disseminate information on male involvement is radio. Sensitization programs such as phone-in programs and adverts were conducted on Mkushi Community Radio. Health education sessions were conducted both at the health centre and in the community during outreach. The study recommends the involvement of politicians in sensitization, broadening of ante natal services to weekends to accommodate more men. The study also recommends that refresher courses for the staff on the male involvement be conducted.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my late father Mr Redson Penjani Simon Nyirenda whose words of inspiration on issues of academics I still cherish.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Almighty God for giving me an opportunity to pursue my master's degree program and complete it in good health. I saw the hand of God throughout the course of my studies. The success of this report would not have been possible without the contribution and support of many people. I would therefore, acknowledge and appreciate each of them. Firstly, I would like to thank my Supervisor, Dr. E.M.M. Bwalya, who read my numerous revisions and helped me put things in order. Also recognition goes to Mr. F. Muzyamba , Mr. K. Makungu for their guidance and support. I would also like to acknowledge my dearest family for their support especially my mother Mrs Agnes Mulenga Nyirenda.

I further acknowledge the University of Zambia, Department of Mass Communication, for granting me an opportunity to pursue this Master's Programme that has opened my mind in extending my frontiers of knowledge. I am also grateful to Mkushi District Community Medical Office staff for their support towards the study. I am further indebted to the Community Representative and others. Lastly, my sincere gratitude and love go to my fellow MCD course mates especially my lovely friend Mulundu Mumbalanga.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CARMMA	:	Campaign on Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality
DCMO	:	District Community Medical Office
HMIS	:	Health Management Information System
ICPD	:	International Conference on Population and Development
IEC	:	Information, Education and Communication
MCDMCH	:	Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health
MDG	:	Millennium Development Goals
MAMaZ	:	Mobilising Access to Maternal Health in Zambia
NHC	:	Neighbourhood Health Committees
PMTCT	:	Prevention of Mother to Child Health
SMAG	:	Safe Motherhood Action Group
TBA	:	Traditional Birth Attendant
UNICEF	:	United Nations Children's Fund
WHO	:	World Health Organisation