

Ondo Abiye Project a Benchmark for Africa_____WORLD BANK

The World Bank has applauded and recommended Ondo State Abiye (Safe Motherhood) programme as a solution to Africa health challenge. World Bank African Region Vice President, Mrs Oby Ezekwesili said in Washington that Ondo State has provided a role model and a benchmark for the African continent in tackling infant and maternal mortality rate

The World Bank says the federal government and other states of the federation should adopt Ondo State's strategy and replicate same through out Nigeria as a sure and fast means of combating infant and maternal mortality challenge. The World Bank says other African countries must learn from the Ondo State experience where the Governor has shown excellent leadership and commitment. The Bank promised assistance to help expand the Ondo State initiatives as Governor Olusegun Mimiko made a presentation to the World Bank on the State health initiative in tackling infant and maternal mortality.

Infant and maternal mortality has remained a serious challenge where one million African children between the ages of 0-5 loose their lives annually with Nigeria accounting for 10% of the World maternal and infant mortality rate .Ondo State, according to the World Bank rating in South-West Nigeria also had the worst infant/maternal mortality, before the Mimiko administration came on board in 2009.

Governor Mimiko told the World Bank that the Abiye project aims at realizing The Millennium Development Goal 5 for Africa by bringing qualitative, accessible and effective health care to women and children and also increase the utilization of health care facilities. He stressed that the project targets safe motherhood through professional and modern facility while developing sustainable equity-based health care services on universal basis.

Governor Olusegun Mimiko said the Abiye project has a 3- prong strategy of providing reliable and quality care with fixed facilities combined with health ranger scheme-outreach that monitors the women and children while the Apex mother and child hospital caters for the welfare of the mother and child after birth for upward of 5 years free of charge.

The Governor noted that the London Tropical School of medicine has engaged The Mother and Child Hospital, as a research centre and has attracted research fund in just one year of its commencement. He appreciated the willingness of the country Director, Mr. Onno Rhul to experiment with the project by partnering with Ondo State.

The Abiye Project is a breakthrough initiative known as Safe Motherhood project for pregnant, nursing mothers and babies under 5 years of age. The pregnant woman, right from the day she registers, is attached to a team of medical personnel and a doctor (Health Ranger) for close monitoring.

She is given a mobile phone loaded with credit on the bill of the state government, thus enabling her to seek and receive consistent and constant medical attention anywhere she may be even in the remote part of the village. The Mother and Child hospital in Akure with 5 'jumbo size' ward provides first class special care to the mother and the child zero age to five, inclusive of surgeries where needed free of charge

Commissioned in February 2010, with 100 beds, the Mother and Child Hospital has continually provided critical interventions. Within 15 months of operation, 26150 patients had been treated; 5879 babies safely delivered with 905 of them delivered by caesarian section.

A comparative analysis of maternal mortality rates with some major public health institutions in other parts of the country showed the Abiye programme with the Mother and Child hospital in Akure recording the lowest maternal mortality rate and higher birth rate in its first year of operation. The success story is rewarding, for instance the MCH, Akure in one year of operation recorded 4,037 total birth, 26 maternal death when compared with Federal Medical Centre, Nguru, Yobe State in its 5th year of operation which has 3,931 total birth, 112 maternal death as well as Olabisi Onabanjo University Teaching Hospital in its 6 year of operation recording 2,728 total births, 75 maternal death.