



**BAMA**  
Babies and Mothers Alive

# **ANNUAL REPORT 2022**

## FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS



2022 was quite an exciting year characterized by significant recovery from the COVID pandemic. We completed our name change to Babies and Mothers Alive Foundation, fulfilling our goal of consolidating our programming around reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health services.

We are excited about scaling of the BAMA Program to Masaka City and Masaka District as well as the continuation of the Mama Ambassador Program, thanks to the funding from USAID through John Snow Incorporated and Grand Challenges Canada.

We thank BAMA USA that has continued to enable us to run the core BAMA Program through our unrestricted annual grant. Without this generous support, it would be next to impossible to run the other funded programs.

In 2023, we come to the end of the Wehubit/ Enabel funded Mama Rescue Program which has shown impacts on reducing decision time of referral, and ensured many vulnerable women receive timely obstetric interventions. We remain optimistic regarding continued funding for this high impact program.

We received an extra year to continue the USAID Family Planning Activity funded through Pathfinder International. We have noted an up to a 20% increase in family planning uptake for modern methods.

Having completed the Islamic Development Bank-funded Cervical Cancer Prevention Program, we have worked with the districts to continue the program with Ministry of Health Global Fund and CDC funding.

We appreciate the unwavering partnership and support from the four district local governments of Rakai, Kyotera, Masaka City and Masaka, as well as well all of the health workers that they have made it possible to implement our programs through their dedicated services.

We expanded our staff to support the implementation of the scaled programs to Masaka. This required a newly equipped office space in Masaka. With this expanded staff, we noted improvement in the delivery of our programs.

We look forward to improving and consolidating all of our work in service to the women and children of Uganda.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Daniel Murokora".

Daniel Murokora MD  
Executive Director  
Babies and Mothers Alive Foundation



2022 was a year of change for Babies and Mothers Alive. We start with the obvious, that we have transitioned from Brick by Brick, to Babies and Mothers Alive Foundation. This change is more than just a re-branding exercise. Rather it is an evolution in our mission that has been taking place since the launching of our comprehensive reproductive, maternal, and newborn health program. Since 2015, we have increasingly focused on building a strong network of trusted partnerships to create a 'virtuous cycle' to improve the quality of health care for the thousands of women and children we serve. What do we mean by this virtuous cycle? It begins with strengthening the health facility work environment, improving the morale of thousands of health workers. We focus on building the knowledge and skills of providers, which in turn creates a culture of caring throughout the health system. The improved quality of care, along with our community health education activities increases utilization of services which in turn results in dramatically improved health outcomes. Over the past eight years, we have seen reductions in institutional maternal and perinatal mortality of 74% and 47% respectively.

For the first time, in July of 2022, we began to scale the BAMA maternal and newborn health program to the adjoining Masaka and Masaka City Districts, serving approximately 68,000 reproductive-aged women and 16,000 newborns. We began with a comprehensive needs assessment, identifying gaps in 13 health centers and hospitals, which we will now begin to address. Our work in four districts is aligned with the Ministry of Health's national goals, so that we serve as a full partner of government.

This year, thanks to the generous support of Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency, and Spring Fertility, our Mama Rescue Project was in full swing.

This simple mobile phone app links women in labor to local motorcycle taxi drivers, providing lifesaving transport from remote village to health center, and emergency referral from health center to hospital through a corps of trained automobile taxi drivers.

Since June 2021 we transported 27,541 women in labor, with an average transport time of just 15.3 minutes. 2743 mothers with complications were referred from health centers to district hospital for emergency obstetric care. The time for referral was reduced from 3 ½ hours to just 32 minutes.

Thanks to support from Grand Challenges Canada/Saving Brains and USAID/JSIs Partnership Plus Program, we have expanded the Mama Ambassador Program, whose goal is to improve early childhood development and the mental health of young mothers, to a third year. We have continued to demonstrate improved health for over 800 adolescent mothers and their children. Thanks to our expanded male engagement activities as well as our partnership with extended families, political, and law enforcement leaders, we saw a decrease in the incidence of sexual and gender-based violence in 2022.

