

Women and Children First

Improving maternal and newborn health in Bogra District, Bangladesh



Communities supported
196
Lives saved
23
Women, children and adolescents benefiting
28,091

Problem

In Bangladesh, every year, 5,200 women die in pregnancy and childbirth and 73,780 children before one month of age. This is due to low coverage of key health interventions and high inequalities.

Approach

WCF MNH tool

- 196 groups established with 10,500 members
- Developed local answers including: raising awareness; generating funds; providing emergency transport; preventing early marriage.

Partner

Diabetic Association of Bangladesh – Perinatal Care Project

Funder

UK Aid (£250,000)

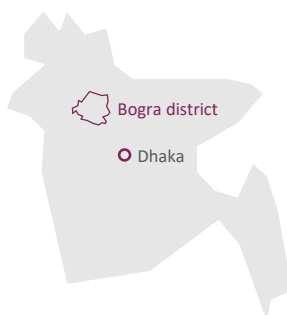
Dates

2014 – 2016

Project population

96,985

Bogra District, Bangladesh



Social accountability

- Agreement for female PLA group leaders to represent communities at meetings for 13 community clinics
- Sharing concerns on service quality and accessibility

Advocacy

- Regular meetings with 91 Imams, 250 community leaders, health workers at five health facilities and NGO and government representatives
- Sharing learning to inform decision-making

Results

- Large improvements in care-seeking: early antenatal care (42%), attending 4 or more antenatal care appointments (65%), delivery with a skilled attendant (15%) and seeking postnatal care within 7 days of delivery (21%)

- For home deliveries large improvements in safe newborn care: 99% of babies with bathing delayed for 24 hours or more (71% at baseline) and 97% of babies with umbilical cord left undressed (51% at baseline)
- Overall: 34% reduction in neonatal mortality and 19% reduction in stillbirths

Lessons learned

- Local female volunteers are capable of successfully facilitating PLA groups
- Working with Imams is important to ensure community support and male involvement
- Potential to scale PLA groups through Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare systems

www.womenandchildrenfirst.org.uk

Figure 1: MNH group membership

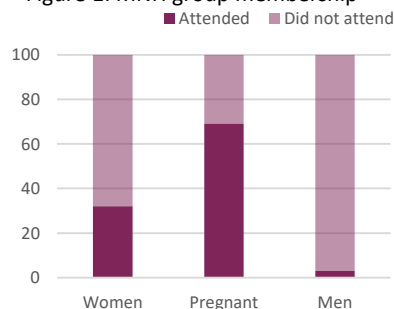


Figure 2: Home-care practices

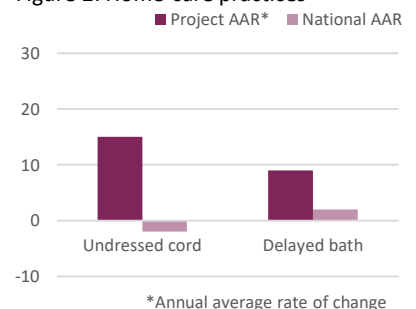
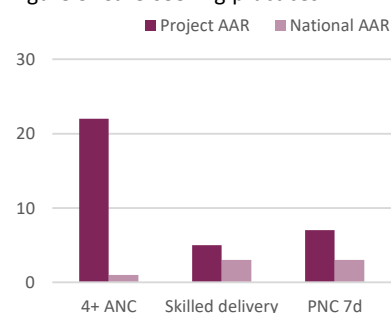


Figure 3: Care-seeking practices



Community health worker

"I have worked here for 5 years. I have hardly seen pregnant women...coming to get ANC...but, in the last year they have started coming every month for check ups, to take tablets and capsules...the number of pregnant women coming was around 5 or 6 per month, but now it has increased to 18 – 22 per day."