

## BIKE FOR CARE IGANGA- STATUS REPORT

NOVEMBER, 2015



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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In 2013 July, FABIO-The First African Bicycle Information Organization in partnership with COOP Africa embarked on a Bike 4care Project in Iganga district in the two sub-counties of Nawandala and Nambale having realized the fact that health is one of the key issues affecting the wellbeing of the people in Iganga district .This is evidenced with the fact that there are a few government health centers in the district and these are found in long kilometers for a poor man who can not afford transport but has only one option of moving no matter how many kilometers they are to reach the health center. FABIO found out through its research coupled with overtime field experiences that many people in the rural areas of Iganga have lost their lives not necessarily because there are no drugs but because they are stumbled by the long distances they have to move to reach the health centres.

It's upon that back ground that FABIO implemented the BIKE 4 CARE Project whose major focus was improving the accessibility of VHTs to households and health centers by provision of a bicycle on work to own basis. The project involved a number of trainings and workshops for the VHTs, launching and giving out of bicycles to VHTs to improve on their effectiveness and efficiency while carrying out their roles and responsibilities in the communities. During the implementation of this project, bicycles were given out in two sub counties of Nambale and Nawandala both in Iganga district where 74VHTs and 76VHTs were given bicycles in those respective sub counties.

It is imperative to note that the initial plan of the Bike 4 Care project was aimed at giving out 236 Bicycles to VHTs in the two identified sub counties (160 to Nambale & 76 to Nawandala). However, due to inadequate funding of the project, a total of 150 Bicycles were given to the VHTs in the two sub counties which created a difference of 86 VHTs pending with out Bicycles even though they qualified. This called for the need for more Bicycles in order to cover up the gap of the VHTs that missed during the first phase of implementation.

### 2.0 CURRENT STATUS

Having realized the need and urge to mobilize for the VHTS that missed the bicycles in the first phase, FABIO embarked on a journey for mobilizing resources to effectively implement the second phase of the Bike 4 care Project **“giving out bicycles to the VHTs that missed in the first phase”** and in the process FABIO was offered a donation of 6450 dollars (18309000 UG Shs )from the Nederlands Albert Schweitzer Fonds to purchase 43 bicycles and 4 bicycle ambulances from Iganga partnership through the worltorf community in Germany which gave us a good start for the second phase of implementation.

It should be noted that FABIO managed to secure only 38 bicycles from the money donated to us the fact that there was an increment in the dollar rate which affected the initial plan. Two bicycles were given to FABIO as a sign of appreciation by the World Bicycles Relief for supporting them and this sums to 40 Bicycles' received in total.

***NB: Despite the fact that FABIO was offered a donation from the above foundations, it's imperative to note that still all the VHTs that missed getting the bicycles in the first phase were not fully catered for and this brings a difference of 46 VHTs pending (did not get bicycles).***

Like in the implementation of any other project, the scaling up exercise/second phase of implementation involved quite a number of activities but not very different from the previous activities involved in the first phase of implementation and these included:

- ❖ Importation of Bicycles from Kenya to Kisumu
- ❖ Bicycle Assembling and training of bicycle mechanics
- ❖ Hand over
  
- ❖ **Importation of Bicycles from Kenya to Uganda**  
This involved one of FABIO's staff travelling from Uganda to Kenya to clear the taxes both at the boarder and arranging for the transportation of the Bicycles to the final destination (Uganda in Iganga district).
- ❖ **Bicycle Assembling and training of bicycle mechanics**  
On arrival of the Bicycles in Uganda, the mechanics were trained by one of the officials from the World Bicycle Relief and they were later assembled the fact that they were imported when parked in boxes to ease the transportation exercise. This was done by five technical people in the field of mechanics who were trained by an official from the World Bicycle Relief to avoid any inconveniences. The exercise was done in three days under the supervision of FABIO and it was successful.
- ❖ **Hand over**  
This took place on 3rd/11/2015 at Namungalwe Sub county Headquarters and was officiated by the District Director of Health Services in Iganga district. This meeting was attended by VHT's, Health Assistants, Sub county chiefs, Community members and Community members. The handover exercise was concluded by officially handing over the Bicycles to the targeted project beneficiaries.

### **3.0 THE HAND OVER ACTIVITY**

This event was presided over by the DDHS of Iganga district and many other important stake holders in the health sector. During this exercise, the bicycles were officially handed over to the VHT's that missed during the first phase of implementation to ease their accessibility.

