
GRADUATION 2000

Bungu Afya Ya Msingi Kenya

GLOBAL STRATEGIES FOR HIV PREVENTION JULY, 2000



AN EXCEPTIONAL GRADUATION

It was a special day for twenty four Traditional Birth Attendants (Village Midwives) in Kenya. They were about to receive their certificates of graduation in a ceremony that was the culmination of several months of classroom and field training. They had all worked as midwives before, but now they had completed more advanced training in accordance with guidelines and a training manual issued by the Kenyan government.

It began as a dream of Alex Njuga with a sign up of an initial 13 names. *Global Strategies for HIV Prevention* immediately offered to fund a portion of their program. Since that small beginning, we became a major co-sponsor of the subsequent phases of their training.

Graduation was a special day for us too. Natasha Martin and Caroline Karutu from *Global Strategies* were privileged to witness the event. For many women it was the first diploma that they had ever received. Their husbands turned out in their best clothing to honor their wives and their accomplishments and to be photographed with them.

Preparation for graduation

Earlier that afternoon Caroline Karutu and Natasha Martin arrived in the village to the aroma of fragrant spices – just a hint of what was in store. There was a flurry of activity, except in the hut where the twenty four graduates all sat wearing their special Traditional Birth Attendant (TBA) kangas (skirts). This was their last day and they were all eager to show their knowledge as they answered questions from the Kilifi medical officer of health who would later present them with their certificates. Barely was a question finished before many hands shot up in response.

In past visits, dozens of school children had serenaded and entertained us with traditional dances. Today it was the TBA's turn! After the speeches were made - one of them appropriately by the village chief, a powerful woman - the certificates were presented, and the TBAs danced, sang and performed a play for us.

[Why train traditional birth attendants?](#)

TBAs play a major role in the delivery of infants in rural areas throughout the world. In many parts of Africa their role is increasingly important as HIV takes its toll on the community. Important reasons for training TBAs include expansion of prevention education, especially prevention of primary HIV infection of adults, care of individuals with AIDS, and instruction on the prevention of HIV transmission from mothers to infants with the use of nevirapine.

[Our Traditional Birth Attendant kit and graduation T-shirt](#)



A delivery kit and a graduation T shirt was given to each TBA graduate.

Mission

Global Strategies for HIV Prevention is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization whose mission is to implement international strategies to prevent HIV infection by means of strategic alliances with those who share in a compassion for alleviating the suffering of children.