



# Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board Local Capacity Initiative

## LCI outreach program; taking health care services to the doorstep of those who badly need it

By *Delphine Fri*

### Introduction

With the initiation of the Local Capacity Initiative (LCI) Project as a sub component of the HIV Free (HIVF) Project in 2014, ten districts, both in the North West and South West Regions of Cameroon which experienced low uptake in Ante Natal Clinic and Prevention of Mother To Child Transmission ANC/PMTCT were selected for it pilot phase.



*Cross Section of Pregnant Women Ready for ANC at Akwaja Health Fare*

After a research conducted on the field to track down the reasons for the low ANC/PMTCT uptake, several reasons were advanced among them were; lack of basic equipment, inadequate infrastructure, enclave terrains, and the poor organization or non-existence of dialogue structures. As

the project sought for sustainable ways to increase services uptake, different strategies were put in place to arrive at the set goals with one of them being the outreach strategy.

### Outreach Strategy

The LCI Outreach Strategy is a concept that consists of integrating ANC and other basic health care services to the already existing monthly mobile caravan routines. In the past the exercise offered a limited package which consisted of vaccinations and IWCs services. The Local Capacity Initiative which takes healthcare services to the door steps of its clients in hard to reach areas, added other services to the package which are; General consultation, ANC, VCT and ART adherence.

This initiative brought stake holders, community mobilizers, and community leaders on the same platform, as they jointly sensitized community members through town criers, door to door sensitization, churches, mosque to inform all community members of an upcoming outreach activity in a particular area.

These activities are generally planned on days like ‘‘countri Sundays’’ since community members do not go to the farm on such days. Hence increase the number of people who turn out for the outreach.



# Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board

## Local Capacity Initiative

### Benefits of the Outreach Strategy

This strategy has enabled thousands of clients to acquire medical attention at a highly subsidized cost. This innovation is given new hope to many as Mami Bih attest

*“When I look at my granddaughter now, I know I have my walking stick during my last days on earth. Thanks to the doctor’s timely visit the rejected stone of my house has become the pillar stone I now lean on. Bih consoles me on daily basis and already fetches water for me. I can never be thankful enough.”*



Mami Bih explained her ordeals with her granddaughter of 5 years who was seriously ill to the point that her biological mother abandoned her. While they had given up and waited for the child to die, the visit of an outreach team changed their story.

During one outreach campaign to Mundum, the Chief of Centre of that community heard of this case and decided to track her in the community. Little Bih was identified, tested and placed on ART. Barely 16 months after this laudable effort, Bih now walks and does

things like other children thanks to the timely intervention on the Mundum 1 outreach team.



Like Mami Bih, beneficiaries of the outreach strategy of the LCI project are dotted in all the 10 Health Districts of project implementation. This has led to;

- Increase number of women attending ANC
- Increase in men accompanying their partners during ANC
- Decrease in home delivery
- Decrease in transportation cost and charging fee hence more access to healthcare



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## Local Capacity Initiative

- Reduction of MTCT and other complications related to pregnancy and increase in ART adherence.

### Conclusion

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With the introduction of this new strategy by the LCI team, it is hoped that, facilities and communities will own this initiative, as it will help them reach more people who really need such care.