### **3.1 SPEECHES**

#### **a) FIELD OFFICER FABIO-MR GALIWANGO SULA**

In his remarks he welcomed the participants and thanked them for attending in big number and for welcoming the project in their area. He argued them to work together and always submit the weakly reports to the health centers on the number of homes visited and cases reported so as to help FABIO in the monitoring and evaluation which will help to disclose the impact of the project in these sub counties during this phase of implementation.

He also emphasized the issue of transparency in this project and he shared with the participants one of the challenges encountered during the first phase of implementation where there was impersonation among the natives of the precious villages in which the project was first implemented. He added that the true VHTS ended up not getting bicycles the fact that there were other people that disguised to be VHTs yet the project was purely meant to benefit the community through VHTs. He therefore made it clear to all the participants that through that experience, only VHTs with proof that they fall into that category shall be given the bicycles.

He also talked about the 4 bicycle ambulances that were to be given out and however emphasized that for purposes of convenience, the ambulances be kept at the health centers and be fully controlled by the health center management including repairing and maintaining them in case of any break downs. On addition to that, VHTs are freely entitled to using the ambulance in case need arises at any time of the day but they are argued to return them after using them.

FABIO's field officer also advised the VHTs to always take their bicycles for servicing before mechanical break downs occur and to always ensure safety of their bicycles since they have their rocks and therefore concluded by emphasizing the VHTs to use the bicycle for some other productive things that can transform their lives

#### **b) REMARKS FROM FABIO'S ED- MR KAYEMBA PATRICK**

In his opening remarks Mr. Kayemba Patrick begun by appreciating all the participants especially the key stake holders in the health sector for thinking it wise to honor FABIO's invitation. He further panacurated that the major objective of giving out bicycles to the VHTs was to ease accessibility of medical services to the local people hence promoting sustainability.

He also argued the relevant authorities to always take programs of this kind very vital since they are always intended to empower their electorates without any political affiliations or interests. Patrick also encouraged the VHT's to utilize the bicycles effectively in order to uplift their standards and also uplift their community..

The Executive Director FABIO also urged the health workers to have records for the VHT's that have ever been given bicycles to avoid benefiting the same people. This will motivate and ease accessibility form for many VHTs in different sub counties.

He also talked about the E-bike as one that is environmentally friendly, multi purpose and favorable since it can be charged with both solar and can be put under sunshine during day time, and that it was the first of its kind to be tested in Uganda. He therefore encouraged the participants that once it's tested, many can be brought on board for purposes of convenience.

Mr. Kayemba also encouraged the VHT's to formulate saving circles which will enable them lobby easily, save little money and lead them selves at a very low interest hence improving their income per capita. He therefore concluded by emphasizing the aspect of hard work and creativity for improved livelihood of the VHTs.

### **c) REMARKS FROM THE GUEST OF HONOR**

The guest of honor who was supposed to be District Director Health Services was represented by Mrs. Kagoya Florence the Namungalwe health center in charge thanked FABIO management for choosing these 6 six sub counties during this phase of implementation. She expressed her appreciation especially on the issue of the bicycles ambulances where she opened up to the FABIO team that the health has been facing a big challenge of lack of ambulances especially in times of emergencies and she said that the ambulances will at least cover the that existing gap.

She also argued FABIO not to only focus on VHTs alone but to also give support to the health officials in executing their duties since they are faced with quite a number of challenges that hinders their output like inadequate facilities, lack of housing facilities around the health centers and many others. She therefore concluded by encouraging the fellow medical officials to work a hand in hand with the VHTs to ensure effective service delivery to the people.

## **5.0 CHALLENGES**

1. We encountered a challenge of delays to be cleared by the Uganda Revenue Authority which took us some time hence causing delays in getting the bicycles.
2. High Taxes were imposed on the bicycles which was not budgeted for in our initial plans
3. There was also a challenge of frequent change in the dollar rates which caused inconveniences in purchasing the bicycles the fact that we had strict budget.
4. There was a challenge of the political atmosphere in Uganda the fact we are in a political season therefore our programs collided with the political rallies which at some extent affects our out put since our work is not political.
5. We also experienced a challenge of bad whether where by the roads become impassable during the rainy season and so led to poor time management

## 6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. There should always be a miscellaneous budget to cater for the emergencies that arise like high taxes and increase in the dollar.
2. We need to look for bicycles models that are cheaper and can easily be accessed in Uganda to cut down the tax expenses
3. There is need to reach out as many VHTs to achieve the impact of the project
4. There should be an allocated budget for continuous trainings for easy monitoring

## 7.0 PHOTOGALLERY

