

Success sees Phase 2 of Campaign for Fistula Free Northern Ghana take off.

With the success of Phase 1 of Campaign for Fistula Free Northern Ghana, NOYED-Ghana has taken the first steps to expand its community led education and awareness campaign in to the remote district of Kpandai in the Northern Region.

“We focussed on four communities on the outskirts of Tamale. At the beginning of phase 1, only 57.5 per cent of respondents stated they had heard of fistula, however the majority were unable to state when or where they had heard of it nor describe any signs or symptoms,” NOYED-Ghana Executive Director Mr A. A. Iddi said.

“By the end of our three month campaign 92.5 per cent of respondents stated they had heard of obstetric fistula and 70 per cent could describe the causes, signs and symptoms of this devastating condition.”

Campaign for Fistula Free Northern Ghana is a community led campaign focussed on educating men and women about the causes, prevention and treatment methods of obstetric fistula.

Launch in May 2014 in an effort to help efforts of institutions like the UNFPA and Ghana Health Service in eradicating obstetric fistula, NOYED-Ghana is one of the only NGOs focussing on the debilitating condition.

“Obstetric fistula is a hole between the birth canal and bladder or birth canal and bowel caused by prolonged and obstructed labour,” Mr Iddi said.

“It renders the women incontinent, often leaving her isolated, ashamed and depressed for many years.

“Her baby often dies and in many cases she is completely abandoned by her husband and cast out from her community, due the severe stigmatisation associated with the condition.

“The good news is that it can be prevented and treated and that’s where we come in, making sure that at risk communities are aware of the dangers and their options in terms of prevention and treatment,” he said.

Phase 1 of Campaign for Fistula Free Northern Ghana was funded by the Trull Foundation USA through Sister Cities of Tamale. Phase 2: Kpandai began in November and will focus on community led education in six communities and five schools. Phase 2 is supported by philanthropic individuals, including major sponsor, Biodistributors, Tasmania.