

EXPLORING THE KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDE AND PRACTICE OF COMMUNITY HEALTH WORKERS ABOUT MALARIA PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT IN A SELECTED SECTOR IN GICUMBI DISTRICT.

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ABSTRACT

Although a big step has been taken in Rwanda to equip community health workers with knowledge about malaria prevention and control programs, there is little evidence that studies have been conducted to evaluate their knowledge, attitudes and practices in the above mentioned programs, and whether the training of community health workers has been an on-going process. Thus the aim of the study is to explore the knowledge, attitude and practice of community health workers about malaria prevention and management while the specific objectives of the study are to assess the knowledge, attitude and to identify the current practices of CHWs on malaria prevention and management. The results can be used in planning for more effective and reliable solution to health problems in relation to malaria. Purposive and random sampling was used for the study and 65 Community Health Workers were recruited in the survey. Each of CHWs was interviewed at home using a structured questionnaire. Thereafter the data were coded and entered in the computer for analysis with Epi-Info and SPSS and later for interpretation. The mean age of the participants was 39.2 years old with a standard deviation (SD) of 7.6. Health facility and school were the most common source of information within the community. The respondents who participated in this study had moderate level of knowledge in the areas explored (mean=7.5, SD = 2.15) and 47.7 % had good practice in malaria prevention and management (mean= 4.75, SD = 1.39). This study also revealed out few knowledge deficits such as 34.5% of the respondents felt that only spraying is enough to prevent mosquito no need for other ways. May be these people believe and might not appreciate the importance of other malaria preventive measures. Significant associations were found between employment status and practice ($p < 0.0015$) and knowledge and practice ($p = 0.00$). The findings of the study indicate that if people are supplied with accurate knowledge through appropriate channels, they may eventually have good practices in malaria prevention and management. Regular CHWs' training on malaria prevention and management is necessary to address the knowledge gap revealed in the study.