

Smile Mums Foundation Outreach Clinic Technical Report 2024





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Special Thanks



ABOUT US —

The Smile Mums Foundation began as a community healthcare project in 2016, known as "Save Mothers, Save Babies.". Its goal was to reduce childbirth complications and encourage early antenatal care. In 2018, the organization was officially registered to enhance the well-being of mothers and children in rural Malawi through cost-effective programs developed in collaboration with the Government of Malawi, the Ministry of Health, Chingalire Growth

Our Vision

To create a community where every child and woman has access to quality healthcare services for survival, protection, development, and participation.

Our Mission

To inspire innovation in the provision of healthcare services for children and women, leading to immediate and lasting improvements in their lives through enhanced access to health services





Introduction

The Smile Mums Foundation, in partnership with the Ministry of Health through Nsaru Health Center, expand its maternal health program in 2023 by introducing outreach antenatal care at Mamie Center, located 16 km from Nsaru Health Center. This center serves a total population of 5,634 from 24 surrounding villages.

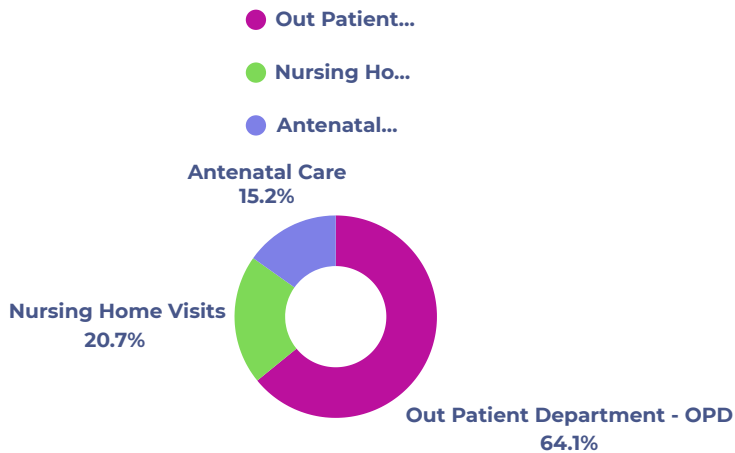
Following the successful implementation of outreach antenatal care in 2023, the program scale up in September 2024 with financial support from Partners for Equity Australia and the Segal Family Foundation. We establish an Outreach Clinic that integrates maternal health services with the outpatient department at Nsaru Health Center.

Through this Outreach Clinic, we conduct a mobile clinic once a month, providing free healthcare services that include treatment for malaria, HIV/AIDS, family planning, diarrhea, coughing, and antenatal care, nursing home visits and child growth monitoring among others.

