

**CARING FOR NEWBORNS
AND CHILDREN
IN THE COMMUNITY**

**A TRAINING COURSE
FOR COMMUNITY
HEALTH WORKERS**



Caring for the newborn at home

PARTICIPANT'S MANUAL



WHO Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Caring for newborns and children in the community: a training course for community health workers: caring for the newborn at home.

Contents: Participant's manual – Counselling cards – Facilitator notes

1. Infant, Newborn. 2. Infant Mortality – prevention and control. 3. House Calls. 4. Home Care Services. 5. Infant Care. 6. Counseling. 7. Teaching Materials. I. World Health Organization. II. UNICEF.

ISBN 978 92 4 154929 5

(NLM classification: WS 420)

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Printed by the WHO Document Production Services, Geneva, Switzerland

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The WHO Department of Maternal, Newborn, Child and Adolescent Health (MCA) and UNICEF initiated the development of the materials *Caring for the newborn at home*, to increase access to postnatal care services and essential interventions for pregnant and lactating women and their newborn infants. They are a follow-up to the WHO/UNICEF joint statement on *Home visits for the newborn child: a strategy to improve survival* (2009).

Rajiv Bahl (WHO/MCA) and Judith Standley (consultant, UNICEF) developed the materials on *Caring for the newborn at home*, with substantial contributions to the content from Pyande Mongi (WHO/AFRO), Nancy Terreri (UNICEF/HQ) and Luwey Pearson (UNICEF/ESARO). Other members of the WHO/MCA working group on community level newborn and child care, including Jose Martines, Samira Aboubaker, Bernadette Daelmans, Cathy Wolfheim and Teshome Desta provided many valuable inputs during development and field testing.

The training materials draw on experiences of training community health workers in caring for the newborn at home in several research studies, particularly the SEARCH study in India (Principal Investigator: Abhay Bang) and the NEWHINTS study in Ghana (Principal Investigators: Betty Kirkwood, Zelee Hill).

A special word of thanks is also due to Pavitra Mohan (UNICEF India) and Nita Bhandari (Society for Applied Studies) who coordinated the production of the illustrations for the Asian context, and Rolando Jose Rolando Figueroa (UNICEF/ESARO) who did so for the African context. Patricia Shirey conducted a final review of the materials.

WHO and UNICEF are grateful to all external contributors who made suggestions for the scope and content of materials for community health workers: Abhay Bang, Isabelle Cazottes, Lastone Chitembo, Luis Gutiérrez, Sharad Iyengar, Orphelia Khachatryan, Harish Kumar, Dharma Manandhar, B. Mayame, Pavitra Mohan, Vinod Paul, Mwale Rodgers, David Sanders, and Ellen Villate.

UNIT 1: HOME VISITS DURING PREGNANCY (SESSIONS 1 THROUGH 12)

GETTING STARTED WITH HOME-BASED NEWBORN CARE

SESSION 1: Introduction to training, importance of home visits for newborn care, and CHW training materials

Objectives of this session

At the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Discuss why the mother and baby are particularly vulnerable during birth and the first days of life, and the importance of newborn care
- Describe the materials that are used in this training and will help you in your work

Why newborn babies need extra care

The first month of life, called the newborn or neonatal period, is the most risky period in the life of an individual. Out of every 100 children born alive, about 10 die before reaching the age of 5 years. Of these 10, about 4 die in the first month of life itself, the newborn period. Most of these newborn deaths occur in the first week of life.

Many newborns fall sick in the first days of life due to complications of childbirth. It is therefore important to have skilled care at birth so that any complications can be prevented or treated. The first day of life is particularly important. While inside their mother, babies are safe, warm and well fed. After birth, newborns have to adapt to a different way of feeding, breathing and staying warm. It is very important to help them meet their new needs. At this time babies can get sick easily and the sickness can become serious very quickly.

Story of a death

- A woman in a nearby village, Ameena, was pregnant with her first child. She was very happy.
- Ameena's family was as poor as others in the village. She was short and thin. She did not go to get any health care during pregnancy.
- When labour started Ameena's husband called the TBA. The baby was born small and weak. Ameena did not breastfeed the baby. Her mother-in-law fed the baby sugar water with a dropper because she thought that breast milk should not be given because the baby was too small.
- By the end of the second day, the baby stopped accepting sugar water, became cold and died the next morning.
- Ameena was very sad. She blamed herself for not being able to take care of the baby.

Unfortunately, this story is not uncommon. But it is not necessary that the stories of babies in

your community should end like this. Most newborn deaths are preventable. It is important to make these little arrivals to our world welcome and help them stay with us.

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