Catalysing scale-up of people-centred maternal and newborn health innovations within the health systems of Ethiopia, Uttar Pradesh, India and northeast Nigeria: building a conceptual framework

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IDEAS project overview

- *Informed Decisions for Actions in maternal and newborn health*

- Measurement, Learning and Evaluation grant by the *Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation* to the *London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine* since 2010

- Aims to improve evidence for maternal and newborn health (MNH) policies and programmes in northeast Nigeria, Uttar Pradesh in India and Ethiopia
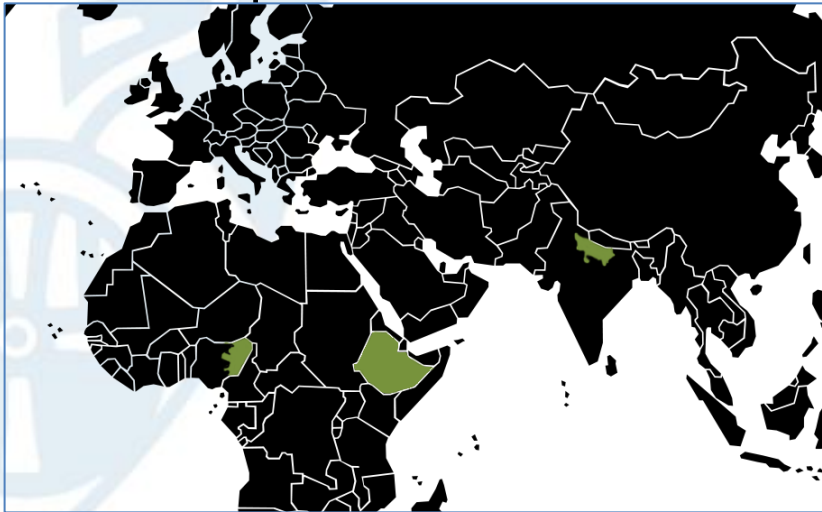
Estimated 6% of the world's population, 10% of global births and 16% of global maternal & newborn deaths

Our objectives

1. To build capacity for measurement, learning and evaluation

2. To characterise innovations

3. To measure efforts to enhance interactions between families and frontline workers and increase the coverage of critical interventions

4. To explore scale-up of maternal and newborn health innovations

5. To investigate the impact on coverage and survival of maternal and newborn health innovations implemented at scale

6. To promote best practice for policy

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Qualitative study of scale-up overview

Aims

- *To understand how to catalyse scale-up of externally funded MNH innovations*
  - Externally funded grantees – typically funded for 2-4 years to develop and test innovations in pilot districts
  - How can grantees catalyse innovation 'scale-up' to meet needs of whole populations?

Methods

- 150 in-depth stakeholder interviews in three geographies in 2012/13 with: government; development agencies; civil society; MNH grantees; professional associations; academics and experts
- Thematic cross-country comparative analysis using Nvivo version 10

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Definitions

- **'Innovations':** New approaches in a setting to enhance health by increasing coverage of life saving interventions. Examples:
  - Mobile phone apps with health communication messages
  - Emergency transport schemes to enable facility births

- **'Scale-up':** Increasing the geographical reach of externally funded MNH innovations to benefit a greater number of people **beyond grantee programme districts**

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Evidence informed framework

- Based on findings emerging from 2012/13 data collection from three geographies

- Framework captures critical actions required to catalyse scale-up of innovations beyond project areas

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Framework of actions to catalyse scale-up of MNH innovations

1. Preparing for scale-up
   a. Designing scalable innovations
   b. Integrating scale-up within programme design

2. Persuading government to accept, adopt and finance innovations at scale
   a. Evidence-informed advocacy
   b. Alignment and harmonisation
   c. Engaging policy champions and partners

3. Supporting and enabling government decision makers and implementers to scale-up innovations
   a. Offering government technical support
   b. Strengthening government capacity to scale-up innovations