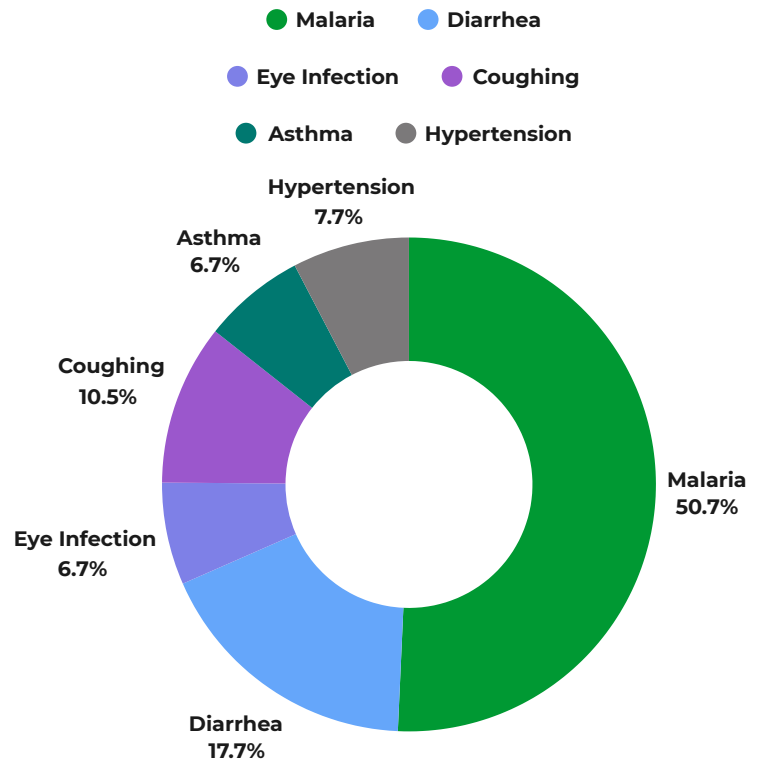
Impact Data

Outreach clinic

Outreach Clinic Intervention 2024



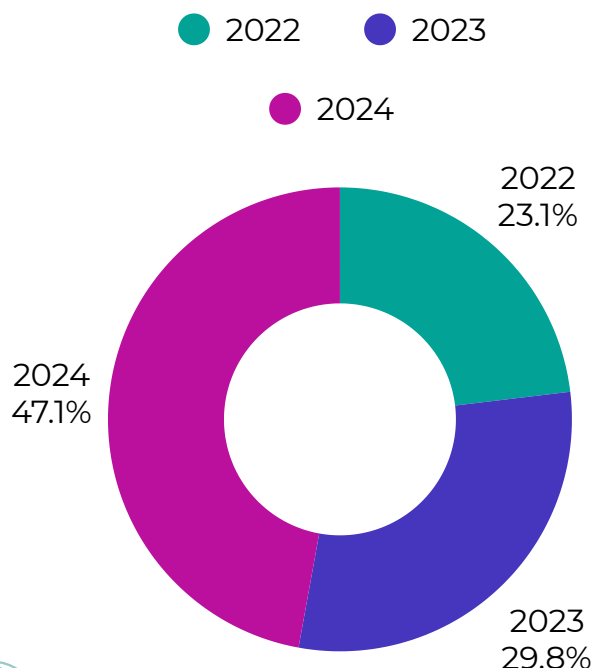
Condition Treated 2024



NB: A total of 1,271 people were reached through the Outreach Clinic for pilot phase

Antenatal Care

Pregnant Mothers Admssion within 15 weeks



OUTREACH CLINIC

The Smile Mums Foundation and Nsaru Health Center have been working to improve access to healthcare services in villages served by Nsaru Health Center. Despite these efforts, some villages, such as Chimbayo, Katsumwa, and Mtuwaivi, located 11 to 22 kilometers from the facility, have been experiencing difficulties accessing healthcare services. In September 2024, after several attempts to assist people in these areas, the organization collaborated with Nsaru Health Center to introduce an outreach clinic at Katsumwa known as a mamie center. This initiative is financially supported by the Segal Family and Partner for Equity.

The outreach clinic is operated by clinicians and nurses who conduct monthly visits to provide primary care to patients who would otherwise need to go to the hospital as outpatients. The aim is to bring primary healthcare directly to communities facing barriers to seeking and accessing care at fixed health center sites. By offering services closer to their homes, the outreach clinics create a familiar and comfortable environment for patients, while also helping families avoid the time and cost associated with traveling to a hospital.

Through this outreach clinic, the Smile Mums Foundation provides logistics support, including medical supplies and transportation. The Ministry of Health, through Nsaru Health Center, contributes human resources and antimalarial treatment.

Key Objectives of Outreach Clinics

- **Providing Affordable Care:** We offer no-cost health outreach services to educate underserved communities about quality healthcare options, including malaria testing, HIV/AIDS treatment, maternal health, diabetes management, and cervical cancer awareness.
- **Facilitating Continuity of Care:** Our outreach programs provide essential follow-up care and improve access to specialty appointments, ensuring patients receive necessary treatments and support services.
- **Addressing Transportation Needs:** high travel costs hinder access to care, especially in rural areas. Our clinical outreach initiatives aim to reduce these barriers, making it easier for patients to receive essential services.



DIAGNOSTIC AND SCREENING SERVICES



HEALTH EDUCATION



ELECTRONIC DATA MANAGEMENT

OUTREACH ANTENATAL CARE

Outreach antenatal care is an intervention introduced by the Smile Mums Foundation in 2023. Its aim is to increase early access to antenatal care, reduce the distance that mothers from 24 villages around the Mamie Center need to travel to receive antenatal services, and enhance care and support for children under five. This intervention is implemented in partnership with the Nsaru Health Center under the Ministry of Health.



In September 2024, we expand the intervention with additional funding from Partners for Equity by integrating it with outreach clinics that provide healthcare services to all villages surrounding the Mamie Center. The services offered include malaria testing, care and treatment, HIV/AIDS testing and support, disease diagnosis, treatment care, family planning, antenatal services, nutrition assessments, and child growth monitoring.