A core component of our Transition to Scale strategy is to establish a network of East African NGOs that share our mission of reproductive, maternal, and child health as a human right. Creating a community of support and shared learning will allow BAMA to disseminate many of our core innovations, scale our reach, and encourage integration of our health interventions into the government system. Toward that end, we have established a new partnership with the Adara Group, an Australian non-profit Organization focusing on improving intensive neonatal care in Uganda. Over the next 18 months, we will engage in a learning exchange, sharing our Mentor Midwife and Mama Ambassador model, while we adapt Adara's Hospital to Home program, supporting newborns who are at risk for developmental delay.

In 2022, we continued our successful collaboration with the FreO2 Foundation, which has resulted in the installation of sustainable oxygen concentration and delivery systems in 20 health centers and hospitals throughout Uganda.



We are forever grateful for the partnership of the Rakai, Kyotera, Masaka City and Masaka District Governments, the Ugandan Ministry of Health, and the communities we serve. Our successes are the result of a dedicated staff of 43 health professionals who everyday go above and beyond to serve the women and children of Uganda. We also thank hundreds of midwives, physicians, and Mama and Papa Ambassadors. Last but not least, we thank our many donors; your generous investment in the health of women and children gives us the strength and courage to continue .

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marc Sklar".

Marc Sklar MD, MPH  
Executive Director  
Babies and Mothers Alive USA





**Who we are**

Babies and Mothers Alive (BAMA) is an innovative bi-national partnership between Babies and Mothers Alive Foundation, a community-based NGO registered with the Government of Uganda, and Babies and Mothers Alive USA, a US-based 501(c)(3) non profit.

**About us**

We were founded by Drs. Daniel Murokora and Marc Sklar in 2003 with the mission to improve reproductive, maternal, and newborn health in Uganda. Our staff of 43 committed health professionals empower women and their families to build healthy communities by supporting reproductive, maternal, newborn, and early childhood healthcare, sexual and reproductive health education.





## **Babies and Mothers Alive(BAMA) Program**

Improving Maternal & Child Health

The Babies and Mothers Alive (BAMA) Program is a partnership with the Ugandan Ministry of Health to improve the quality of health care and reduce maternal and newborn mortality in the Rakai and Kyotera Districts.

Since 2015, the BAMA Program has led to a 74% and 47% reduction in maternal and perinatal mortality respectively, across 48 partnering health facilities. The BAMA Program mobilizes 150 Community Health Workers, known as Mama and Papa Ambassadors, to help increase demand for institutional obstetric services among hard-to-reach populations.

Our dedicated Mama and Papa Ambassadors assist pregnant women in rural areas to develop birth preparedness plans, stressing the importance of delivering at a health facility under the supervision of a skilled birth attendant. Our 30 peer educators, known as Mentor Midwives, have trained 300 healthcare providers in emergency obstetric and newborn care — preventing the vast majority of deaths that are due to treatable complications from childbirth or pregnancy.

In 2022, we began a Transition to Scale process, expanding the BAMA Program to the adjoining Masaka City and Masaka Districts, serving a total of 920,000 people.



## **Mama Ambassador Program (MAP)**

Improving Adolescent Maternal & Child Health

In Uganda, 24% of women become pregnant before the age of 19. With the support of the Canadian Government's Grand Challenges Canada Saving Brains Program, Babies and Mothers Alive Foundation launched the Mama Ambassador Program, establishing over 30 peer support care groups for 430 adolescent mothers at Rakai Hospital.

These monthly sessions focus on parenting skills, infant bonding and psycho-social support for young mothers. The program demonstrates significant improvements in infant development, improved mental health for mothers, and a greater than two-fold increase in uptake of postpartum family planning.

In 2020, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), we began a scale-up of this successful program to reach 1,000 adolescent mothers, fathers and their extended families. In 2022, with the support of both USAID and Grand Challenges Canada we extended the MAP to a 3rd year. We have also expanded our male engagement and family outreach with the goal of promoting girls and women's health and rights, and ending sexual and gender-based violence.







## Mama Rescue Project

Improving Access to Maternal & Child Health

In 2021, Babies and Mothers Alive, with support from Enabel, the Belgian Development Agency's Wehubit Program and Spring Fertility, launched the Mama Rescue Project, a mobile phone application providing women from remote areas with free transport to health facilities via motorcycle or automobile taxi.

