

## ***Health Care and Transport***

A weak transportation system prevents the delivery of basic health care services. There are several transport challenges that create obstacles to adequate health care provision.

**Encouraging routine health visits;** especially among the low-income, who cannot afford the costs in time and money to reach services that are far away or difficult to access  
**Service delivery** by nurses and doctors to populations who lack health care;  
**Providing care** to populations who are too sick to travel to obtain care or medicine;  
**Providing emergency transport**, such as ambulances;  
**Reaching vulnerable populations** for outreach and educational efforts; and  
**Supplying drugs and vaccines** to health clinics.

### ***HIV/AIDS and Transport***

HIV/AIDS is one of the most significant health issues in Africa today, the leading overall cause of death in the continent. 70 percent of adults and 80 percent of children living with HIV in the world are in Africa. Half of all newborns in Africa carry the HIV virus, according to Dr. Peter Piot, executive director of UNAIDS.

As HIV infection rates continue to rise, providing adequate health care to those infected becomes more and more of a challenge. Strategies to address the HIV/AIDS epidemic include:

**Through outreach and education:** The World Bank recently stated that education is central to the prevention of AIDS and could rescue Africa from the epidemic.

**Through care provision for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA):** Because PLWHA tend to be too sick to travel to clinics for care, many providers are mobilizing community-based health outreach workers.

**Through drugs and antiretroviral treatments:** Care providers are working to overcome barriers such as costs, inconsistency of supplies, inadequate supplies, and delivery of supplies.

**Through food security:** Without proper caloric and nutritional intake, drug treatments will not be effective and will not have the desired outcomes.

Due to the increasing numbers of HIV/AIDS patients and the costs of building stationary health clinics, there has been a move internationally to community-based and home-based care (CBC). CBC incorporates the model of mobile health clinics, where a nurse and/or doctor travels to the sick and does routine visits to the well.



### **The Role of Bicycles**

Bicycles offer a low-cost, efficient and sustainable way to increase the ability of service providers to reach their clients.

Bicycling is on average three times faster than walking, and significantly less costly than motorcycles and cars. In pilot projects in Africa, bicycles have been shown to double or triple outreach efforts.

In a cost-effective, efficient and environmentally-sound manner, having nurses on bikes addresses:

- Reaching patients too sick to travel;
- Reaching a greater audience with outreach and education;
- Having geographically dispersed settlements that cannot support a clinic unto themselves;
- Lack of mobility by all residents, but especially women;
- The desire for privacy.

The benefits of the community-based care model include:

Costs are significantly less than building permanent clinics;  
 A higher degree of confidentiality exists than in clinics;  
 Provides care to patients who are too sick to travel;  
 Patients typically say they prefer CBC;  
 Resolves anxiety due to the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS.