

HOME-BASED NEWBORN CARE



Saving the Lives of Newborns

Around the world, more than three million newborns die in their first month of life every year. Many of these deaths can be prevented using proven and cost-effective interventions delivered by community health workers. Home-Based Newborn Care (HBNC) packages successfully address the main causes of death, decreasing newborn death rates by up to 70%.

Case Study: Society for Education, Action and Research in Community Health (SEARCH) — Gadchiroli, India

Problem

- Of the millions of newborn deaths that occur globally each year, 99% occur in developing countries, where the majority of births continue to take place at home.
- Proven low-cost interventions can address the main causes of these deaths - infection, asphyxia (oxygen deficiency), and pre-term birth.
- Many families do not have access to health facilities or are unwilling to take their newborns out of the home for treatment.

Solution

- SEARCH developed and field-tested Home-Based Newborn Care (HBNC) packages that bring the information and tools needed to save newborns to the homes of the expecting mothers.
- HBNC packages include health education for the mother, the presence of a health worker during home delivery, care of the baby at birth, and home visits during the baby's first month of life.

How it works

- Local women are selected and trained as Village Health Workers (VHWs).
- VHWs are present during home deliveries, and advise and assist mothers in newborn care.
- VHWs visit newborns at home several times during their first month of life and are trained to detect and to treat basic illnesses and make referrals when necessary.

Reach/Scale

- SEARCH currently uses HBNC packages in 40 villages in rural Maharashtra, India. They are a trainer of both public sector and NGO health workers from around the world.
- Many aspects of SEARCH's HBNC package have been adopted by governments and NGOs for implementation in countries across Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Cost-Impact Profileⁱ

- Cost per newborn life saved (death averted) ~ \$150*
- Cost per mother-newborn served ~ \$7*

Representative Impacts

- Newborn deaths (as measured by neonatal mortality rate) decreased by 70% in SEARCH villages compared to control areas; the neonatal mortality rate in the SEARCH intervention area fell from 62 to 25 deaths per 1,000 live births
- Maternal morbidities in SEARCH intervention areas were reduced by 49%
- Reduced case fatality in leading causes of newborn death

ⁱFigures based on research conducted from 1993-2003, presented in Bang et al. (2005).

*Costs given based on analysis from 1995-2003, presented in 2003 prices. According to estimates from SEARCH staff, costs may have doubled in the past ten years due to inflation.

(SEE CASE STUDY ON WEBSITE FOR REFERENCES AND SOURCES OF DATA)



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