

There are multiple factors that affect the sustainability of maternity waiting homes. This is an organizational tool to acknowledge common challenges to sustainability as you plan and implement your MWH.

Factors that Affect Sustainability	Considerations & Challenges
Financial	<p>Revenue-generating activities should come from multiple sources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Health system via government budgets <input type="checkbox"/> Income-generating activities chosen by the community <input type="checkbox"/> Donation or monetary contributions <input type="checkbox"/> Fee for use <p>Financial training for community members has been shown to be helpful in financial sustainability and increase community involvement.</p> <p>Challenge: Charging a fee for use or use of supplies may lead to a barrier and decrease the use of the MWH. If this is a consideration, it is important to include the women and understand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What is a reasonable fee? - Would they still use the maternity waiting home if there was a fee?
Operational (Staffing / Supplies)	<p>Whether owned and managed by the community itself or by the government with community decision-making, community involvement is critical to sustainability. Ongoing commitment in times of political change must be maintained.</p> <p>Staffing considerations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Selected by community <input type="checkbox"/> Responsible for day-to-day operations <input type="checkbox"/> Involvement and oversight of health facility staff
User Satisfaction	<p>It is important to periodically assess the women's satisfaction and access to supplies while staying in the homes. Past areas of dissatisfaction with access to supplies includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Overcrowding - Safety and Quality of supplies

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of access to mosquito nets - Lack of private storage spaces - Lack of activities
<p>Transportation/Location</p>	<p>The MWH must be located within easy access for community members and next to a health facility for emergency situations</p> <p>Challenges: Some women do not use the MWH due to distance or the expense of transportation. In some cases providing a transportation incentive could encourage women to travel to the MWHs.</p>
<p>Cultural</p>	<p>There are many cultural considerations that must be addressed to ensure optimal use of the home, which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Visitation and attendance by family members <input type="checkbox"/> Providing traditional healing practices such as traditional teas, steam baths, etc <input type="checkbox"/> Arranging child care <input type="checkbox"/> Male role <input type="checkbox"/> Attendance of traditional birth attendant <p>Challenges: Husbands are often the primary decision-makers and do not always allow the women to use the MWHs or leave the home for long periods during pregnancy. Community support early in the planning process could help address this challenge.</p>
<p>Communication/Education</p>	<p>Education and communication between community members and health facilities are crucial to the successful use of the MWH, which should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Educational program for community members <input type="checkbox"/> Educational programs for pregnant women and their families <input type="checkbox"/> Educational programs for health facility staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> On-going outreach within the community <input type="checkbox"/> Continued feedback from community members <p>Challenges: Lack of knowledge from health facility staff and community members about how or when to use the MWH can cause a disconnect and decrease the overall use of MWH.</p>
<p>Referral System: 1) referring women from the community to MWH; 2) referral from MWH to appropriate level of care</p>	<p>1) Referral systems have been shown to improve the use of MWHs which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Increased community awareness and engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Women are more likely to use the MWH if referred by a friend or family member <input type="checkbox"/> Providing an incentive to refer <p>2) MWHs provide referrals for women in the community to higher levels of care in emergency situations or in high-risk pregnancies. This referral is essential to reducing the risk of maternal and neonatal morbidity and mortality. Access and referral to an appropriate level of care in the case of emergencies is essential.</p>

References

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