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Interviewer: This interview might take one and half hour and incase you get tired or something has come up don’t hesitate to let me stop.

The map that i am trying to draw looks like this , we shall continue talking about the issue of health , water and i will start drawing this things called concepts for instance if it rains we shall draw how it links to health and this numbers is to represent the strength of that association , three is to show that its very strong and one means least .

So i will start to draw and if you feel like whatever i am drawing you don’t understand you will just let me know so we shall start drawing this together and in this interview i am trying to understand the issues of food ,health and water in your perspective .

And i might be asking you a very obvious question but kindly just answer as you understand it and it will also help me understand this matter .

May be we can start our questions with you giving us history of this role community health extension worker ?

Respondent: Before it was referred to as community health extension worker but now its called community health assistant.

Interviewer: When was this name changed ?

Respondent: When we were absorbed by the county government the name changed and before we were under the contract of the national government .

Interviewer : so that was around 2010 during the new constitution ?

Respondent : it was in 2011.

Interviewer: So now you are under the county government ministry of health ?

Respondent : yes .

Interviewer : for how long have you been doing this work ?

Respondent : Since 2011 but we were absorbed by the county government in 2015 .

Interviewer : So for how long were you working under the national government?

Respondent: 2011-2014 and we got absorbed by the county government from 2015-to date .

Interviewer: What is your role as community health assistant exactly?

Respondent: We are working with the community with CHPs and we have 32 of them working in 11 villages .

Interviewer: You are basically managing them or What is their role ?

Respondent: i do supervise and support them and they do report to me .

Interviewer : on what ?

Respondent : On the issues of health for instance if they find out a defaulter and trace them and through me we refer them to the facility because there are some who are working at the facility .

Interviewer : What are the type of training that this CHPs get?

Respondent: They have their basic training module and in addition to that they were given training on integrated community case management , at their level they can do some small things, they have the kit which contains things like paracetamol and ORs for diarrhea so they treat minor ailments and they also dress some minor wounds and they have been taught how to also test malaria and they also have the BP machine they have mwactapes for malnutrition luco meter and if they couldn’t manage the case they refer to the health facility .

Interviwer : Which facility is that ?

Respondent : its the maikona health centre .

Interviwer : Which level is that ?

Respondent : its level three hospital .

Interviwer : is there an office here ?

Respondent : There is a room where we keep our things .

Interviwer : Can the CHPs do vaccination?

Respondent : No they don’t that is done by experts in the facility .

Interviwer :For you which training did you pursue at school?

Respondent: i did certificate in pharmaceuticals .

Interviwer : Where did you study at ?

Respondent : i studied at thika .

Interviwer : So you knows the kikuyus ? I am from Nanyuki ( both laughing)

Interviwer :So now the CHPs are out in the community is that only for this community or for the whole county?

Respondent : Its the whole county .

Interviwer :So this 32 CHPs are under you?

Respondent: We were four intially but one went on transfer and now two are working in Maikona 2 since we have two community units that is Maikona 1 and 2 and for Maikona 2 they have 15 CHPs out of the 32 .

Interviwer : So is this Maikona one is it a ward on its own or its under a ward?

Respondent: Its under Maikona .

Interviwer : So Maikona one is a sublocation?

Respondent: Both of them are under the same sublocation and then Maikona 1 is under 17 CHPs .

Interviwer : Do you do a case management or you just do referrals?

Respondent: i do case management too sometimes i go for training and comeback and train them too for instance like WASH

Interviwer: Who does that training ?

Respondent : Partners like the NGO’s and not the government.

Interviwer : But you are paid by the county government?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviwer : Have you encountered any challenges when it come to salary payment?

Respondent Yes we do , we just got paid our january salary so there is delay in payment of salaries and still we have not been paid the february salary.

Interviwer: Have you seen any changes since you got absorbed into the county government?

Respondent : Before we didnt have any letter of appointment and also we were under a contract now we are permanent and pensionable .

Interviwer :So in your opinion you are now better since you got absorbed into the county government?

Respondent: Yes .

Interviwer : so this is good in helping me understand your position here . So if you have a difficult cases you transfer it to marsabit?

Respondent: Yes normally when the cases is beyond us the local facility transfer it to the subcounty referal hospital that is Kalacha referal hospital which is under northhorr subcounty.

Interviwer : is there any other hospital in northhorr ?

Respondent: There is an healthcentre like this one but the one at kalacha is an hospital .

Interviwer : Were you born here ?

Respondent: yes but when i was under contract i was posted at Balesa and i worked there for five years .

( talking to a person called jillo at the back )

Interviwer: What type of diseases are common in this community?

Respondent: there us rampant cases of diarrhea especially in chidren .

Interviwer : What leads to this diarrhea?

Respondent:it’s water ,we have water treatment chemicals but people prefer not to use it although some do .

Interviewer: Are people given those water chlorine tablets for free?

Respondent : Yes they are given for free by the government .

Interviewer: is that still the county government ?

Respondent: yes

Interviewer: How is that relationship, what else leads to water getting dirty?

Respondent:Storage of water too leads to the water getting contaminated if for instance the storage containers is not clean .

Interviewer: What else leads to diarrhea?

Respondent: Very rare but may be the way they prepare food basically food hygiene and washing of hands and fruits and vegetables.

Interviewer: What else dirties the water?

Respondent: open water point which is not protected .

Interviewer: So people mostly drink different water from the animals?

Respondent: Yes , but others from different areas might drink same water through water tracking but those from this area do not, that happens when there is shortage of water and people come here to search for water .

Interviewer:is that water dirty though? And do they pour the water in a trough for the animals and the people to use?

Respondent : they put the water in an underground water tank and from there the animals and the people use .and that is now our outreach sights and when it rains they draw just the surface water .

Interviewer : And why are people not fetching the machine water and instead use the surface water?

Respondent: when they don’t fetch the surface water the one in the tank won’t be enough for them .so they prefer to fetch and save for later use .

Interviewer : So they are trying to save the water in the tank for later use ?

Respondent: yes because of the scarcity of water in their place and they are getting water through tracking and rain water . At places called toricha and iyole.

Interviewer: So that means when they drink the surface water and save water in the tanks for future use?

Respondent: Sometimes we help them with PUR - water purifiers that we carry from the facility during the outreach and then we give them.

Interviewer: do you give it to the people or you pour it inside the tank?

Respondent: We give it to them and they purify it themselves and when they do that the water forms layers of clean and dirty water they store the top layer and pour the rest .

Interviewer: So that is different from the aqua tabs?

Respondent: Yes because aqua tabs are for clear water .

Interviewer: pardon the name kindly .

Respondent: PUR -water purification chemicals.here water is available but very salty So we have the centre and the outreach sites and they are getting our services through outreach .

Interviewer : So we shall write that as distance from the centre or ruralness , so they are using water tracking techniques meaning the human and the animal are using same water .Does that have an impact on the health?

Respondent: people can dirty the water while using it and it can affect them health wise .

Interviewer: about the water tabs is there a problem when it comes to its supply?

Respondent: They are some people who do not want to use it because of its smell but the majority loves it and they even request for it so the rest that don’t love the taste drinks it without treating.

Interviewer:Is there a problem when it comes to supply?

Respondent:No its available in plenty the government supplies it .

Interviewer: is there a time when the tabs are not available?

Respondent:not every time may be once in a while .

Interviewer : what do people pay for “boucer “?

Respondent : Yes they must pay for it .

Interviewer: And this one?

Respondent: they don’t.

Interpreter: And for those people in your outreach sites isn’t it expensive for them?

Respondent: Yes it is .

Interviewer : What does that mean?

Respondent: Sometimes they are even supported by NGOs.

Interviewer : Do the community also buy for themselves ?

Respondent: yes they do .

Interviewer : How does that work?

Respondent: They call for Barraza or make a request through phone call to mp, MCA or to some NGOs.

Interviewer : Is contributing that money a burden to the people?

Respondent: May be that one underground tank is owned by three people so they share the cost .

Interviewer: but it’s not a big burden financially?

Respondent: it is a big burden .because there was a prolonged drought that swept away the animals and that made them go down financially . Because before they used to sell their animals to get money .

Interviewer: So livestock population means that people do not have enough money as before ?You said what has led people to loose their animals?

Respondent: they lost their animals due to drought because they got weak because of lack of pasture and after it rained the few that remained also died because of that body weakness .and the far areas that there are scarce pasture water is not available so taking the animals to a far area because of water becomes an issue too so they do water tracking do that they can get water wherever they are for the animals.

Interviewer: What other issues related to health that affects people?

Respondent: URTI- upper respiratory tract infection .

Interviewer: What leads to that ?

Respondent: changes in the climate, pneumonia .

Interviewer : So that occurs during the rainy season?

Respondent: Yes during the rainy season because of changes of the climate .

Interviewer : So because of that URTI pneumonia comes in ?

Respondent: yes it might lead to pneumonia but for pneumonia it’s a bit different .( interviewer writing down at intervals)

Interviewer : What happens when people get affected by pneumonia?

Respondent : mostly the victims are the children under the age of five and it’s life threatening .

Interviewer : lets put it this way , sickness in children and for the diarrhea too you said it affects the children under the age of five?do they still die of diarrhea?

Respondent: Yes because they become dehydrated .

Interviewer: Do the adults too die?

Respondent:For the adults such cases are minimal .

Interviewer : i have realized so many people in this area cough are there cases of TB?

Respondent:TB patients in this area are very minimal because every Thursday there is a car that comes here and sputum are collected and most of them turn out to be negative.

Interviewer : and where are those sputum taken to ?

Respondent : To Marsabit referral hospital .

Interviewer: what is this that is making people cough?

Respondent : it’s because they don’t treat flu and cold .

Interviewer: What are other issues regarding health?

Respondent: There are TB patient although they are few cases there are also HIV /AIDS patients .

Interviewer: Which one has more cases?

Respondent: HIV is common .

Interviewer : How does this affect the community?

Respondent: It is mostly spread through ( mpango wa kando) having concubines.

Interviewer: So we can term those as multiple sexual partners .And what is making people engage in that?

Respondent: Its just normal here .

Interviewer :Its not because of money?

Respondent: Not really its just a normal thing here .we have those HIV patients at the facility.

Interviewer: Do they stay at the facility?

Respondent :No they just come for the medicine .

Interviewer: And how does HIV virus affects the life of the victims?

Respondent: There is stigma , and some even because of that fails to come for the medicine .

Interviewer:Do people pay for that medicine?

Respondent: No it’s given for free .

Interviewer: Is that HIV Issue connected here ?

Respondent: its just an issue that is in the community .

Interviewer:Does it kill people?

Respondent: Most of the people use medicine so deaths are rare cases .

Interviewer: About the diarrhea are there times that its very rampant?

Respondent: Yes mostly when it rains I don’t know if it’s because of the surface water getting into the water source and dirties the water .and for the borehole that is down there people from this side don’t use it but people living on the other side of the borehole says that when one washes there hand with that water it forms foams and we haven’t known the reason yet although people have come to check but no good feedback has been given and the water cannot be drunk actually

Interviewer: What pushes people to use the borehole water ?

Respondent: Sometimes unless that of the animals there is this other borehole at Boji with a tank up there that distributes the water and that piping system is faulty hence there is problem of water shortage although its just the piping that is required because of the breakdown of the pipes so they just use that water for the animals for cooking cleaning and doing laundry but might be unsafe for human consumption.

Interviewer: Who did the testing?

Respondent: I can’t remember but i think it’s NGO .

Interviewer: but they never gave the results?

Respondent: they didn’t.

Interviewer: What has made the pipe become faulty?

Respondent: When the sun heats the pipe it breaks and metal too rusts .

Interviewer: So we can say that is due to harsh climatic conditions?

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: And why was it not repaired?

Respondent:We did the reporting but just recently they tried to repair it but stopped i don’t know why and the tank is there but its like its also damaged .

Interviwer: So there is no maintaince made?

Respondent : yes .

Interviwer: So because of that water shortage people uses water that is not safe for human consumption?

Respondent: Yes

Interviwer: why are you not cleaning the dirty water containers ?

Respondent : We normally have community open conversation and during this time when people come together and we demonstrate how they should clean this storage containers but they do not follow the instructions mostly for instance they practice for a week and stop .

Interviwer : Why ?

Respondent: the problem is that women have alot of work to do like taking care of the animals and children so there is that female workload .

Interviwer : let’s delve into that now ,So distance to water point is long ?Why do you think people live far away from the water point ?

Respondent: For instance if wherever they stay the borehole water is dirty they are forced to go to a far place insearch of clean water and also for the animals after every three days they are supposed to drink water .

Interviwer : So this distance to livestock water also becomes a burden to women and take much of their time.

Interviwer : Just the other day we were at a place called isacko Mala in northhorr and they told us that men go for water for the animals and women goes to fetch water for the domestic use and human comsumption so in this place is it only the women that do both?

Respondent : They both do it, women too must participate ,you know there is that drawing water from the well which is the work of the men and since the animals are many the women help in dividing those animals that are to drink water in-turns and watch over others as others goes to drink.

Interviwer : So there is shallow wells , boreholes and surface water right?is there any other sources?

Respondent: there is also protected hand pumped wells .

Interviwer : So for the shallow well is it normally good for the animals or for human consumption?

Respondent: its essesntial for the animals only but those people in the outreach still use that one because that is the only place they can refill their tanks from .

Interviwer : Who had built this boreholes ?

Respondent: Some are built by the county government and others by the NGO’s .

Interviwer : So the NGOs built the borehole ?

Respondent: yes

Interviwer: the government are the ones to supply the aqua tabs ?

Respondent: yes they are the ones .

Inteeviwer : What else have the government done regarding the health of the people and water ?

Respondent: They also bring medicines and they give some five thousand shillings to the CHPs per month and this is two thousand five hundred from the national government and the other half from the county government and they also give them kits with the medicine .

Interviwer : So can we say that when the government is involved there would be so many CHPs?

Respondent: Yes .

Interviwer: So does that mean that the cases of pneumonia , URTI , diarrhea and Malaria drops ?

Respondent: Yes it can be managed although cases will still be there .

Interviwer: So that means people do not get sick as much and death cases get minimal ?

Respondent: Yes .

Interviwer: so that is mostly done by the government and not the NGOs?

Respondent: its the government that is concerned with the issues of medicine but the NGOs supports the training for the health workers like the CHPs.

Interviwer: According to your opinion how do you think food is linked to this ?

Respondent:For instance when a kid diarrhea he or she gets weak and requires balanced diet to get back to normalcy so food is also medicine for the body and there is a training called such and there is poster of that at the facility.

Interviwer: So does that apply to the children only or to everyone?

Respondent:it applies to everyone but we mostly emphasizes to the PLW - pregnant lactating women .

Interviwer : Is there another link to maternal health and sickness of children under the age of five ?

Respondent:apart from balanced diet if the mother is healthy the children too are healthy When they are born there are suppliments like that of Vitamin A that they are given and also deworms and immunization .

Interviwer: What do you think brings about the balanced diet?

Respondent: its brought about by eating different types of food CHPs have been trained about food groups for each category of people for instance for women when they are breastfeeding and when pregnant same applies to the children so we emphasize to them that out of the seven food groups atleast a child should not miss four of them .

Interviwer : Which is that food group that people in this area rarely get?

Respondent:Like fish are rare atleast for the fruits there is a car that brings them for sell on every sunday unless may be due to lack of money people fail to buy but they are trying.

Interviwer: Who is the owner of the car that sells the fruits?

Respondent: it just belongs to an individual .

And another food is eggs and most of the people here do not consume it but we tried to demonstrate to them on how to prepare because those that consume it are mostly those from the urban areas and they loved it after they tasted it .they mostly don’t see eggs as an essential thing.

Interviwer : So is it because of its scarcity in this area or?

Respondent: They don’t buy it because they don’t know its benefits but we are really trying to give them health education .

Interviwer : Are they not buying it because of the price or ?

Respondent: its thirty shillings each , but that is not the reason though its because of the cultural myths that they don’t eat the products of birds even the meat .

Interviwer : Which food do they prefer mostly?

Respondent: Goat meat and milk and they prefer milk that comes directly from the animal .

Interviwer : does that milk comes with any health issues ?

Respondent: Yes if its available , when a kid eat the same food everyday he or she will become malnourished eventually so we normally teach them about diet diversification to avoid that so they should atleast eat four groups of food out of seven .

Interviwer : What happens when people are malnourished ?

Respondent: others get weak and their immunity too drops and they get sick easily and we give them suppliments such as plumpynuts and plumpysups for free and its the UNICEF that provides it for the malnourished.

Interviwer : Does it mean when they are given this plumpynuts they don’t get malnourished or ?

Respondent:It does help .

Interviwer : What else about malnutrition?

Respondent:We also insight the mothers at the household level to try and feed the baby when the malnutrition is moderate and so the plumpynut is just given one satchet and so we moniter after every two weeks to see the progress.

Interviwer : Now in that case do the mothers lack food to eat because they give the food to the children ?

Respondent: It can also lead to shortage of food at home .

Interviwer: what leads to poor food security?

Respondent : Loss of livestock since they depend on it for money and also those that are paid salary are not paid on time .

Interviwer: is it lack of money or loosing of their animals ?

Respondent:its lack of money , there is a market here those that have animals sell and get money .

Interviwer : What else leads to food insecurity ?

Respondent:people are used to getting relief food and hence do not want to work hard .

Interviwer : So because of depending so much on relief food people fail to plan themselves and end up having a poor food security ?

Respondent: yes .

Interviwer : So NGOs also tries to help people but at the end?

Respondent :The NGO’s even tried giving cash transfer but people are stuck in the same situation no improvements .the food aid that people are given is not even sustainable .

Interviewer: But it’s not all that becomes dependent once they get the food aid right?

Respondent: yes it’s not all .

Interviewer: Are there food aid that helps with food security or it just helps with malnutrition ?

Respondent: it helps with food security .

Interviewer: Do you think there is something that we have left out?

Respondent: For the CHPs there is counseling card that each of them have and they teach women with things like feeding zero to six and maternal nutrition food groups .

Interviewer:: Do they give the card to people to read or it’s the CHPs that teaches the others ?

Respondent: They teach in groups and do household visits to the houses of pregnant women and lactating mothers depending on targeted individuals .

Interviewer: So when the CHPs are many they do health promotion.

Respondent : yes they help trace the defaulters, , health promotion,education, referrals.

Interviewer Health promotion improves nutrition right ?

Respondent: Yes .

Interviewer: So they also do treatment follow up?

Respondent: yes .

Interviewer: So that means HIV too gets controlled?

Respondent: yes it gets controlled.

Interviewer:in an household who makes the decision regarding water or food ?

Respondent: it’s the husband although this days people discuss before making the decision.unlike before where it’s only the husband that makes the decisions.

Interviewer: Have you seen any changes from that equality?

Respondent: Yes , for instance somethings men don’t understand it so when they discuss with the wife for instance things to do with food .

Interviewer: So gender equality brings about improved nutrition ? What else?

Respondent: Yes, For instance the food that they didn’t use to eat at home like the eggs when the woman learns in the group about its benefits she can introduce it to the family

and hence improves the nutrition of the family .

Interviewer: So that is because health promotion mostly goes to the women?

Respondent: yes because even now if you go to the houses you will just find women because men go out to relax most of the time.

Interviewer: What has brought about that change?

