



Women Health Channel Uganda



*Annual report 2019*

*Expanding horizons for women to shape and seek health care*



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End of year of implementation is a time to showcase success and to reflect on opportunities that lie ahead, a time to strengthen our resolve and to set goals for the future. At Women Health Channel Uganda, saving lives & empowering women & adolescents shape their destinies is a commitment & passion that we hold dear. We do it by empowering them make informed decisions about seeking health care, space pregnancies, start sustainable income streams, adopt safe hygiene practices, overcome extreme suffering & violence. We are aware that saving lives is an enormous and unprecedented undertaking, the stakes are high, the cost of failure is great but the rewards of success are greater still.

As the board chair, I am proud that through the turbulences and transitions of 2019, our staffs & partners stood tall, showed their mettle and continued to deliver impressive life-saving results for women, children and adolescents even in our remotest catchment. Our interventions in 2019 enabled 2500 pregnant women access lifesaving health care and created livelihood options for more than 1500 households. As the supreme governing body, the board will continue to mobilize multi-directional support to put forth an enabling environment for women, children and adolescents to survive and thrive. I hope this report will activate your interest and commitment to invest resources & take actions that address the most pressing challenges affecting women, children & adolescents

***Atim Irene,  
Board Chair***



Our 2019 annual report highlights ways how our work hand-in-hand with our partners is improving health & building resilience of Women, Children & Adolescents to shape their own destinies. The evidence to this fact lies not only in the captured stories of change but also in the statistics which points to how the lives of women, children, adolescents and households reached by our interventions are improving. Our experience in 2019 reinforced one simple truth: when women & girls have the chance to improve their health & lives, they will seize the opportunity and contribute to a better future for everyone.

At Women Health Channel Uganda, the drive that keeps us pushing is the passion & commitment to ensure that: women are protected from preventable pregnancy & child birth related deaths and enjoy good health with amplified opportunities to thrive; children enjoy good health and are protected from disease; and that adolescents enjoy good health, are educated for life and enabled to fulfil their potential no matter the location and the circumstances that surrounds them.

Our activities in 2019, enabled 2500 pregnant women access lifesaving health care, enabled 4700 babies receive lifesaving vaccination, reached 2700 with comprehensive SRHR services, enabled 700 women start sustainable income streams (IGA) & equipped 270 young girls with self-employability hands-on skills in crafts, bakery and hairdressing. As 2020 awaits, we have got big ambitions and great plans, we aim to approach our next year with the same thirst and humility, the same zeal and passion, the same commitment to values and results, the same joy and passion to save & improve lives of women, children & adolescents. Please explore this piece of our work with the desire to compliment what we do and ask yourself what we can do together to amplify this cause.

I wish to thank all our partners who have continued to make our work possible through technical and financial support

Gabala Franco

Chief Executive Officer

## Acknowledgements

Our impact in 2019 was mainly possible due to our solid relationship and financial support from ZMQ Development India. Together, we provided hope where there was none and created new opportunities for women, children & adolescents to survive & thrive. Special thank you goes to the women, children & adolescents whose cause we live for every day “we are in this together”. A huge thank you to the midwives & VHTs who helped strengthen our work and made our success possible, you are truly are our success.

Our gratitude goes to the Ministry of Health Uganda, District Health Team Jinja & health facilities whose resources and technical guidance aided the successful implementation of our interventions

We express thanks to the entire Women Health Channel Uganda team for their tireless efforts and steadfast commitment towards transforming lives of Women, children & Adolescents.

## **Who we are**

Women Health Channel Uganda is a registered local NGO in Uganda. We are driven by the passion to save lives, improve health and create bright futures for women, children & adolescents.

## **Vision**

A future where every woman, child & adolescent is empowered & connected to seek health care they need to survive and thrive.

## **Mission**

To create resilient community platforms that mobilize, empower and connect women, children and adolescents to the health care they need to survive and thrive. We are committed to lead demand creation & health system strengthening efforts for Maternal and Child Health, Adolescent SRHR, Family Planning, HIV/AIDS/TB alongside Livelihood Creation, GBV Prevention, ECD & WASH.

