



*Angel holds her newborn daughter, Tomy, just days after her complicated delivery.*

## EmONC Trainings in the DRC

ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH | SEMI

### HELPING MOTHERS DELIVER SAFELY: ANGEL AND TOMY'S BIRTH STORY

When Angel Mboyo began to hemorrhage at only seven months of pregnancy, she feared for the life of her unborn child. In her remote village in northern Kasai province of the Democratic Republic of Congo, or DRC, birth complications often resulted in death for either the mother or child or both. She knew she had to seek care. Bleeding and doubled over in what could only be described as labor pains, she gathered her few possessions and walked out of her small mud hut to flag a motorbike. Thankfully, her village in Kinkole Health Area was only five kilometers from the provincial Ilebo General Reference Hospital, known locally as HGR Ilebo. It would be a grueling five kilometers on bumpy, single track dirt roads, but at least she wouldn't have to suffer a long trip in her condition.

When she arrived, Nurse Beatrice Shikadi, head nurse of maternity, received her. Nurse Beatrice had recently completed a training in Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care, or EmONC for short, organized by the FCDO-funded SEMI Project. During her training she learned

how to correctly use a partogram, an effective tool for the early detection of maternal and fetal complications during childbirth. Using the partogram, she began the process of monitoring the elements of fetal progress and vitality, as well as uterine contractions. The partogram revealed that the baby's vitals were distressed. Nurse Beatrice knew that if the baby didn't come now, she might not make it. Because of her training, she also knew this was a delivery that required skills that she didn't have. Angel needed to have a cesarean section and she needed it now.



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Nurse Beatrice called Dr Albert Ndjondo. Dr Albert says he was born in this very hospital. Once when he was young, he was sick and his mother brought him to HGR Ilebo for care. He remembered watching the doctors help so many people that day, and it was then that he knew he too wanted to be a doctor.

Dr Albert and his team were also attendees at the SEMI EmONC training. He knew exactly what to do to bring Angel's baby safely into the world. His team prepared Angel for surgery and within the hour, Baby Tomy was alive and breathing in her mother's arms.

Dr Albert and Nurse Beatrice are two of the 502 health workers trained in 18 health zones in Kasai province during the first several months of the project. These health workers went on to mentor another 424 service providers during mentoring clinics, extending the reach of qualified personnel significantly. With this knowledge, these health workers have safely delivered more than 108,000 babies in project health zones since December 2022.



*Dr Albert delivered Baby Tomy by C-section just hours after her mother arrived, hemorrhaging at HGR Ilebo.*



*Nurse Beatrice holds Baby Tomy with mother, Angel. She was the first to receive her when she arrived bleeding at the hospital.*



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## About the SEMI Project

Funded by the UK Government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) through UK Aid, IMA World Health is the lead consortium partner for the SEMI Project, a three-year health systems strengthening programme focused on Kasai Province, in the DRC, with targeted national support for evidence-based health policy reform. At 620 deaths per 100,000 live births, DRC has one of the highest maternal mortality rates in the world. The SEMI project is designed to improve health outcomes for 1.6 million women, girls and children and contribute to ending preventable deaths in Kasai, one of the poorest provinces in DRC with the highest maternal mortality rate in the country. SEMI operates in all 18 health zones of Kasai Province.