What you may not have known:

Accountability\(^1\), Transparency\(^2\) and answerability\(^3\) are increasingly becoming significant aspects in improving health system performance and accelerate health progress. Health Promotion Tanzania has been using Community Score Card (CSC is a tool used to improve the quality, efficiency and accountability of services at community level). It increases accountability in health and as a result, citizen reports improved quality of RMNCH health services in Ngara and Biharamulo District. This approach has been used in the implementation of USAID BORESHA AFYA for RMNCAH in Bukiriro, Mabawe, Kibimba, and Keza wards in Ngara district. In Biharamulo District Nyakahura, Kalenge, Lusahunga, Nyamahanga, Nisibo, Katahoka, Runazi, Nyabusozi, Nembia, Kabindi and Nyanza wards. The text box summarizes the values of Community Score card.

Despite anti-corruption Framework available, Warioba report (URT 1996) reported corruption across all sectors in Tanzania including health. Quality Improvement Framework in Health Care (2011-16) (URT, 2011) reports corruption in health care system. Finally, the most recent draft revised National Health Policy (MoHCDGEC, 2017). Of concern to health-system stakeholders, including policymakers, is the practice of petty corruption and health-provider absenteeism, but also low productivity among public health providers. The underlying reasons incentivizing such informal practices are complex and overlapping - evidence to date underscores that they are a consequence of unmet expectations and needs of both providers and health users\(^4\). Negative consequences for patients can result in catastrophic out-of-pocket expenditures and further impoverishment of marginalized groups, inequality and discriminatory access to services and high-quality care, loss of public confidence in public health care, and inequality in health outcomes.

Health Promotion Tanzania’s Community Score Card efforts aims to support the current Government’s efforts in fighting corruption, containing inefficiencies and misuse of public funds, ensure the wellbeing of every Tanzanian. The government Attention is focused on strengthening delivery of quality primary health services to optimize use of scarce resources, as well as to ensure equitable access to essential care. Attention is also focused on exploring feasible incentive schemes to motivate trained personnel to work in rural areas.

Implementation of Community Score card:

Community Score Card (CSC) documents citizen perceptions and feedback regarding service availability, service access and service quality. Health service providers, community members and government are part of meeting. Five groups are selected each comprising of youth, elders, village leaders and health committees (health service providers & selected members of health facility governing board). This runs into five phases summarized above.

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\(^1\) relationship between a bearer of rights or a legitimate claim and the agencies responsible for fulfilling or respecting that right

\(^2\) requires that decisions and actions are taken openly, and sufficient information is available for citizens or agencies to monitor government actions

\(^3\) denotes obligations on the part of decision makers to justify their decision to citizenry

\(^4\) Strengthening accountability for better health outcomes through understanding health system bottlenecks: insights from Tanzania

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Key Results of Community Score card:

As a result of improved quality of antenatal services due to score card, health facilities in areas of operation have recorded increased deliveries of up to 79% by September 2019. As part of citizen responsibility, Kasulo village in Ngara district went from zero household on Community Health insurance to 40 by August 2019. This initiative will reduce out of pocket expenditure contributing to Tanzania ambition to reach all Tanzania with health insurance.

To unlock the second delay in maternal health to reach health facilities for delivering mothers\(^5\), communities established emergency transport funds in both Ngara and Biharamulo district. In Biharamulo district 3 village of Migambo, Kitwechembo and Bisibo.

In both Ngara and Biharamulo districts, men participation in maternal child health has increased. For a long period, men participation has been low, and was partly due to health system that prioritized women only. Number of Men who escort their wives to clinic in Ngara increased in 2019 compared to 2018 as the graph below shows. (data obtained from community health facilities of Mukatabo, Muhuhamba and Katerere of Ngara DC

Community Score card empowered men to understand their role in maternal issues and this was witnessed by Mr. Sweetbert Gozibert from Rukora village in Biharamulo who said “I am now fully involved and ensure that my wife attends clinics and have all the necessary requirements before delivery period”.

In areas of operation, there has been more government answerability and responsiveness towards improved maternal child health issues. Maternal health issues have been embedded in village leadership and is no longer left for health providers. As a result, village leaders are now involved in ensuring issues of Reproductive health are improved and well addressed. Sharing his experience Mr. Peter Ngh’onera (WEO) from Kabindi in Biharamulo said, “As a village leaders I knew issues of Reproductive health are for health workers only but I know understand I am too responsible in preventing Maternal and Child deaths through the help of Community score card meeting.”

In conclusion:

Health Promotion Tanzania monitoring and evaluation data has clearly shown remarkable increase in leadership and community responsiveness in accessing health services. Health providers has become more responsible in upholding the rights of patients. These parameters have led to improved quality of health services. We call upon partners to support scalability of this intervention to cover all district and beyond.

Health Promotion Tanzania, popularly known as HDT, is a leader in promoting maternal and infant health in Tanzania. With over seven years of experience in promoting health and wellbeing, we focus on health systems strengthening and advocacy for policy change. HDT has become a household name in the country, reputable in mobilizing other partners to attain outcomes in health through SMART advocacy - an evidence-based decisionmaker-centered approach that stresses on right timing for advocacy intervention.

For more information kindly visit our website at [http://healthpromotiontanzania.org](http://healthpromotiontanzania.org).

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\(^5\) Three maternal health delays are (1) DELAY in deciding to seek appropriate medical help for an obstetric emergency; (2) DELAY in reaching an appropriate obstetric facility; and (3) DELAY in receiving adequate care when a facility is reached.