## **Slogan**

Expanding horizons for communities to shape & seek health care

## **Coverage**

Apparently, our interventions cover Eastern Uganda. Our resolve for 2020 & beyond is to expand our interventions to cover the rest of Uganda

# Our impact in 2019



*Supported 2500 pregnant women to access lifesaving care*



*All women who gave birth under our project delivered in a health facility*



*93% of pregnant women in the cohort made 4 or more ANC visits*



*770 women supported to access family planning services*



*4700 children reached with lifesaving immunization services*



*1500 women mobilized into “prosper together” saving groups*



*700 women supported to start income generating livelihoods*



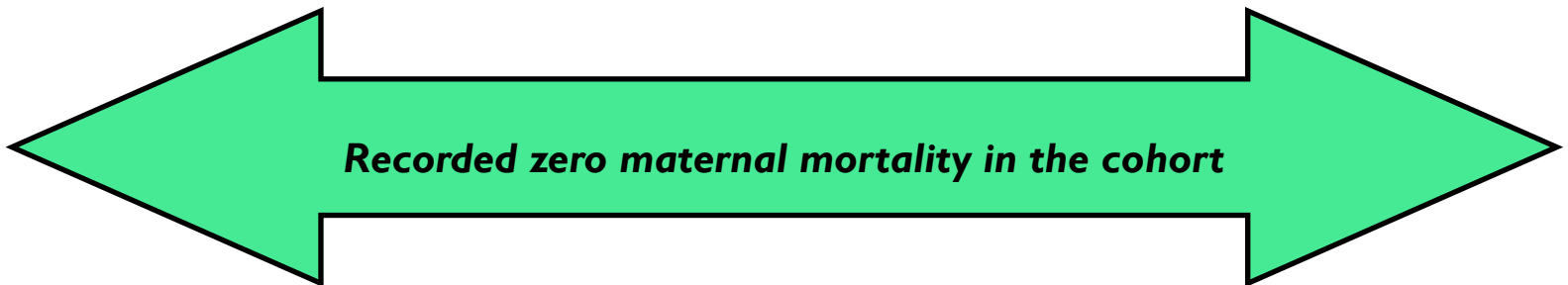
*250 women linked to livelihood opportunities within their communities*



*270 young girls equipped with hands-on skills in crafts, bakery and hairdressing*



*2700 young girls reached with SRH information & services*



**Recorded zero maternal mortality in the cohort**

# Survival (MCH)



Our survival component aims to foster health & survival of women & children through ensuring that: (a) mothers and children are protected from infection and disease (b) mothers and children access essential health services. Our intervention work to promote proper health care seeking practices alongside health system strengthening to deliver for the most disadvantaged women, children & adolescents.

With funding from ZMQ development India, WHCUG in 2019 rolled out the ending preventable Maternal and New born deaths, improve health of adolescents through Integrated Mobile Channels for providing healthcare information and services project code name “MIRA channel” a mobile-phone based last-mile integrated solution that provides health information & communication to rural women and timely connects them to the health system for service delivery. The solution has in-built progress tracking tools including Pregnancy week-by-week tracker, ANC calculator, Immunization calculator, Postnatal & Newborn progress tracker and High-Risk Pregnancy Analyzer that provide critical data for managing MCH outcomes.

Evidence under the project affirms that when women have access to accurate health information during or after pregnancy, they seek care, deliver in health facilities and mortalities goes down. The project is continuously supporting VHTs to conduct weekly home visits involving phone enabled voicing of messages and submission of high-risk pregnancy reports and this is greatly paying off. No maternal mortality was recorded in 2019 in the cohort, facility deliveries stood at 100% & 4 or more ANC visits increased to 93%

*“Being my first time, realizing I was pregnant pushed me into deep worries! Surely, I had no idea of what I needed to do to keep my pregnancy safe but when Hasifa, our area VHT registered me into Women Health Channel Uganda “ending preventable deaths project”, my troubles were taken away. She began to visit me weekly and shared with me information about pregnancy, antenatal care and safe delivery and because of that information, I was able to deliver safely in a health Centre and I now take my baby for vaccination, Women Health Channel is surely my health and that of my baby. **Hope, a first-time mother of Kainogoga Village**”*

## Our results

- Fewer neonatal mortalities were recorded 5/1000 visa vi 27/1000 live birth national average
- Zero maternal mortality
- 770 women supported to access modern family planning methods
- 67% women had acquired birth preparedness item prior to labor

