

No More Deaths Because of Late Assistance

Zero Breakdown Motor Cycle Maintenance for Health Workers in Flores Timur

Presenter

Mansetus, *Yayasan Kesehatan Untuk Semua*
Marianus Wuring, *Petugas Kesehatan*

”For a health worker, being late for a minute puts someone’s life at stake.”
(Maria Yasinta Lowa, a village midwife in Flores NTT)

Receiving an emergency call is a frequent occurrence for health workers, especially those stationed in isolated regions. Sometimes, calls from 2-3 people arrive at the same time. “For a health worker, being late for a minute puts someone’s life at stake,” said Yanti, a midwife, when she received a motorcycle from Yayasan Kesehatan Untuk Semua (YKS).

Unfortunately, there are still many health workers who work in isolated rural areas without operational vehicles. This makes life difficult for them, especially if they are answering many calls at once. There are quite a few emergency cases where death has occurred because of late assistance, especially in rural areas with minimal transportation facilities.

“Thankfully, the obstacle I faced for over ten years working as a midwife has been overcome with Yayasan Kesehatan Untuk Semua giving me a motorcycle in March 2009. I can now reach those who need my services faster. While it’s only been three months, I haven’t had any deaths due to late response. What’s more, as YKS motorbikes are managed using a special system the bikes are always ready to use,” explained Yanti.

Yayasan Kesehatan untuk Semua has been developing the Transportation Infrastructure Management for Minimum Breakdown program since 2002 in NTT. This is the first program of this sort implemented in Asia. The first Infrastructure Management for Minimum Breakdown program began in Lesotho, Southern Africa, in 1991.

The Infrastructure Management for Minimum Breakdown program has had positive effects for health workers and the community as the beneficiaries, including:

- Faster response time for patients who need help
- Increased coverage area for health services
- Increased access to information and health services
- Increased number of health and sanitation facilities that can be monitored
- Increased frequency of health services in primary schools

Ansel Demon, a health worker who works in the Ancillary Health Clinic in Apubele, Adonara Tengah sub-district, Flores Timur district, says that with this program the operational vehicles are always ready to use and rarely, if ever, breakdown when being used to provide health services.

This is why the program developed by YKS is an approach which ensures effectiveness by using a maintenance schedule to guarantee none of the vehicles are damaged. This means most YKS operational vehicles have a life of over 7 years, compared to 3 years for normal non-maintained operational bikes.

To guard the effective utilization of the motorbikes for health services, YKS works with the Health Department, community leaders, civil society organizations and other NGO partners. They are involved as field monitors and are involved in every monitoring and evaluation meeting.

The function of the monitoring is to observe at the effective use of motorbikes for health services and to then report to YKS any violations committed by the bike drivers. The bike drivers who don't follow the rules of using the motor bikes receive a warning. This can be followed by the taking back of a motorbike so it can be given to another health worker in that area or elsewhere, if the violations continue. The bikes can also be removed immediately if grave violations occur, such as accidents caused by driving under the influence.

The drivers are also controlled using a log book system. Any activity related to health services using the motorbikes must be logged in the book. Other important information that must be recorded includes the initial position of the speedometer before departure, the destination, what type of service will be provided, and the speedometer amount after arriving at the destination. All is logged regularly to ensure that the use of the vehicles is really for health service provision. The logbooks also provide health services data in the work regions of the health worker drivers.

For funding, YKS works with a number of individuals and motorcycle clubs throughout the world, including Riders for Health, Motorcycle Outreach (MOR), Yamaha Japan, ABATE of Indiana, ABATE of Alaska, South Suburban Chapter of Illinois, In Memory of Captain Ride and others. YKS is also trying to establish a relationship with the Health Department of Flores Timur to obtain joint funding. For local funding, the YKS garage not only services YKS bikes but also sells spare parts and services motorbikes for the general public.

Contact Detail

Mansetus Balawan

Yayasan Kesehatan Untuk Semua

Mobile **081339306242**

Email **yks_flores@telkom.net**

mans_motor@yahoo.co.id