



Reproductive Health, Upper Nile State

GOAL / Community partnership for enhanced reproductive health outcomes

“Here in Upper Nile State we are responding to the worst maternal and neonatal morbidity/mortality rate in South Sudan, which itself has the highest rate in the world.”

“Most deaths due to pregnancy and post-delivery complications go unreported, these women are just dying on their own!” protests Sister Rose Odong, GOAL’s Roving Reproductive Health Supervisor, “The community capacity is so low and many dangerous beliefs and practices exist - people are dying out of ignorance. So what do we do? We annually educate Community Traditional Birth Attendants (CTBAs) on providing care during pregnancy, clean delivery, identification of risky/danger signs and referrals and send them down to deliver services and spread the messages in the villages.”

In February, 2007 Sister Rose oversaw the establishment of the Reproductive Health programme in the highly marginalised area of the Sobat Corridor, Upper Nile State. This programme offers safe motherhood services to an estimated catchment population of 102,045 highly vulnerable people including Antenatal Care (ANC), safe delivery, Postnatal Care (PNC), and family planning. A major element of this programme is the utilisation of CTBAs, volunteers trained by GOAL to bring the services deeper into the community.



Sister Rose and the graduating CTBA class of 2009

One such volunteer is Rebecca Atong of Galashel. A former refugee she returned to South Sudan and began to work independently as a TBA in her community. Rebecca became a CTBA upon the

establishment of the RH programme in 2007 receiving training and material support from GOAL with the generous assistance of DfID/BSF, the programme’s primary donor.

“Last year we took a two week training and this year we took another two week training. Galashel is a big community so we move and check the pregnant mothers and if we find complications we can help them or advise them to go to the clinics. I also advise pregnant ladies to come to the clinics for ANC and postnatal mothers to come for vaccinations. I am interested to volunteer for GOAL because I want to help the community.”

“GOAL’s work helps a lot. Before people were dying in the community, especially the pregnant mothers. When GOAL came in it trained us to help with deliveries in the community and give health messages. Now the pregnant ladies are safer so there is an improvement.”



Rebecca Atong at Baliet Clinic

With 63 CTBAs working on a voluntary basis in its programme in UNS, this partnership has been instrumental to the intervention’s success. “The volunteers are very important” continues Sister Rose, “We don’t see all the cases in the clinics, most deliver in the community, so with the CTBAs they can have clean deliveries. They also have a lot of influence in the community so they can send pregnant mothers to ANC and PNC and refer cases with complications to the clinics”

“I am very happy with GOAL and with the work I am doing.” concludes Rebecca, “Before I was doing this work but I didn’t know what I was doing but now I am a trained TBA helping my community!”