- 2500 pregnant supported to access care
- 4<sup>th</sup> ANC visits in the cohort stood at 93% far & above 60% national average
- 100% health facility deliveries
- PNC uptake in the cohort within the first two days after birth stood at 67% above 53% national average
- 4700 children reached with lifesaving immunization services.
- 67% women had acquired birth preparedness item prior to labor



# Livelihood



Health outcomes are worse for women, children and adolescents who live in underserved communities especially among the poorest and least educated and in the remotest catchments. On the other hand, women and households empowered to meet basic needs look to the future with hope. When women cannot earn enough to make ends meet every day, they are unable to meet costs involved in seeking care including ANC visits, prepare for birth and give birth in health facilities, unable to feed their families, unable to foot the cost of care and raising their children. The goal of our livelihood support interventions therefore is to empower resource constrained women & households to find sustainable income streams to be able to finance their regular health, nutrition and other needs.

This year, Women Health Channel Uganda mobilized 1350 mothers into “prosper together saving groups” of between 15-25 members (90% women, 10% men). These meet on a compulsory weekly basis to save and borrow from group savings to start up IGAs, expand businesses, meet household needs or finance health emergencies. Alongside saving and borrowing, initiated regular business coaching for members of the groups purposely to simulate smart business practices.

*“ I feel like I own the world, gaining financial literacy and creating my own business using savings and soft loans from my prosper together saving group, gave me an edge to controlling my own life.” – Doreen age 17*

## ⇒ Our results

- ⇒ 1350 women mobilized into prosper together saving groups
- ⇒ 150 men mobilized into prosper together saving groups
- ⇒ 1500 members received financial literacy & business coaching
- ⇒ 250 women linked to livelihood opportunities within their communities
- ⇒ 700 women supported to set up profitable & sustainable income streams (IGAs)
- ⇒ 600 pregnant women used their saving to acquire birth prepared items

# Adolescent Health

Although adolescence appears to be a relatively healthy period of life, this population (24% of the national population) has a relatively high burden of disease (more than 33% of the disease burden). Almost 28% of maternal deaths in Uganda are attributed to young girls aged 15–24 years and 60% of premature deaths among adults are associated with behaviors or conditions that began or occurred during adolescence.

Overall, teenage birth rate in Uganda is alarming, 24% of girls give birth to their first child before turning 19 years. Every young person will one day have life-changing decisions to make about their sexual and reproductive health. Yet research shows that majority of adolescents struggle to access health services and information that would protect them or lack the knowledge required to make those decisions responsibly, leaving them vulnerable to coercion, sexually transmitted infections including HIV, school dropout, drugs & substance use, unintended pregnancy, un safe abortion and death.

Against that background, under our on-going “MIRA Channel” project VHTs & midwives are using enabled mobile phone devices to pass on lifesaving health information and communication to adolescent girls including but not limited to menstrual health, routine vaccinations such as human papillomavirus, hepatitis B, diphtheria-tetanus, rubella, measles. Healthy behavior promotion such as nutrition, physical activity, no tobacco, alcohol, drugs or substance use & HIV/AIDS communication.

Providing information, counselling and training to parents appropriate for managing behavioral disorders among adolescents. This all is working in combination to bring about expanded access to essential health services resulting into better health care seeking practices, adoption of safe health practices, delayed sexual debut, reduced HIV infections & teenage pregnancy outcomes for adolescents

## Outputs/outcomes

- 2700 adolescent reached with accurate menstrual health information
- 1500 parents and caregivers reached with skills training for appropriate managing behavioral disorders in adolescents.
- 270 young girls equipped with self-employability hands-on skills in crafts, bakery and hairdressing



*“As a first-timer, I had many worries and was very nervous about menstruation but with this improving adolescent health project that Women Health Channel brought to my village that is training & equipping VHTs to handle our issues, things have been sorted! I now run to my area VHT for information & messages on menstrual health & hygiene and because of that, I am now in charge. - Hasifa, 14 years of Kainogoga village”*

# Early Childhood Development & Learning



Low education outcomes prevent children from gaining invaluable knowledge and skills to prepare them for healthy transition and successful futures. The goal of our ECD interventions is to increase access for the most disadvantaged children in the remotest catchment to Early Childhood Education & learning opportunities that is safe, stimulating and supportive of child development alongside increasing support within families and communities for children's learning while addressing the development and learning needs of children ages 0-8 years.



