



*The case of Natalia Bojikwele Philip - Photo credit @Daniel Garang (TRC)*

## **Where You Save Mothers' Lives, A Case-Study Pillar of the Health Sector Transformation Project**

The case of **Natalia Bojikwele Philip** embodies the saving grace of the Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP) in South Sudan concerning the wellbeing of mothers. Following severe complications during her first delivery, including a caesarean section and a near-fatal postpartum hemorrhage, Natalia credits Yambio State Hospital medical team for saving her life. Natalia's gesture of gratitude can challenge the previous negative undertones that surrounded the hospital. Her case is a vivid example of how the HSTP put in place necessary resources for health workers to provide quality and saving care.

## **Restoration of a Hospital and Trust in the Community**

In the face of a funding gap that had hit the Yambio State Hospital badly before HSTP intervention in September 2022, the latter was in charge of rescuing the hospital from its demoralized state, as severely low patient uptake dwindled from 15 daily to near extinction down. This is where the

entrance of the HSTP in the month of July 2024 became a turning point after the injection of essential supplies as well as human resources. Within this short span of time, with this supply, the hospital worked wonders and now treats 300 daily and also holds a growing number of monthly deliveries. To mothers like Natalia, this meant life and death. Besides the project providing in-kind support, it restored the community's trust in the system.

### **The Numbers Speak for Itself**

The stats of deliveries at the hospital offer a practical telltale picture of the great impact of the HSTP. According to midwife Munguye Victoria, the number of deliveries at Yambio State Hospital soared from just 15 in February and June to 112 in July, and over 200 in August. The passing of this project is in enhanced thrift of maternity services. Strengthened services have neither kept maternal deaths at bay, but empowered mothers and families to seek-and-get such-care. Not that there cease to be hurdles ahead, like the unavailability of beds; the gains made from the time of support from the HSTP are unmistakable and thereby instil hope for a healthier future for mothers and babies in Western Equatoria State.

### **Health Sector Transformation Project (HSTP)**

The development objective of the Health Sector Transformation Project for South Sudan is to expand access to a basic package of health and nutrition services, improve health sector stewardship and strengthen the health system. The project comprises of four components. The first component, provision of basic health services nationwide will deliver basic health services nationwide, guided by the Ministry of Health (MoH's) health sector strategic plan (HSSP) and building on the experiences obtained under the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) Emergency Response and Health System Preparedness Project (CERHSPP) and the health pooled fund (HPF), with a focus of improving service availability including to refugees and host communities.

**Investing in the Health Sector Transformation Project is key to expand access to basic health services and a stronger health system for all of South Sudan.**

Launched in July 2024, HSTP was the leading health project in South Sudan's ongoing health sector reform after Health Pooled Fund. This three-year project is managed by the South Sudan's Ministry of Health with cooperation from UNICEF and partners' group of financial entities donating to support South Sudan health sector, amongst them: World Bank, USAID, FCDO, Global Affairs Canada, Gavi, Global Fund, and EU. The project aims to strengthen governance of South Sudan health sector and move toward an alternative sustainable model which relies on the Government.