



THE POSTPARTUM IUD (PPIUD) PROJECT in the Department of Global Health and Population NEWSLETTER

Issue 2: July 2016

In this issue, we are pleased to provide an update for the PPIUD study. More specifically, we focus on activities undertaken since January 2016, when the first issue of the Newsletter was released. In addition to the progress made in each country, we include Q&A with Dr. Mahesh Puri, the research coordinator from Nepal, as well as publications and other professional activities by the PPIUD Harvard Team. We hope you find the Newsletter of interest and are grateful for your feedback on what topics to include in the next issues.

STATUS AS OF JUNE 30, 2016

	Sri Lanka	Nepal	Tanzania
Number of women enrolled in the study	24049	37890	14425
Number of women counselled on PPIUD	5320	3242	978
Number of women received PPIUD	1493	472	147

Update from SRI LANKA



Enumerators at the 9-month training

Sri Lanka has made great strides in the past six months. In addition to continuing enrollment of women in the study, Sri Lanka College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (SLCOG) collected 6-week follow-up data for women receiving PPIUD. SLCOG also held workshops in February, with members from the Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health (HSPH), on in-depth interviews with women where three Sinhala speaking and three Tamil speaking qualitative interviewers were trained. In addition, four medical interns from the University of Colombo, Faculty of Medicine were trained on conducting in-depth interviews with providers. Following the training, interviews were conducted with women and providers in Polonnaruwa, Chilaw, and Nawalapitiya facilities. All in-depth interviews were transcribed and are currently being translated into English.

In May the HSPH team returned to assist SLCOG in training the enumerators for the 9-month follow up interviews. The training took place in June and special emphasis was placed on the contraceptive calendar that ascertains retrospective information on contraceptive use and childbearing. The entire field team practiced with several contraceptive scenarios using both tablet-based and paper-based questionnaire.

In-depth interview training in Sri Lanka



In-depth interview training in Sri Lanka

Interview with Dr. Mahesh Puri

The PPIUD Project will profile activities from each country to learn about the unique challenges and opportunities. We are delighted to begin with Dr. Mahesh Puri, who is also the National Coordinator for Nepal, and serves as the Associate Director of Centre for Research on Environment Health and Population Activities (CREHPA).

In the context of Nepal, how important is postpartum protection against unintended pregnancy?

It is now well established that postpartum family planning plays an important role in preventing unintended pregnancies and, consequently, reducing maternal and infant-child mortality. It promotes the health of mothers and children by increasing pregnancy interval and helps to avoid financial, psychological, and health costs due to the early onset of next pregnancy.

However, in Nepal, many women and men overlook post-partum contraception due to poor knowledge of pregnancy risks soon after birth, difficulty in accessing quality services, sociocultural and economic issues such as poor geographical and financial access, provider bias, fewer options for method choice, lack of effective knowledge about the various family planning methods, low decision making power of women, and fear of side effects act as serious barriers to postpartum family planning use in Nepal.

How is postpartum IUD perceived for contraception after delivery?

Despite various advantages and a government priority, the use of IUD is very low in Nepal. Only 1.3% of currently married women in Nepal were using IUD in 2011. The Nepal Demographic and Health Survey (NDHS) conducted in 2011 showed that only 9% of women who had a live birth in the five years preceding the survey were given information or counselled on family planning during a postpartum checkup. This suggests there are missed opportunities to provide information and counselling

on family planning methods and services to postpartum women. Though postpartum contraception is considered important for women, the service is very limited and not institutionalized in Nepal.

What are the main challenges you encountered in implementing the research evaluating the impact of the intervention promoting postpartum IUD?

Sensitization to government stakeholders about the value of systematic and rigorous evaluation for policy and programs, and receiving their support is a major challenge. Coordination among government stakeholders and intervention implementing partner is also not an easy task.

What is the demand for postpartum contraception among women who do not wish to have another child or wish to wait to have the next child and what are the effective ways to promote postpartum contraception, in particular postpartum IUD for these populations?

I think there is a demand for postpartum contraception among women who want to space their births, provided they receive complete information and effective counselling before and during pregnancy. We need to work on overcoming both demand side and supply side barriers for promoting postpartum contraception, in particular for postpartum IUD.

Do you have any suggestions for the implementation of the intervention and/or research evaluating the intervention?



Dr. Mahesh Puri training enumerators in Nepal

A designated family planning counselor in facilities where women deliver and more IEC/BCC activities that are tuned to local context and intensive orientation to community level health workers, health volunteers and community leaders would contribute in achieving better outcomes and in meeting women's need for postpartum contraception.

Papers Submitted for Publication

David Canning, Iqbal H. Shah, Erin Pearson, Elina Pradhan, Mahesh Karra, Leigh Senderowicz, Till Bärnighausen, Donna Spiegelman, Ana Langer: *"Institutionalizing postpartum intra-uterine device (IUD) services in Sri Lanka, Tanzania, and Nepal: Study protocol for a cluster-randomized stepped-wedge trial."*

Mahesh Karra, David Canning, Sorcha Foster, Iqbal H. Shah, Hemantha Senanayake, U.D.P. Ratnasiri, Ramya Priyanwada Pathiraja: *"Quality of Antenatal Counselling and Acceptance of Postpartum IUD in Sri Lanka"*

Update from NEPAL

Impressive progress was made by CREHPA in the first half of 2016. CREHPA has continued enrollment activities of women in the study, collected data for 6-week follow-up of women receiving PPIUD, and conducted in-depth interviews with women and service providers in three Group 1 hospitals. Guidelines for the in-depth interviews and the 9-month follow-up questionnaire were reviewed and translated into Nepali.

A training workshop on 9-month follow-up interviews was held from 16-19 May, 2016. The CREHPA core study team facilitated the training, with assistance from the HSPH team, which was attended by 23 enumerators. The head of the Gandaki Regional Hospital and representatives from the District of Public Health gave opening remarks at the workshop and Nepal Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (NESOG) president, Dr. Lata Bajracharya, presented on the intervention activities on the last day of the training.

The training covered the study background, objectives, tools, and design and discussed the 9-month questionnaire, ethical aspects and challenges, and strategies for

follow up interviews. The participants also devoted several days to tablet training on CommCare.



Elina Pradhan of HSPH training enumerators on form 3 in Nepal

Professor David Canning, PI for Sri Lanka, also visited Nepal at this time, and had the opportunity to meet with enumerators, members of CREHPA and NESOG, and the head of the Family Planning Division at the Ministry of Health and Population.

Update from TANZANIA



Enumerators with Joel Francis and Walter Shoo of MDH, and Leigh Senderowicz from HSPH

The Tanzania team at Management and Development for Health (MDH) has been hard at work evaluating the intervention in collaboration with the Association of Gynaecologists and Obstetricians of Tanzania (AGOTA).

In June HSPH team members visited Tanzania to assist with training for in-depth interviews and for 9-month follow up interviews. Two experienced qualitative interviewers were hired by MDH and trained to conduct in-depth interviews with both women and providers. The qualitative training took place from June 22-24, and on the final day the interviewers had the opportunity to pilot the interview guide at Muhimbili National Hospital.

The 9-month follow up interview training sessions took place in multiple locations. The first occurred in Dar es Salaam, from June 29-July 1, for MDH enumerators associated with Muhimbili,

Tumbi-Pwani and Mt Meru hospitals. The second took place in Mbeya over July 4-6, for MDH enumerators associated with Mbeya and Dodoma hospitals.



Dr. Erin Pearson training enumerators in Tanzania

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