

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO MATERNAL AND PERINATAL DEATHS IN MBALA DISTRICT, CASE OF MBALA GENERAL HOSPITAL, ZAMBIA

DOCTOR BISIMWA NYENYEZI

Main finding It was noted that after implementing the recommended activities in the maternity wing at Mbala General Hospital in Northern Province of Zambia, the number of maternal deaths and perinatal deaths had remarkably reduced. The observed results were as follows:

At community level- early antenatal booking, community involvement in the continuity of care

At Health facilities level: early referral of pregnant women has also been achieved

At institutional level- enhanced skills of officers in obstetric case management.

BACKGROUND & CHALLENGES TO IMPLEMENTATION

BACKGROUND: Mbala General hospital is a second level referral hospital located in Mbala district of Northern Province of Zambia. The district has a population of 218,000(2010 national census). The hospital offers the following services: ante natal, Neonatal, Maternity, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Surgery, Operating theatre, Ophthalmology, Dental, Radiology, Internal Medicine, Pharmacy, Laboratory, Physiotherapy, ART and anti-gender based services among others. It also superintends over the Mbala College of Nursing.

CHALLENGES IN IPC ACTIVITIES IMPLEMENTATION: as a referral facility Mbala General Hospital has an average of 160 deliveries per month including a monthly average of 60 caesarian section and 100 spontaneous vaginal deliveries. From 2018 to 2021 quarter 2, Mbala General Hospital had recorded 18 maternal deaths (MD), 120 neonatal deaths (NND), 98 macerated still births (MSB), 174 fresh still births (FSB). These raised numbers could be explained by various challenges faced daily by the hospital in implementing IPC programs as shown in the table below:

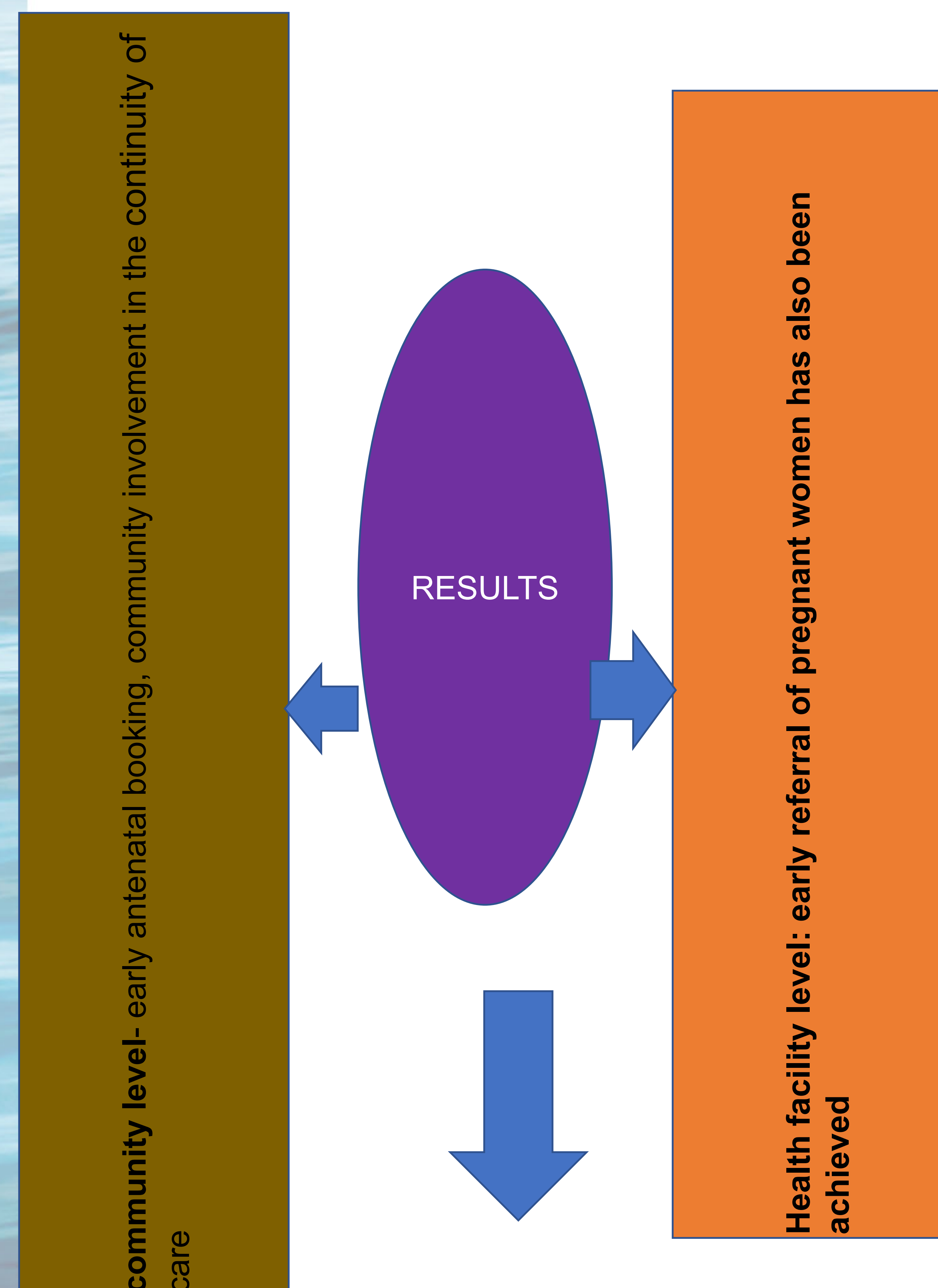
Quantitative method was used and one on one interviews with the staff attached to the maternity ward. Patient files and registers were also sampled to analyse data. The activities undertaken are in the table below