Our livelihood interventions complement in assisting families to have enough income flows to be able to pay for school expenses, ensure children are well-nourished & cared for. WHCUG runs a community strengthening model that position households, communities and schools as cornerstones for ensuring access and quality of ECD services. In 2019, we enabled 1200 children 0-8 years access ECD services, mobilized and supported communities to establish or refurbish ECD centers, supported ECD centers to access play and learning materials, trained ECD teachers/caregivers to offer quality pedagogical services, trained ECD management committees to efficiently run and spearhead Centre development initiatives, facilitated processes that worked to stimulate parents awareness, involvement and financial commitment towards ECD programs but also advocated for legislation of better ECD policies.

## Our core outcome areas

- *Improve quality of learning*
- *Improve quality of indoor & outdoor learning environment*
- *Children 0-6 prepared for successful transition to primary school.*
- *Address development and learning needs of children 0-8 years*

## Results

- *1200 children received ECD services in our centers*
- *10 ECD centers supported to access play and learning materials*
- *24 ECD teachers received training on improved delivery of pedagogical services but also received coaching on the revised ECD guidelines of ministry of education*
- *65 ECD management committees trained to efficiently run and spearhead center development activities*

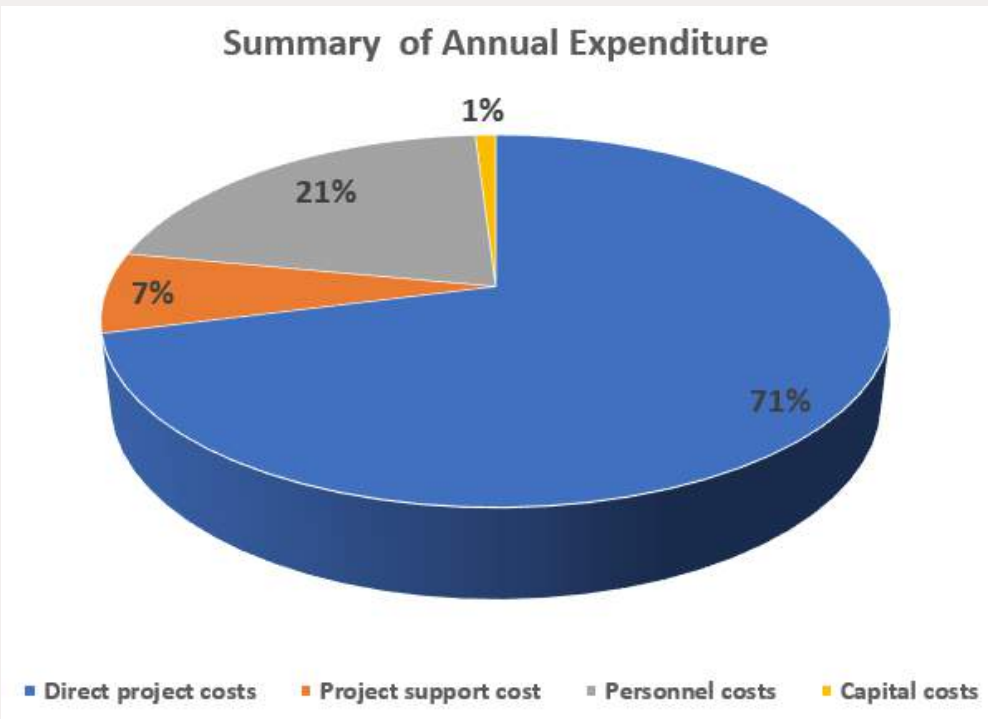
# Partnerships

*We believe that organizations become stronger with effective collaboration. We have continued to work with state and non-state actors local and international*

- ZMQ Development India
- Health systems global
- African Leadership Institute
- Ministry of health Uganda
- Jinja district local government
- Jinja district Health department

# Financials

Women Health Channel Uganda continues to be successful in the implementation of its life changing programs thanks to the generous support from ZMQ Development India



## Our Board

- Atim Irene: Board Chairperson
- Dr. Muhangi Dennis: Technical Board Advisor (Phd)
- Gabala Franco: Board Secretary:
- Alugulu Elizabeth: Finance
- Ndibaisa Juliet: Board Member

## Our senior executive team

Gabala Franco: Chief Executive Officer  
Ndibaisa Juliet: Programs Director  
Namumbya Sylvia: Finance  
Acheng Kate: Human Resource



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