In 2022, we transported 18,013 women in labor from village to health center, as well as providing emergency transport for 2,174 women in need of referral from health center to the hospital.

On average it now takes just under 16 minutes to transport women from their homes to health centers. We have reduced emergency referral time from health center to hospital from 3 ½ hours to 34 minutes. Our solution has been developed locally in partnership with Yo! Uganda, with support from MTN, the largest mobile phone network carrier in sub-saharan Africa.

By addressing the delay in accessing skilled maternity and newborn care once the decision to deliver at a health center has been made, we have dramatically reduced the time it takes women to move from their communities to health facilities and to refer them from lower level to higher level health units. This leads to a reduction in maternal and newborn complications and deaths.





## **USAID/Uganda Family Planning Activities**

Increasing access to family planning information and services

Thanks to the support of USAID through their partnership with Pathfinder International, Babies and Mothers Alive Foundation is implementing the Uganda Family Planning Activities (FPA) in the Rakai District. Our goal is to increase access to modern family planning and to promote best practices in sexual and reproductive health.

In 2022, we completed our second year of implementation of this critical component of the BAMA comprehensive reproductive health program. High fertility rates and adolescent pregnancies contribute to increasing health risks for both mothers and babies. Over the past two years, we have mobilized and sensitized communities to advocate for positive social norms, provided voluntary family planning methods, and created referral links for family planning within the district health system. Our work focuses on respect for the health and rights of women, ensuring that they have full agency in reproductive health decision-making.

Community health dialogue sessions were implemented in seven sub-counties in 48 health facilities. These sub-counties were selected due to their low contraceptive prevalence and high adolescent pregnancy rates. We also conducted home visits, and leveraged existing youth groups to integrate family planning messaging. Through cultural and religious platforms, and by engaging male partners, we are increasing women's agency in accessing contraception. We also support access to family planning methods and linkage to services by community health workers.





## OUR STORIES

“Through the BAMA Program, we have been able to provide psychosocial and child support to adolescent mothers and their babies.

I would like to thank our adolescent mothers for their time and consistency in attending peer-led sessions that we have conducted for the last three years.

I also thank the funders of this program. Their generosity has enabled us to reach out to hundreds of adolescent mothers and their babies with knowledge that has transformed them into empowered mothers.”

Sandra Namajjuzi,  
Mama Ambassador



“I used to fight with my wife everyday because I suspected her of cheating on me. When she refused to have sex with me, i would beat her in front of the children and kick her out of the house. As a husband, I did not treat my wife well.

I over-worked her and did not share anything with her because of my ego. When I began attending the men’s sessions at the health facility, my perception of a lot of things changed. I began paying more attention to my wife’s needs.

In addition to this, Mr Wekoye of BAMA called me for a talk. This was because they were already talking to my wife who had reported to them the incident that had happened at home.

Mr Wekoye together with Ms. Nabayinda counselled us as a couple on how we should handle our family issues in order to live in harmony.”

Byaruhanga,  
Adolescent father.







“People are no longer ashamed to report their cases. They have the law on their side, and we always make sure they get the right treatment.”

The potential benefits of men’s involvement include improved family health, better communication between couples, joint and informed decision-making within-households, and improved sexual and reproductive health.”

Allan Wekoye  
BAMA Counselor



“I have driven a number of mothers who were in labor, and I have many memories. I remember a mother I drove whose pains were aggressive, in that whenever they happened, she kept hitting me in the back.

She hit me so hard that I thought we would not make it to the health center in time. Thanks to Mama Rescue I rushed the lady to the hospital or else she would have given birth at home.”

