

## RESEARCH BRIEF

# Increasing knowledge of home based maternal and newborn care using self-help groups: Evidence from rural Uttar Pradesh, India

This study examined the feasibility of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to contribute towards improving knowledge around Home-Based Maternal and Newborn Care (HBMNC) among communities in Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh (UP). Health workers' outreach to pregnant women and new mothers in this region remains low, and thus SHG members have greater potential to disseminate knowledge among the community. The study explored whether an intervention of discussions on HBMNC at SHGs increased participants' knowledge and improved behaviors related to HBMNC.



Photo Credit: Population Council

## RECOMMENDATIONS



Promoting health behaviors through SHGs is potentially scalable and sustainable as it builds on an existing structure to disseminate information.



Successful implementation requires the support of larger organizational structures, such as Village Organizations (VO), which may help SHG interventions be more regular and effective.



Design additional interventions and messaging around HBMNC topic as knowledge is low, especially for women with little or no education.



Photo Credit: Population Council

*Building on an existing platform for reaching women, peer educators were trained and facilitated discussions in their SHGs on HBMNC topics.*

## FINDINGS

- Compared to knowledge at baseline, there was a significant increase in knowledge of most HBMNC topics, suggesting the intervention was effective.
- However, knowledge remained low-- after the intervention, nearly 2/3 of respondents remained unaware of maternal and newborn danger signs.
- Women's education was a key determinant in increasing knowledge around maternal and newborn health care.
- From an implementation science perspective, SHGs that did not form a village organization had more irregular attendance, indicating the critical role of the village organization.

## METHOD

A pre-post intervention study, with experimental and comparison groups was conducted in Bangra and Baragaon blocks of Jhansi district, Uttar Pradesh, to measure change in knowledge on HBMNC topics. Bivariate and multivariate models were conducted to assess changes in HBMNC knowledge and behaviors.

## EVIDENCE

The Evidence Project uses implementation science—the strategic generation, translation, and use of evidence—to strengthen and scale up family planning and reproductive health programs to reduce unintended pregnancies worldwide. The Evidence Project is led by the Population Council

Mozumdar A et al. 2018. "Increasing knowledge of home based maternal and newborn care using self-help groups: Evidence from rural Uttar Pradesh, India," Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare. Full paper available at [doi: 10.1016/j.srhc.2018.08.003](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.srhc.2018.08.003)

The Evidence Project is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of cooperative agreement no. AID0AA-A-13-00087. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of the Evidence Project and Population Council and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government  
[www.evidenceproject.popcouncil.org](http://www.evidenceproject.popcouncil.org)