

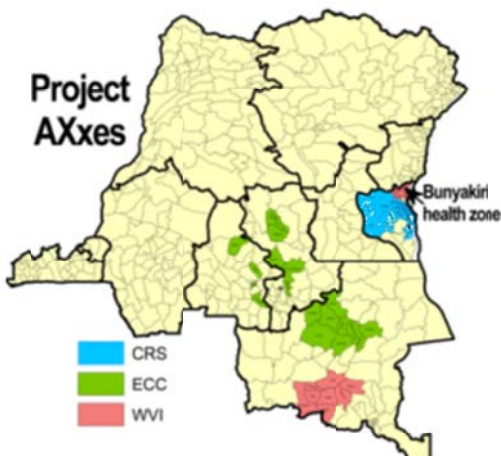


SUCCESS STORY

Lighting Up Quality Health Care in South Kivu



Bitale Health Center
Before and After Solar Lighting



Bitale health center is located 20 km from the Central Bureau of Bunyakiri health zone in the northern part South Kivu Province, an area of continuing insecurity and internal conflict. Bitale serves a population of more than 6,000 including approximately 1250 women of reproductive age. WVI is the implementing partner for Project AXxes in this area of S. Kivu.

Prior to Project AXxes, health services operated in an emergency mode to provide basic medical care with little investment in health infrastructure. Inadequate working tools, a chronic lack of medicines and insufficient training also contributed to poor health care. However, as regional stability has improved, Project AXxes, funded by USAID, has been able to assist in shifting from humanitarian to development approaches with by providing significant health strengthening assistance. This has included increasing accessibility to quality health care with synergy of health interventions, provision of essential drugs, equipment, training, supervision and improved management.

Bitale is one of five health centers in Bunyakiri HZ that received solar panels to provide lighting for their maternities. The maternity in Bitale, and many other health centers in AXxes-assisted health zones, were also rehabilitated and equipped with delivery beds, working tools and skilled midwives.

During the past four years Project AXxes has funded more than 500 solar lighting systems (fixed and portable) and 207 solar refrigerators. These efforts have significantly improved the health care conditions and outcomes for the populations served.

Mimi Mapendo, the midwife nurse at Bitale health center, has nicely summarized the situation with this statement:

“The solar panel provided by AXxes for our maternity is making my work easy and pleasant. Before this donation, we had difficulties in taking care of pregnant women correctly especially during delivery at night. Both simple and complicated cases were difficult to handle. Care of the newborn and the mother was compromised because of darkness or poor lighting from kerosene candle that we used. Thank you to the project and to the donor, USAID for this support. I am motivated to do this work because it is contributing immensely in the reduction of child and maternal deaths particularly deaths related to child birth.”