

RESULTS SUMMARY

Improving access to health care through community-led advocacy

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PROJECT	<i>Title:</i>	Resilience Enhancement and Advocacy Program (REAP)
	<i>Partner:</i>	ADRA Uganda
	<i>Country:</i>	Uganda
	<i>Period:</i>	January 2022 - ongoing

CHANGE	<p>As a result of persistent advocacy done by organised community members in the North Division of Kotido Municipality, Uganda, the fee charged for maternity services at Losilang health centre II was reduced from Uganda shillings 20.000 to 10.000 by end of the first quarter of 2023, benefitting a population of 2.296 people. In addition, a night nurse was deployed to ensure adequate treatment in case of health emergencies occurring at night.</p>
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CONTEXT	<p>Losilang health centre is the nearest health unit for people of North Division that offers maternity services. The next immediate health facility which offers free services, is the district general hospital 7 km away. The charge of 20.000 shillings for a community with poverty levels standing at 76% and who can only afford one meal a day was unaffordable. Furthermore, mothers who would enter into labour late in the night had to risk travelling 7 km to access maternity services amidst the insecurity challenges.</p>
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CONTRIBUTION	<p>Members of Nayese Etopolooto akwap CBO that is supported by the REAP programme organized a community meeting with their division chairperson together with the Losilang health centre management committee to advocate for reduction of the fee. This was followed up by two meetings at the division headquarters and finally the results were achieved. Nayese CBO has been trained in human rights and advocacy as part of the REAP programme and the programme supported the implementation of community meetings.</p>
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IMAGES	 <p>Photo: ADRA Uganda</p>	 <p>Photo: ADRA Uganda</p>
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

ACTIVITIES

ADRA Uganda has worked in the Karamoja Region for several years, organising and strengthening civil society capacity. Following years of sensitization processes, CBOs and CBGs who have been trained in advocacy issue identification, analysis and prioritization are gaining confidence and experience. They are now able to develop their advocacy workplans and implement them, conducting community dialogue meetings and sensitization on identified advocacy issues; holding radio talk shows (15 in 2023) at the local community radio stations as engagement platform between the right holders and duty bearers on identified issues of concern like the exaggerated fee charge in the health clinic; holding strategic lobbying meetings between the CBOs and key duty bearers on issues that need to be addressed by the duty bearers; and organising public social accountability meetings where prioritized community issues of concern are discussed and leaders held to account for service delivery.

LESSONS

Advocacy is a long term approach which requires persistence of the communities because results of their efforts may not appear in the short term. Public authorities who ought to play the role of duty bearer, are often lacking sufficient resources to address the needs presented by communities. Even so, communities take ownership when they are leading advocacy actions, and this increases their commitment and persistence, leading them to think of alternative solutions like approaching other development partners for support. Hence, they have gained confidence to approach duty bearers and other actors which will endure even after the project ends. Furthermore, the groups are encouraged to renew their registration status whenever expired to stay eligible for benefitting from government programs like North Uganda Social Action Fund that has a component of infrastructural development.

EVIDENCE

The need for reducing or even abolishing the fee charged in Losilang health centre II was identified by the community and the plan for achieving it was developed by Nayese CBO. These steps could only be achieved because the community was aware about the right to access to health care and the duty of delivering this of the public authorities, and because they had the proper tools to work for it. As described above, ADRA Uganda has worked for years with awareness raising and training in advocacy, hence there is a clear connection between ADRA Uganda's contribution, e.g., through the REAP programme and the improvement of this public service. The process, activities and results are documented in reports.

DOMAINS

<i>Development strategy priorities:</i>	<i>Insert strategy priority</i>
<i>Changes in the lives of people facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability</i>	x
<i>Changes in laws, policies and practices that affect people's rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in the capacity of organisations and communities to support rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in partnerships and collaborations that support people's rights</i>	-
<i>Changes in participation of groups facing poverty, marginalisation or vulnerability</i>	x
<i>Changes in local leadership of development and humanitarian work</i>	x