

In a car, Blessing is born.

Kei is remote village, up a very potholed rocky road on the South Sudan border; you climb several hills on the way and cross many rivers with local wooden bridges.

After a long, 240km dusty journey, Harriet & I arrived at Kei Health Centre, ready for a cup of tea and to wash the dust of our bodies.

The clinic was busy with a lot of activity. The nurse came quickly and told us they had 2 women in labour. We went to the labour ward and found the two women in active labour. One of the women had an obstetric problem, the midwife suspected placenta praevia. They had called the ambulance from Yumbe, but it was not available. The family had been searching for other means of transport since 10 in the morning. All that was available was a motorbike.

Peninah was expecting her 6th child, and looked very pale and undernourished as she lay on top of the delivery couch. She was anxious about her forth coming delivery as the midwife had explained there was a problem. When she heard we were going to take her to Yumbe Hospital in the car, she quickly got herself organised and planned which woman she wanted to accompany as her helper.

The midwife, Judith, rushed around getting the Maama kit and extra delivery supplies ready. With a polythene sheet carefully positioned on the back seat we all, got into the car and set out on the bumpy journey down the 20kms dusty potholed road to the Hospital.

Just 15 minutes into the journey Peninah wanted out, as she felt she needed to pass urine, we all said try and hold on until we reach Yumbe. She continued to moan through her labour pains and then a few minutes later, she said "I feel something coming". We pulled over to the side of the road, everyone out of the car. Harriet was busy trying to direct the men on push bicycles away from the car and explain the car is not broken down, no we have not run out of petrol and we are OK.

Peninah lay down on the back seat. On a quick examination we saw meconium stained liquor in the yet unbroken membrane sac. Anxious moments for a midwife "what are we going to do with a limp baby at the roadside? What about the placenta praevia?" Judith and I had on gloves and ready for action, we prayed for an uncomplicated delivery, and a healthy baby. Didn't have long to worry, another pain the "waters broke" and the head emerged, God had pulled the placenta up out of the way. Quickly the towel was ready to receive the baby on the front seat. The next pain a baby boy was born. He was limp and not breathing, more arrow prayers, vigorous rubbing and suction got him breathing and then a lusty cry. We now were praising God, but we still had to deliver the placenta. We gave Peninah an injection and delivered the placenta and Praise God, no bleeding.



After a few minutes we tidied and mopped up the car the best we could, Peninah got dressed and cuddled her baby with happiness. We turned the car around and went back to Kei, with lots of laughter and excitement.

Blessing Emmanuel was born on the back seat of our car, on a dusty road, beneath the teak trees. Mother and baby are both healthy.