



Attentive. Ms Nakintu Dimitilia, a leader of Gayaza Maternal Health Advocacy Coalition sensitises community members about maternal health rights, utilisation and the risks of using TBAs, at Kiyuni Health Centre III on Tuesday. PHOTO BY FRED MUZAALÉ

Enforce ban on traditional birth attendants - CSO

Caution. Activists say expectant mothers risk losing their lives if they do not go to professional health facilities.

BY FRED MUZAALÉ
editorial@ug.nationmedia.com

KYANKWANZI. A coalition of maternal health advocates and communities in Kyankwanzi District have asked leaders to enforce the government ban on Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) in the area.

The call follows a maternal choices' random survey conducted between January 2016 and June 2017, which discovered that TBAs were behind 76 per cent of the 42 identified maternal deaths that occurred in the sub-county in that time.

The survey highlighted that expectant mothers risk losing their lives if they continue delivering with TBAs. Mothers were encouraged to seek maternal health care services from health facilities.

The survey proved that 92 (47.4 per cent) of the 194 mothers surveyed depended on both the TBAs and the district health system.

Of the 42 maternal deaths identified during the period under review, 21.6 per cent had only 'attended antenatal care' with TBAs.

According to the survey, three mothers died from complications before full term pregnancy, and only one had attended antenatal care.

Twenty-seven mothers were taken directly to TBAs when in labour from where eight died.

The TBAs and family members attempted to refer 14 of the 27 to health centres but

the majority died on the way because it was too late.

Five mothers delivered with TBAs but died from complications at home some days after delivery.

Only 12 of the 42 identified deceased mothers (29 per cent) had entered the health system, five of them with complications compounded by TBAs.

One of the 12 was lured from Hoima Hospital where the family had failed to raise money for a C-section to a TBA who made the family believe she could deliver her safely. The mother died in the hands of the TBA.

Govt ban

Gaps. In 2010, government banned TBAs from giving services to expecting mothers but many women still go to them because of the inconsistencies and gaps in the main health-care system.

The Aruwe executive director, Ms Agnes Mirembe, said: "The findings are essential for the district and sub-county leadership to act to cover the maternal health gaps," Ms Mirembe said.

Ms Mirembe said two midwives have been posted to Kiyuni Health Centre III, and there have been infrastructural improvements such as renovation of the maternity ward and acquisition of three new delivery beds at the facility, as a result of the campaign.

Ms Elizabeth Nakato, one of the members, says she rescued her daughter from a TBA and took her to a health centre where she had a safe delivery.