An exploration of opportunities and challenges in implementation and practicing Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) in rural Sindh, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Background: More than 2.5 million newborns die each year, accounting for 47% of children dying worldwide before their age of five years. Complications of preterm birth are the leading cause of death among newborns. Pakistan is amongst the top ten countries with highest preterm birth rate per 1000 live births. Globally, Every Newborn Action Plan (ENAP) has emphasized on Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) as an essential component of neonatal health initiatives.

Methodology: We conducted this qualitative study with 12 in-depth interviews (IDIs) and 14 focus group discussion (FGD) sessions, in two health facilities of Sindh, Pakistan during October-December 2016, to understand the key barriers and enablers to a mother's ability to practice KMC and the feasibility of implementing and improving these practices.

Results: The findings revealed that community stakeholders were generally aware of health issues especially related to maternal and neonatal health. Both the health care providers and managers were supportive of implementing KMC in their respective health facilities as well as for continuous use of KMC at household level. In order to initiate KMC at facility level, study respondents emphasized on strengthening of availability and quality of services as well as training of health providers as critical prerequisites. Also in order to continue practicing KMC at household level, engaging the community and establishing functional referral linkage between community and facilities were focused issues in facility and community level FGDs and IDIs.

Conclusion: The study participants considered it feasible to initiate KMC practice at health facility and to continue practicing at home after returning from facility. Ensuring facility readiness to initiate KMC, improving capacity of health providers both at facility and community levels, coupled with focusing on community mobilization strategy, targeting specific audiences, may help policy makers and program planners to initiate KMC at health facility and keep KMC practice continued at household level.

ATTACHMENTS

[FINAL study plan_introducing KMC in Pakistan.docx](#)