

THE leadership of Kayenze village in Ilemela District has banned expectant mothers to ride a motorcycle as a means of transport to a health facility for delivery.

According to Kayenze Village Chairman, Amos Mbagu, the move was taken because a bodaboda means of transport on the district's rough roads posed a risk to pregnant women.

Speaking at a meeting organised by a Mwanza based non-governmental organization (NGO), Tandabui Health Access Tanzania (THAT/Afya Radio), attended by the spiritual and village leaders, Mr Amos Mbagu said the move to ban women from traveling on a motorcycle was reached after the death of an expectant mother in January this year.

Mr Mbagu said Mariam Sebastian (28) died at Sangabuye Health Centre after arriving there on a bodaboda from Kayenze to Sangabuye health center about 20 kilometers away. The Kayenze Village Chairman added the incident prompted the introduction of the bylaw.

The late Mariam died when she was giving birth. The doctor's report shows that she had suffered extensive bleeding caused by the rough and bad road she had traveled on from village to the health center.

Mariam's death prompted the village's leadership into taking the action of banning expectant mothers from traveling to a health centre on a motorcycle. According to the bylaw, both the motorcyclist and the expectant mother - his passenger will each pay a fine of 20,000/-.

Mr Mbagu advised people

to use the alternative transport means of taking a taxi. Fare for a taxi ride from Kayenze to Sangabuye is between 10,000/- and 15,000/-. A taxi service is available at Kayenze Village and costs 20,000/- for an expectant to the health centre.

Mr Mbagu said from April this year the village has collected 180,000/- as fine from those who violated the bylaw. Kayenze Village authority also encourages expectant mothers who go to the health centre by a taxi, in the absence of their husbands by giving them 20,000/-.

The Spiritual leaders, Traditional birth Attendants (TBA's) and village as well as street leaders who attended the meeting have applauded the village authority for taking action to reduce maternal mortality rate in the area with the strategy.

The strategy includes fine collected from a pregnant woman found riding on a motorcycle, her relative or spouse, on her way to the health centre for a gynaecological reasons.

Presenting a religious sermon in Geita, Nyamagana and Ilemela chairman of BAKWATA in Ilemela District, Sheikh Saad Salim said that, they had started to take action after they were given maternal health education geared to reduce maternal mortality rate.

The project is supported by THAT/Afya radio, which implements maternal health project in the three districts.

Deputy Chairman of BAKWATA in Ilemela District, Sheikh Saad Salim said they have conducted a meeting with imams from various mosques in the district and agreed to include maternal health on the agenda of their sermons. Likewise, they agreed to form a committee to monitor devel-