Respondent:Its just education given to people for instance through NGOs like the Smart Couples gave training on gender equality.

Interviewer: How does that improvement of gender equality impact the women workloads?

Respondent:Husband and wife help each other hence reduces workloads for women .

Interviewer: are you sure ? If you are not please just answer from what you are sure of .

Respondent: it’s there they help each other.

Interviewer : For that we put minus one .

Respondent: Yes.

Interviewer: What makes people live far from the town?

Respondent:People normally focuses on the life of the livestock mostly unlike the life of the human beings .

Interviewer: So it’s because grazing area is not found in this urban centers?

Respondent: Yes .

Interviewer: Has it things to do with cultural preferences?

Respondent: yes culture too contributes but little.

Interviewer: What about school?

Respondent:ECD is available even at the rural areas but when going to grade one they stay at a family’s place or some join boarding school.while in those outreach areas the children stays with their siblings and drink milk from their animals unlike when they stay in the urban areas where there is enough pasture for their animals .

Interviewer: So when they live close to their animals they get to drink more milk?

Respondent: Yes

Interviewer: Here in town do people buy milk fresh from the animals or the processed one?

Respondent:Fresh from the animals but the livestock have started to migrate to other areas where it has rained like places in hurri hills .

Interviwer: When there is diarrhea in people does their productivity drops?

Respondent:Yes when one is sick they cannot do work and when a child is sick he or she cannot go to school .

Interviwer : In this drawing of ours what does it mean when people get weak ?

Respondent:people could not take their animals to the grazing areas and water point too when weak and also health seeking behavior is low in this area .

Interviwer : What prevents them from coming to the hospital?

Respondent: its just their norm but some rely on the herbal mdecines .

( interviwee talking to someone else from outside)

Interviwer : So people not having good health seeking behaviuor means they will have poor health?

Respondent: Yes .

Interviwer : In your opinion when people have good health seeking behaviour does that mean the chances of them getting sick is minimal?

Respondent: They will still get sick but they will get to be attended to quickly and get well easily it won’t affect them as much as when they don’t.

Interviwer :Do you think going for herbal remedies or treatment is bad and does it help?

Respondent:Some does , for instance for diseases like brucelas people from a certain clan are believed to have a powerful saliva that when spit on the sick part of the sick person for some time it heals them.

Interviwer: in your opion what do you think people can do to prevent diarrhea?

Respondent: The first thing is to use nutrient dense foods , and not just to eat food because as we said earlier food is medicine on its own and also proper disposal of waste from the human body and also proper washing of the hands .especially those in the outreach area do not even have latrines instead they go to the bush to release themselves .

Interviwer : You talked of hand washing?

Respondent: Yes by washing hand alot of diseases are prevented and also by drinking clean water.

Interviwer : Where do people get climatic information from?

Respondent: Through Fm radio because they love listening to the radio at night easpecially .

Interviwer : for instance if they get information about a coming drought do they accept the information?

Respondent: Sometimes they don’t accept the metrological information from the radio but rather from the elders .

Interviwer:Do you think there is competition between men and women or between communities?

Respondent: There is and communities fight most of the time because of grazing areas .

Interviwer: So in this case there is tribal conflict mostly. What happens when conflict occurs between tribes?

Respondent: There is loss of lives and travelling from one place to another becomes difficult.

Interviwer: So water tracking too becomes difficult?

Respondent: yes

Interviwer When people fail to travel from one place to another because of comflict does it have any impact on the health of the people?

Respondent: As i said earlier there is a car that brings vegetables and fruits to this area so when there is conflict bringing those because an issue and hence there will be a shortage of food supply.

Interviwer: So that means food security drops?

Respondent: Yes, during such conflicts there is loss of lives and also the animals could not move freely to graze and end up getting weak .

Interviwer :What happens when the animals get weak?

Respondent: People sell their animals and when this animals die they end up not having animals to sell or if they get weak they couldn’t fetch good prices and hence lack of money and food .

Interviwer : Financial burden.What else?

( interviwer thanking the interviwee for the time and information)