



THE SAFE BIRTHING PROGRAM

MISSION: TO REDUCE MATERNAL MORTALITY IN THE AMOLATAR DISTRICT OF UGANDA

International Women's Initiative's Safe Birthing Program's (SBP) main objective is to reduce maternal mortality in the Amolatar District in Northern Uganda, through providing women with their fundamental right to reproductive healthcare.

THE NEED

As many as 16 women die due to labor complications in Uganda daily due to the lack of adequate reproductive healthcare. In the northern region, rising fertility rates, and a higher than average maternal mortality ratio of 40 deaths per 100,000 births, compounds their health burden. With the return of IDPs from Ugandan conflict with the LRA, the health system in the Northern Region has become overburdened and reproductive health services have suffered.

WHAT MAKES THE SAFE BIRTHING PROGRAM IMPORTANT?

While birthing kits are provided by the Ugandan government, health centers in the Amolatar are not always provided with enough kits to meet the demands of their patients. Low kit numbers as well as inconsistent delivery means that not every woman is provided with a birthing kit upon entering the health center for delivery causing some women to have to pay for supplies or give birth in unsanitary conditions. IWI seeks to alleviate this by providing birthing kits to each center to create a "buffer" to ensure all women have access to sanitary birthing conditions

IWI is confident that the success of our program will elicit a systemic change to women's access to healthcare in Northern Uganda. We can build robust constituencies for social change, mobilizing and support for maternal healthcare to other areas in Uganda, and to expand our efforts to help bring about lasting change to the region.

WHAT WE ARE DOING

IWI is providing birthing kits to health facilities that are struggling to provide women with the reproductive healthcare that is their right. IWI will provide an initial buffer amount of 50 kits to each of the health centers to augment kits provided by the government. Each subsequent month, kits will be provided to bring the centers back to the initial kit levels. This will ensure that all women giving birth in these centers have access to sanitary birthing conditions. International Women's Initiative has partnered with the Birthing Kit Foundation of Australia to provide the birthing kits.

Each kit includes:

- Soap
- 1 plastic sheet
- 2 gloves
- 1 sterile scalpel blade
- 3 cords
- 5 gauze squares

Our collaboration with our local partner organization, Extended Hands Uganda, will ensure kit delivery to each center. IWI and EHU will conduct monitoring and evaluation throughout the program to ensure its effectiveness and adapt the program as necessary. IWI believes that our collaboration improves the capabilities of our partners as well as ensuring our program is sustainable. In all, thirteen health centers in the Amolatar District will benefit from the Safe Birthing Program.