

Effect of A Community Health Worker led Intervention on Skilled Birth Care in Rural Mwingi West Sub-County; Kenya. A Quasi Experiment

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ABSTRACT

Background: Despite strong evidence that Skilled Birth Care (SBC) significantly reduces maternal deaths, one in four babies worldwide is delivered without SBC. This has kept Maternal Mortality Rates (MMR) high in sub-Saharan Africa and Kenya in particular. Kenya adopted Community Health Strategy (CHS) with the aim of improving community health services. The aim of this study was to evaluate the effect of CHS on SBC in Mwingi west sub-county, Kenya. **Methods:** A pretest -posttest quasi experimental study design was conducted with 1 pretest and 2 post-test household surveys done in intervention and control sites. Sample size in each survey was 422 households. Women with a child aged 9-12 months were main respondents. **Results:** In intervention site; SBC utilization significantly improved by 12.9% (57.9% vs. 70.5%). Women in end term survey were 1.6 times (Adj. OR=1.556, P<0.0001; 95%CI: 1.295-1.868) more likely to deliver under SBC compared to baseline. Compared to control, proportion of women delivering under SBC in intervention site increased by 8.6%. **Conclusion and Recommendation:** CHS significantly improved utilization of SBC in Kenya. To improve Maternal and Child Health outcomes in Kenya, implementation of CHS should be fast tracked in all counties.

Key Words: Community Health Strategy, Community Health Workers, Skilled Birth Care, Maternal and Child Health

50-word Abstract: Community Health Workers (CHWs) are key to improving utilization of Skilled Birth Care (SBC) in Africa. Evidence from a quasi-experiment conducted in Kenya indicates that the Community Health Strategy, which is a Community Health Worker led intervention increased utilization of Skilled Birth Care by 1.6 times.

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