Evarist  
Mama Rescue Boda Boda rider





## Our Impact: Babies and Mothers Alive



**27,842**  
people served  
through  
Community  
Health  
Outreaches  
conducted in  
2022



**6094**  
women  
referred to  
health  
facilities by our  
Mama and  
Papa  
Ambassadors



**534**

Newborns  
admitted  
to our 3 NICU's in  
2022, 97%  
discharged alive

**79%**  
of women  
attended at  
least 4  
antenatal  
care visits, up  
from 43% in  
2017



**74%**  
reduction in  
maternal deaths  
since 2016





## Our Impact : Mama Ambassador Program



**984**

Adolescent mothers  
and babies served



**244** spouses  
actively participate in  
peer-support sessions



Improved early  
childhood  
development  
scores across 4  
domains

**37**

peer-support  
saving groups  
established



**79%**

reduction in the  
incidence of  
sexual and  
gender-based  
violence  
amongst  
participants





## Our Impact: Mama Rescue Project

**24,571**  
women in labor  
transported from  
village to health  
center



**2,743**  
women with  
complications  
received  
transport from  
health center to  
hospital



Health facility  
births increased  
from **79.7%** in  
2018 to **94.4%** in  
2022



**166** motorcycle and  
30 automobile taxi drivers  
trained on the Mama  
Rescue platform

Average time for  
transport village to  
health center 15.8 .  
minutes, time for  
referral reduced from  
**3** 1/2 hours to **34**  
minutes.





## Our Impact: Family Planning Activity



Contraceptive uptake reached **88%** in Rakai District, a **26%** increase since 2021



Community mobilizers completed **226** dialogues reaching **4521** people

**5479**

community members reached through home visits



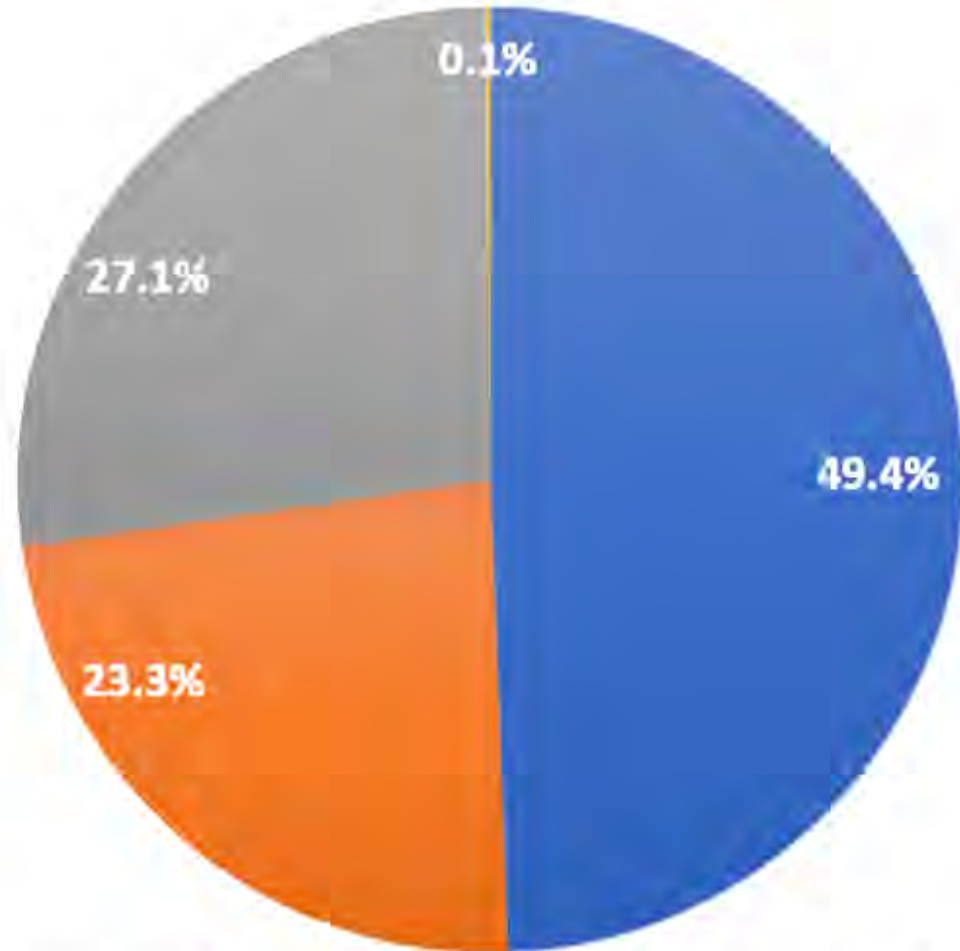
Women only dialogues held for **1026** women





