

**Information sheet - FOR VILLAGE/SECTION LEADER; COMMUNITY LEADERS**

**Maternal and child health care seeking behaviour household study, XX District Sierra Leone**

Dear, XX (Name of head of village; Community leader)

We are here to ask you permission to carry out a survey in your village.

As you might already know, [Organization XX] is working to provide and support free health care in the District for pregnant and children under five in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS).

In 2016–2017, XX carried out a study in the District which found that pregnant women and children under the age of five faced significant barriers to accessing health care. Since then, XX has been working with the Ministry of Health and Sanitation to improve access to health care for mothers and children in the district.

Today, we are carrying out a survey to try to understand more about health and health seeking of people in your village and assess any improvement in access to health care since the 2016–2017 study. We are particularly wishing to speak with pregnant women, mothers and carers of young children, and local health workers.

XX wants to use the outcome of the survey to help to plan and deliver improved services to better meet the needs of people, particularly expectant mothers and young children. XX may also use the results of the survey to advocate on behalf of the population, in order to raise awareness of the situation in communities. However, your village/section will not be named. Any information we share will not use the names of anyone in the village, or the name of the village.

We need to speak to approximately 20-30 households in your village, if they each agree to speak to our research team. The research team includes myself, my fellow interviewer, and people entering and analysing the information shared with us.

We would like to ask the head of each selected household some questions, such as:

- How many people live in your household?
- What is the age of your household members and their sex?

In selected households we then would like to ask women who have given birth in the last two years some questions such as:

- How many children have you had and how many are currently living?
- Did you experience any problems getting health care during pregnancy and childbirth?

In selected households we would like to ask carers of young children some questions such as:

- When your child was last ill with fever did you seek health care?
- Did you experience any problems getting treatment?

Also, in selected households we would like to ask more general questions such as:

- Can you tell me about your views and ability to access family planning?
- What issues do adolescents, particularly young girls, face in accessing health care?

There is a chance that some of the questions could be upsetting for participants as they may bring back memories of sad experiences or pain. Participants can refuse to answer any specific questions and stop participation at any time. If they are distressed or upset as a result of participation in the study, XX will provide them with confidential medical and psychosocial support at no cost.

Participation in this study is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw at any time. All participants are free to refuse to answer any specific questions. There is no payment or incentive for participating. XX supports the Ministry of Health to provide health care in this area, and whether persons in this area participate in this study or not will not affect in any way your access to health care from XX.

With this survey we hope to improve services for people in the District. The results of the study will be shared with the village/section and the local MoHS. No study participants' identity will be revealed in the results.

Thank you for taking the time to listen to our information about this study if you have any questions, please feel free to ask us, we are happy to answer.

In case you have any questions after the study has been completed you are free to contact the survey supervisor at the below information:

Name of Study Supervisor:

(Local) phone number of Study Supervisor:

This research has been approved by the XX Ethics and Scientific Review Committee, an independent body that oversees research in Sierra Leone. If you have any concerns or questions, you can contact them directly at: [\[include contact information\]](#)