

Home Based Life-Saving Skills

Community Partnerships for Safe Motherhood and Child Survival



The PRIME Project, in collaboration with its supporting partner, the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), reached another milestone with the development of its new *Home Based Life-Saving Skills* (HBLSS) intervention model.

The HBLSS model helps to improve delivery outcomes for pregnant women and children. Through community mobilization and training of family caregivers and home birth attendants, basic life-saving measures for common obstetric and newborn complications can be applied at the community level. These interventions, combined with effective, timely linkages to referral facilities where life-threatening complications can be managed, are geared toward reducing maternal and neonatal mortality. Supported by a number of international reviewers, ACNM will field test and adapt the HBLSS manual and training materials in late 2000 and early 2001; implementation, evaluation and replication will follow.

The HBLSS manual, comprised of 12 topics, is a flexible modular design, allowing the community and the HBLSS trainer to select priority topics through a participatory process. To maximize effective communication and learning among community members who may not be able to read, HBLSS content will be taught using pictorial "Take Action Cards" which learners will take home for reference.

- Content includes:
- Introduction to HBLSS
 - Overview and selection of mother and baby problems (topics)
 - Prevention and home-based management of maternal bleeding, infection, prolonged or obstructed labor and eclampsia

**PRIME Regional Office
for Asia/Near East**
53 Lodi Estate
New Delhi 110 003, India
Tel: 91-11-464-8891
Fax: 91-11-464-8892
intrah@jasd101.vsnl.net.in

PRIME II

Intrah School of Medicine
University of North Carolina
1700 Airport Road, Suite 300 CB 8100
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27599-8100
Tel: 919-966-5636 Fax: 919-966-6816
intrah@intrah.org www.prime2.org

- Prevention and home-based management of neonatal infection, low birth weight and asphyxia
- Stabilization and transportation of a mother and baby to a referral facility
- Family planning, with an emphasis on the lactation amenorrhea method.

The HBLSS approach to behavior change emphasizes the importance of community problem identification, problem solving, negotiation, and respectful consideration of existing solutions before attempting to integrate biomedical practices. The overall goal is to develop consensus on practices that are not only safe, but also feasible and acceptable to users in a home setting. Toward this end, the HBLSS model emphasizes community involvement at every step to:

- Learn what pregnant women, family caregivers and home birth attendants have experienced
- Share what the Trained Health Worker has learned
- Come to a common understanding and agree on what to do
- Practice what to do
- Decide whether the practice makes a difference (evaluate)
- Remember key prevention messages.

Through empowerment, participation and practical application, HBLSS promotes community level contributions to global Safe Motherhood and Child Survival.



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