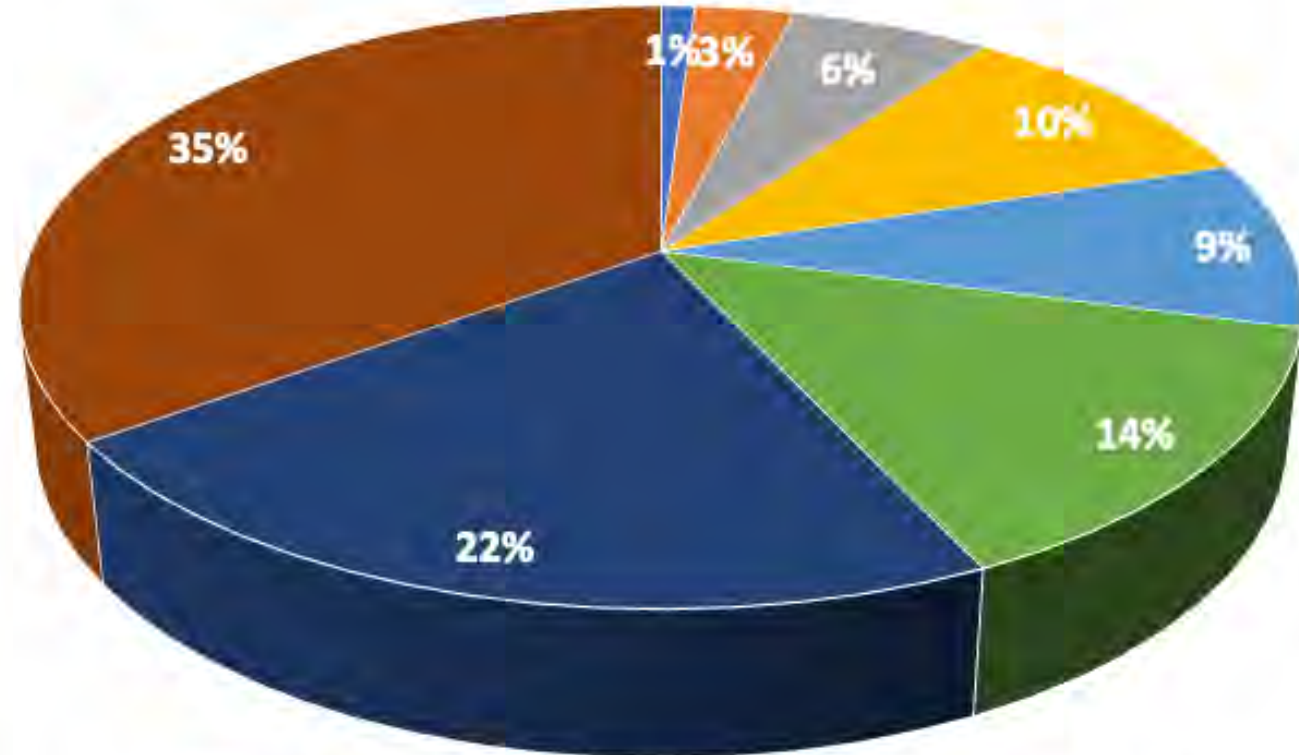
# BABIES AND MOTHERS ALIVE FINANCIAL SUMMARY

**TOTAL REVENUE BAMA FOUNDATION / BAMA USA**  
**USA**  
**\$1,603,458**



**FOUNDATIONS : \$792,320**      **GOVERNMENT : \$374,058**  
**INDIVIDUAL Donors : \$434,804**      **OTHER : \$2,277**

**Total Expenses BAMA Foundation / BAMA USA**  
**USA**  
**\$1,662,937**



**CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM : \$16,629**  
**FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES : \$49,888**  
**BAMA CORE PROGRAM : \$99,776**  
**FREQ2 PARTNERSHIP : \$166,294**  
**BAMA USA SALARIES : \$150,246**  
**ADMIN : \$232,811**  
**MAMA RESCUE PROJECT : \$365,846**  
**MAMA AMBASSADOR PROGRAM : \$581,446**



# Thank You to Our Generous Partners



Ugandan Ministry of Health



WEHUBIT



*Nicoll Family Fund*



**Pathfinder**  
INTERNATIONAL



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Partnerships **PLUS**