



SAVING LIVES

Follow-up on Ms. Napir Shipatia at Primary Health Care Centre MATARA

Behold, children are a blessing from the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. Psalm 127:3

On 25.November.2021, Kuron Peace Village published a story about a miracle of birth. A young Toposa mother, Ms. Napir Shipatia, was in severe danger of dying and her unborn child with her. There was a problem with labor and the child would not come out. She had to be taken immediately by vehicle to Kapoeta Hospital where an emergency C-Section was done and she and her new baby boy were both saved.

Recently, we visited with Ms. Napir in Namuton Village to see how she is getting on. Ms. Napir related her story to Midwife Patricia Nakolong and Lay Missionary Gabe Hurrish. As we spoke, Napir held the very healthy looking Nokolong close to her. This is her second child and she seems to beam with pride at her "miracle" baby. She tells her story:

I am the one who was saved by the good people of Matara Health Centre. I wanted to deliver the baby in my village because that is our tradition. All the women and men said I should do it that way. I am a mother once already so I knew there was a problem with this second child. I was in too much pain and the baby would not come out. I came to the centre because I knew the people there would do their best to help me.

I especially knew Midwife Patricia because she had visited us in the village some times.



All the staff at the Health Centre took interest in my problem. They checked me good. They told me we have to go to a far away place to get the right care. I agreed but I had no energy to resist. All the people of my village thought they would not see me again because they knew that this situation means the mother and child will die. They had seen it so many times before. Many of our mothers die. When I left, they thought it was the last time to see me.

It was because of Matara Health Centre and Kuron Peace Village. They arranged that vehicle so fast. We were on that terrible road for the longest time. The pain in my womb was the worst on the road as the bumps and bounces made me suffer for the entire time. I put my trust in God and I was prepared to die. Midwife Patricia kept encouraging me to be strong. She told me to keep drinking and relaxing. It is because of her that I am alive.

When we arrived at that hospital it was not for me to say anything. I was exhausted. I had no strength. I trusted God and Midwife Patricia. She was my only friend there because I don't know anyone. I couldn't understand their language. Only Midwife Patricia could talk to me as she is Toposa. I watched the people talk and then move me here and there. Midwife Patricia had to bathe me for the surgery. I didn't understand anything and I was a bit scared. Everything was different to me. But Midwife Patricia assured me it would be alright.

They made my body to not feel anything. I just laid quiet. Suddenly I find my baby there! We were alive! The baby boy was healthy. He started to suck at my breast and I felt good. It hurts where I was cut but it is better now. I thank God for the good health workers at the Hospital and Matara PHCC and their help in keeping me and my baby alive.

The staff in Kapoeta hospital were all nice to me. There was only one person who could speak my language. This was strange for me as I have never been there before. The food was the best. I had lots to eat and it tasted much better than the food we eat here in the kraal. I wish I could make such food but we are poor.



During my time in the Kapoeta Hospital, I learned the importance of keeping myself and my baby clean. They made us bathe every day. At first, I didn't know why but now I understand the advantages. Now I try to keep myself and my baby as clean as possible. We don't have so much water in the Namuton Kraal. This was the first time I was in a vehicle. The first time I was so far from home. The first time to be around different people. So the whole time was new to me. But I don't want to go back unless Midwife Patricia comes with me. I would be scared to do that alone.

Midwife Patricia was very generous to me and my mother in law who went with me. She selflessly gave 20 USD of her own money to pay for food for myself and my mother in law. I am poor and had no money for such things. Midwife Patricia also buys candies with her own money and gives to the children when she visits our villages for health education and vaccinations. She really cares for us.

I stayed two weeks and then returned with a Kuron Peace Village vehicle. Everyone in the village was so happy to see me. They thought I was dead when I left. They didn't expect me to return. They were shocked to see us. Usually my people believe that a C-Section means death to at least mother or child. So they couldn't believe I was still there.

Now I tell all the others to keep as clean as they can. I tell them to take their children to the Health Centre before it is too late. I tell them that this PHCC is for us and they know the real medicine. Not like that of the witch doctor. I have changed my attitude and I will tell others about the good things at the Matara Primary Health Care Centre. They should listen to the staff there.

COMMENT by Ms. Napil of Namuton Village 2022: *“I am so thankful that the PHCC is there and they can help us Toposa stay alive and our children too. I named my baby Nakolong after Midwife Patricia in honor of her great service to me.”* (Editors note: *while we were in the village, it was obvious everyone in Namuton knew Midwife Patricia and respected her for her work. She certainly is highly respected by the villagers in that area.*)

(Sources: interview of Ms. Napir and Midwife Patricia in Namuton Village 5.Jan.2022 edited by gh)