

The costs of hospitalization contribute to indebtedness (Household 1)

This household had accumulated debts due to a child's 'serious malaria' in 2001 and were still experiencing difficulties repaying three years later. The child reportedly had a high fever and convulsions, and was admitted to Kilifi district hospital for a week. Although the household could not recall the exact cost, transport costs, hospital charges, and the expense of food items for the child and the carer triggered risky coping strategies. In order to meet these costs, two goats were sold and the household borrowed 'heavily' from friends and neighbours. Although the child recovered after this treatment, the household was unable to repay the debts. It was also reported that the 'malaria' caused another problem (brain damage) that eventually led to the paralysis of the child. In December 2003, the child died from complications that the household believes arose from the initial malaria illness. They incurred additional costs on the funeral that were financed from the sale of a further two goats. Failure to repay their initial debts meant they were no longer on good terms with their neighbours. They still hope to repay one day because they appreciate the assistance they received and because their failure has affected the reputation with and ability to borrow from all neighbours.