

SUCCESS STORY

Male involvement in Child Caregiving



Photo: IMA World Health

Marco Kibusi and Helena Mitegeko with their twins at RCH clinic in the Geita Region.

'I didn't know the secrets of healthy babies, I will keep on assisting my wife with home chores.'

Marco Kibusi is a father of twin, 5-month-old boys, Elisha and Elia. He lives with his wife, Helen Mitegeko in Katete village; one of 115 villages in his home district of northeastern Tanzania.

Malnutrition is prolific here: more than 1 in 3 children in this area do not have access to the proper nutrition that will help them to develop fully. The Kibusi family faced this challenge but, fortunately, it had a unique advantage. Going against the social norms of his area, Marco Kibusi played a vital role in his children and wife's overall wellbeing by becoming engaged in their health and access to care.

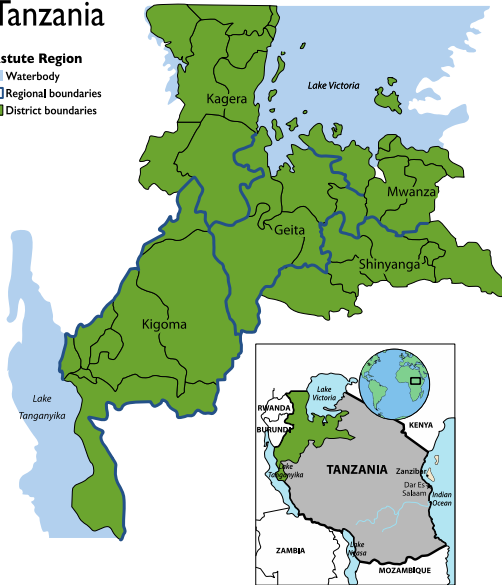
In March 2019, community health worker Penina Mitishamba of Katete Village visited the Kibusi's home. Negotiation for behavior change is an approach used in home visits and support groups by the program Addressing Stunting in Tanzania Early, or ASTUTE program. Mitishamba promotes male involvement in family life as a means to reduce stunting.

On one visit to the home, Marco Kibusi told Mitishamba that his wife was not producing enough milk for their twin babies. Mitishamba let the family know struggling to produce enough milk is a common challenge and provided small and simple actions to help.

Mitishamba encouraged the parents to breast feed babies more than 10 times in 24 hours. She also urged the twin's mother to breastfeed exclusively, avoiding costly formula.

Tanzania

Astute Region
Waterbody
Regional boundaries
District boundaries



In an unusual adjustment, the father took on some of the mother's usual chores. He worked to harvest on the farm, cleaned, cooked meals, washed clothes and attended to his children. It was an effort to ensure his wife had enough time to breastfeed their children.

*'Now, my babies are healthier than before,' Kibusi said
"This is because my wife now has enough milk to breast feed our kids".*

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