Key objectives of outreach antenatal care include

1. Promoting early antenatal care among pregnant mothers.
2. Reducing the distance covered by pregnant mothers from villages around Amamie Center, which is 14 km from Nsaru Health Center.
3. Providing health education to mothers during pregnancy.



NUTRITION HEALTH EDUCATION



PREGNANT TEST AND ANC



NURSING HOME VISITS

The Smile Mums Foundation launched nursing home visits in September 2024 that facilitate interaction between nurses and families. This initiative allows our nurses and government nurses to assess both the home environment and family dynamics while delivering essential nursing care and health-related activities to mothers and children. The intervention has transformed women's and children's health, as nurses now have weekly schedules to visit different villages and meet mothers at the household level.



To achieve optimal results, it is crucial to prepare a visit plan tailored to the specific needs of each client. This approach may involve home visits to individual households, where mothers and children can receive free healthcare services, such as disease diagnosis, treatment, care and support, and health education. During the pilot phase of the nursing home visits, a total of 263 mothers were reached. This intervention is co-funded by the Segal Family Foundation and Partners for Equity, with technical support from the Ministry of Health through Nsaru Health Center.

Key objectives of the visits include:

1. Caring for postpartum mothers, newborns, and the sick, while teaching family members ongoing care techniques.
2. Evaluating living conditions and health practices to offer relevant health education.
3. Providing disease prevention and control education.
4. Fostering strong ties between health agencies and the community.
5. Promoting community services and utilizing an inter-referral system.



**DIAGNOSTIC AND
SCREENING SERVICES**



HEALTH EDUCATION

PURPOSE OF OUTREACH CLINIC

The purpose of the outreach clinic is to provide clinical services in an environment that is familiar and accessible to individuals who face barriers in seeking or following up on their care. The outreach clinic aims to address many common obstacles faced by underserved populations, such as limited or no transportation, unfamiliarity with the healthcare system, and the prioritization of daily survival over health maintenance.

WHOM DOES IT SERVE?

Certain populations may benefit significantly from our outreach efforts at clinics. Individuals who are least likely to visit health centers often have a greater need for primary and preventive care services. These individuals are typically the most underserved and the hardest to reach. The term “hard to reach” can be controversial, as some critics argue it suggests that providers have an excuse for the disparities in access to care rather than addressing the underlying reasons for these challenges. Our outreach aims to directly tackle this issue.

Our Beneficiaries



Mothers



Erdely's



Children



People Living with HIV/AIDs



WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

Local Coordination

We have found that effective local coordination with the communities we serve greatly enhances our impact. At the start of the year, the Nsaru Health Center management and our team identified key priorities for 2024, including expanding the maternal health project, launching an outreach clinic for essential healthcare in remote areas, and conducting a monitoring and evaluation tour with stakeholders to gather feedback and share best practices.

Partnership

We are also exploring how the newly established SFF grantee, MCH Network, can assist us in increasing our funding and providing technical support for the outreach clinic and other programs. Additionally, we aim to find sustainable ways to maintain the outreach clinic for lasting impact.

CHALLENGES

Poor Transportation: The organization relies on car rentals, which can be quite expensive. This situation limits our ability to provide transportation for patients who need treatment at healthcare facilities.

Inadequate Funding: Due to the high inflation rate, our funding is insufficient, compromising our ability to purchase medicines as pharmaceutical prices continue to rise.

Lack of Medical Technology: We do not have enough resources to conduct medical screenings or collect samples from outreach activities for testing at facility laboratories.

Inadequate Staffing: The organization currently employs one full-time nurse, supplemented by government nurses and clinicians for outreach clinics. However, we need to hire our own clinician to ensure smooth operations and facilitate growth, especially when government staff are unavailable.

Recommendations and Future Directions

To enhance our impact and reach more individuals, we propose the following:

- **Increase Outreach Clinic Visits:** Conduct two outreach clinics a week at the Mamie Center and Chimbayo Village to provide more community care.
- **Community Health Education Programs:** Implement initiatives focused on disease prevention, nutrition, maternal health, and health-seeking behaviors to empower the community.
- **Strengthen Partnerships:** Establish strategic alliances with local pharmacies and healthcare providers to ensure consistent access to essential supplies.

Conclusion

The mobile clinic initiative has proven to be an invaluable resource for addressing healthcare access challenges within the community. The high prevalence of malaria, especially among children, highlights the urgent need for improved preventive measures and community education. The success of this program suggests that continuing and expanding it could lead to significant improvements in community health outcomes. The findings from this initiative provide a strong foundation for future healthcare interventions and policy decisions in similar communities.



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