1	Running out/low of essentials commodities, inadequate staff,
2	Lack of knowledge on IPC benefits in the community,
3	Limited resources,
4	Delay referrals,
5	Delay intervention,
6	Absence of pediatrician in the province(before 2021) to obtain appropriate consultation,
7	Absence of NICU (neonatal intensive care unit) making it difficult to provide adequate care to sick babies,
8	Rigidity towards Social Behavioral Change and control (SBCC) where pregnant mothers prefer to deliver from homes,
9	Taking of what is commonly known as African oxytocin to enhance labour and generally late health seeking behavior commonly seen in grand multiparous and late or no antenatal booking

METHODS / ACTIVITY

1	Introduction of risk mothers' registers in all the facilities,
2	Training and mentorship of staff on referral guidelines and IPC,
3	Deployment of more staff to reduce work load, involvement of communities leaders in SBCC,
4	Opening of NICU and reinforcement of activities carried out at mothers' waiting shelter,
5	Targeted mentorship at facility level
6	, formulation of a provincial and district whatsapp group for consultation
7	Virtual provincial and national weekly review of maternal and perinatal deaths (during Covid 19 pandemic)
8	Introduction of risk mothers' registers in all the facilities,
9	Training and mentorship of staff on referral guidelines and IPC,

RESULTS



CONCLUSIONS

Maternal and perinatal deaths is a public health concern in Zambia and joint effort need to be put in place to significantly reduce the incidence of those deaths. Everybody needs to be involved to achieve this goal from the community to the health facilities.

Hence it's recommended to health workers at facilities and hospital level to follow the guidelines when attending to pregnant women and to refer early when need arises.

To provincial health office to continue supporting staff by always providing required mentorship

To MOH to employ more staff and supply adequate essential commodities in order to allow staff to attend to pregnant women according to IPC guidelines.

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MORE INFORMATION / REFERENCES

Optional. If you want to direct readers to a full paper or website associated to this research, add links here or alternatively insert a QR code. There are many sites that can generate codes – for example: <https://www.the-qrcode-generator.com/>

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CONTACT

Dr Bisimwa Annita. Phone Number 0978808222. email nyenyezibisimwa@gmail.com



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