UoN Innovation on Food Security Awarded 10Million

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A team led by Chemistry lecturer, Dr, Benson

<u>Wamalwa</u> at the <u>University of Nairobi</u> has been awarded **Ksh. 10.9 million** in an innovation that will see more **parents immunise their children**. The project dubbed **Vaccination/ Mother and Child Wellness card** seeks to provide solutions to rural mothers who battled with the choice of paying to immunise their children and buying seedlings for their farms.

Vaccination/mother and child welness card provides a <u>bar code</u> that is attached to a clinic booklet to enable health workers to keep track of vaccinations. Parents who immunise their children also get <u>incentives</u> on farm inputs that they purchase by getting discounts. So far, more than 2,000 families have benefited from the project which has been piloted in Mt. Elgon and Kitale and will be expanded to TransNzoia and Bungoma.

Varsity team gets Sh10m for innovation

BY NATION REPORTER

A team from the University of Nairobi has been awarded Sh10.9 million for an innovation that handles child deaths and food security.

In the project dubbed 'Vaccination' Mother and Child Wellness Card', mothers whose children are vaccinated get an incentive of discounts on farm inputs that they need to purchase.

More than 2,000 rural families in Mt Elgon and Kitale have seen their lives improved through the initiative that also impacted on more than 9,500 others.

"For some parents, it is a game of tradeoffs, whether to pay for their children's immunisation or buy maize for the farm. We gave them both of these worlds," Dr Benson Wamalwa, a biochemistry lecturer who led the university team, said on Friday.

The card uses a bar-code that a health worker attaches to a clinic booklet, to keep track of vaccinations.

The bar-code is later scanned through a phone scanner that recognises Quick Response (QR) codes for discounts on farm products.

Family livelihoods

"This scheme also keeps track of vaccine stocks available and a health facility knows when to restock so that mothers are not turned away for lack of vaccines. And all this information can be shared on a central database," added Dr Wamalwa.

The pilot project will be expanded

to Bungoma and Trans Nzoia. It intends to reach 50, 000 children aged under five years and 14,000 pregnant women by 2017.

GlaxoSmithKline Vice President for African and Developing Countries Ramil Burden, while presenting the award, said the innovation allows vaccination in the communities to be linked with family livelihoods.

Save the Children Country Director Duncan Harvey said: "Child immunisation is critical in reducing deaths in children aged under five. This innovation has an economic, social and health benefit to the community."

The award for this year is worth Sh91 million and will be shared among four African health initiatives.

The other winners were from South Africa, Zambia, and Uganda.