Healthy Fertility Study: Integrating Family Planning within a Community-Based Maternal and Neonatal Health Program in Rural Bangladesh

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Evolution of MNH Packages in Sylhet: Projahnmo in Bangladesh
- Designed a community-based maternal and newborn care intervention package and evaluated the effectiveness of the package using a cluster randomized design
- A home care package, which included community health worker (CHW) antenatal and postnatal home visits and management of the sick newborn, reduced NMR by 34%

Integration Model Being Tested
The Healthy Fertility Study is taking the intervention model from the Projahnmo project that delivers a package of maternal and newborn health services through home visits and community meetings conducted by CHWs as a base. The Study then seeks to integrate communications about family planning (FP) including the lactational amenorrhea method, (LAM) and supply of contraceptives. into this system, to promote acceptance and use of FP methods in the postpartum (PP) period.

Healthy Fertility Study in Bangladesh: Context
Selected Family Planning Indicators, Bangladesh and Sylhet, BDHS 2007

Study Sites
- Sylhet district
- Zakiganj and Kanaghat sub-district
- Intervention area (four unions): Manikpur, Kajalchar, Jhilingbari and Dakshin Banigram
- Comparison area (four unions): Sultanganj, Kholachara, Parang and Paschim Dighinpar

HFS in Bangladesh: Study Site, Design, Data
- Two sub-districts of Sylhet district: Zakiganj and Kanaghat
- Quasi-experimental with four control unions (MNH only) and four intervention unions (FP/MNH)
- Study cohort: 2,247 pregnant women enrolled from intervention unions and 2,257 pregnant women from control clusters
- Cohort will be followed up–up to 36 months postpartum

Study Timeline
- Evaluation: Data collected at baseline, 3, 6, 12, 18, 24, 30 and 36 months postpartum by workers independent of intervention
- Completed 12 months of data collection

Community Health Workers
- Young woman with grade 10 education from the local community
- Training received:
  - MH: 21 days
  - HTSP, PPFP and LAM: 5 days
  - FP: 4½ days
  - Injectables: 1½ days theoretical and practical in field

CHW Counseling Topics and Timing

RESULTS
Exposure to Communications Materials and Community Activities

Contraceptive Use at 12 Months Postpartum among Women with a Surviving Infant, by Study Arm

Duration of Exclusive Breastfeeding by Study Arm

Contact Information

Lessons Learned
- The HFS demonstrates that:
  - Integrating FP within a community-based MNH program is feasible
  - The model is effective for increasing modern method use
  - There was no notable negative effect on the delivery of MNH services
  - The promotion of LAM had a positive effect on the duration of exclusive breastfeeding

Study Successes to Date
- Demonstrated integrated FP/MNH community-based model
- Demonstrated increased use of contraception during first 12 months of postpartum period—the highest risk for mother and newborn
- Drew attention to PPFP and influenced government and NGO programs in Bangladesh, e.g. Mayer Hashi and MaMon

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