EXPLORING THE EFFICACY OF COMMUNITY WOMEN’S GROUP LEADERS TO DELIVER HEALTH INFORMATION ON HYPERTENSION DISORDERS OF PREGNANCY TO EMPOWER WOMEN & ENHANCE LINKAGES TO CARE

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Outline

- **Introduction**: *Community Health in 2019*
- **Background**: *Ending Eclampsia project*
- **Methods**: *Training Leaders*
- **Results**: *Lead, Reach, Change*
- **Conclusions**: *Underutilized & Effective*
“There is growing recognition that CHWs and other types of community-based health workers are effective in the delivery of a range of preventive, promotive and curative health services.”

– WHO, October 2018
Community Women’s Groups in Nigeria
Ending Eclampsia Project

Primary Health Care Pre-Eclampsia/Eclampsia Model

**Promising practices from PE/E research**
- Women’s groups improve PE/E awareness within communities and provide health education on the importance of early ante-natal care (ANC).
- Task-shifting early detection and management to other community-based health cadres in context (e.g., community midwives).
- Oral antihypertensive drugs are a key component of task shifting detection and management of PE/E to primary healthcare centers (PHC), strengthening the quality of ANC and postnatal care (PNC).
- PNC follow up for women who had PE/E should occur at all levels of the health system.

**Legend**
- Essential PE/E activities
- Other promising practices
- Enabling Environment: National policy & standardized clinical protocols, stakeholder engagement, funding, infrastructure, human resources, supply chain for essential drugs and commodities
- Client referral
Community Women’s Group Leader Training in Cross River

Approach:

- **46** women’s group leaders trained using:
  - Pictorial job aides
  - Flip charts/infographics
  - Original songs

- **24** local government areas (LGAs) as part of intervention
Leaders’ flip chart

The importance of antenatal care

What to expect at each ANC visit
- BP CHECK
- URINE CHECKED
- BLOOD TEST
- COUNSELING
- WEIGHT TAKEN
- FETAL GROWTH MEASURED
- TETANUS
- FOLIC ACID AND IRON SUPPLEMENTS

Complications that could occur during your pregnancy

PRE-ECLAMPSIA/ECLAMPSIA
- Bleeding
- Sepsis
- Diabetes in pregnancy

What you need to know about pre-eclampsia/eclampsia
- High blood pressure
- Headache and belly pain
- Blurry vision
- Swelling
- Fast weight gain
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS
Women’s groups: Leaders & reach

- n = 46
- 43 Avg. age
- 91% ≥ secondary education
- 67% farmers
- 7 Avg. # sessions given/leader
- 12 Avg. # sessions given/women’s group
- 349 Avg. # women reached/leader
- 56* # women reached/session
- 211* # sessions held
- 11, 816* # total women reached

*estimates based on preliminary data
**Health information sources reported by women at endline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Intervention (n=50)</th>
<th>Comparison (n=34)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had ever heard of PE/E</td>
<td>41 (82%)</td>
<td>10 (29%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women’s group meetings</td>
<td>28 (68%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Church meetings</td>
<td>28 (68%)</td>
<td>1 (10%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health facility providers</td>
<td>5 (12%)</td>
<td>8 (80%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other (radio, traditional birth attendant, neighbor)</td>
<td>14 (34%)</td>
<td>4 (40%)</td>
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Women’s group beneficiaries’ knowledge & behavior change

84%

60%

25%

55%

43%

ANC
Support for sustaining women leaders’ training programs

“The only thing they should do to improve is to empower that woman [leader] so that she will have the strength to interest other women in this meeting, and others, like me, will join.”

– Women’s group beneficiary, 36 years old
Improve maternal health system to meet leaders’ referrals

“What we need is to make sure [government] supports the health center with drugs for the pregnant women.”

– Women’s group leader, 35 years old

“Tell the health centers. They used to give them ‘Mama’ kits, but now the government says it’s finished, and they give no more.”

– Women’s group leader, 31 years old
Women beneficiaries’ health-seeking behaviors

“As a pregnant woman, I was ignorant about it [pre-eclampsia/ eclampsia]. Through this information I am okay now, because immediately when the sickness occurred I went to the health center, and they conducted the test and checked my BP. Now I understand my problem.”

– Women’s group beneficiary, 27 years old
Implications for policy and programs

1. **Sustain** training and information support to community women’s group leaders

2. **Improve** primary health center capacity to manage women who reach ANC from women’s groups referrals

3. **Empower** women beneficiaries with information & tools for personal health agency