4. Stimulating diffusion of innovations among communities
   a. Invoking community leaders
   b. Working with media

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Catan Hexes by Callum Taylor from The Noun Project; Gears by Sebastian Wiercinski from The Noun Project; Conversation by Nadya Brätt from The Noun Project

1. Preparing for scale-up
   a. Designing scalable innovations
   b. Integrating scale-up within programme design

1 a. Designing scalable innovations

Essential to design innovations that are scalable

Effective
- Having **comparative advantage** over alternatives
- Having **observable** effects/impacts

Appropriate
- Meeting health workers and communities' **needs and priorities**
- Being **culturally acceptable** and **adaptable**

Simple
- Being **easy to implement and use** by health workers and communities
- Requiring **low financial** and **human resource** inputs

Aligned
- Building on **existing government policies and services**

1 b.   Integrating scale-up within programme design

Critical to build scale-up into grants from the onset

Planning and resourcing scale-up

- Developing a scale-up plan as an integral part of project plans
- Dedicating staff, resources and time for scale-up activities

Assessing the policy and social environment

- Detailed understanding of community and health worker norms and needs, government policy priorities and health systems – to inform plans
- Stakeholder analysis to identify supporters: *'...it beholds you as an external person to do a little stakeholder mapping – know who your allies are – preach to them, empower them...'*

2. Persuading government to accept, adopt and finance innovations at scale

a. Evidence-informed advocacy
b. Alignment and harmonisation
c. Engaging policy champions and partners

2 a.   Evidence-informed advocacy

Evidence helps inform government which innovations to scale-up

Strong evidence, effectively communicated is critical

- Robust methodology, rigorous and independent
- Presenting clear, simple, powerful messages
- Continual advocacy - presenting evidence early and regularly
- Synchronising communication with decision making cycles

Generating multiple forms of evidence

- **Quantitative** data demonstrating innovation outcomes and impacts
- **Cost** data, cost estimates of scaling innovations: '*When it's required to take it to scale government first asks what is the cost...*'
- **Qualitative** process data and implementation lessons – informing government *how* to scale-up an innovation

2 b. Alignment and harmonisation

Coordination underpins efforts to catalyse scale-up

Alignment with government

- Aligning innovations and evidence with government policies, programmes and targets is critical: *'...the ministry wants to see how the innovation contributes to the ministry and health ...'*

- Involving government in project design, planning and evaluation strengthens alignment and engenders ownership

Harmonisation through government-led partner coordination

- Grantees and Development Partners' voices unified when presenting evidence of what works to government: *'If we put our voices together our voice is stronger'*

- Platform for exchanging learning to strengthen innovations and reduce programme duplication

2 c. Engaging policy champions and partners

Working together is more effective than alone

- Gaining support of well connected government champions: *'We've got someone on our advisory committee... he has the ear of the governor...'*
- Invoking influential traditional and religious leaders to shape policy decisions
- Developing partnerships with powerful actors such as UN agencies

3. Supporting and enabling government decision makers and implementers to scale-up innovations
   a. Providing government with technical assistance
   b. Strengthening government capacity to scale-up

3. Supporting and enabling government decision makers and implementers to scale-up innovations

Working alongside government to implement innovations at scale

a. **Providing government with technical assistance**
- Providing government evidence, implementation lessons and jointly drafting policy guidelines, tools and manuals

b. **Strengthening government capacity to scale-up innovations**
- Staff, organisational and systems capacity: human resources, financial management, evidence-based decision making: '*You have to do some capacity building with those you want to work with – that's the reality...*'

4. Stimulating diffusion of innovations among communities
   a. Invoking community leaders
   b. Working with media

4. Stimulating diffusion of innovations among communities

'Ripple effect' - organic diffusion of innovations from village to village

a. Invoking community leaders

- Working with traditional and religious leaders, churches and mosques, community groups to propagate acceptance: *'...[working with] dedicated community people who can open doors'*

b. Media champions, celebrity endorsement

- Media training and sensitisation and celebrity endorsement to foster acceptance of innovations among communities

Policy actions

Government

- Work closely with grantees: maximise relevance and value
- Strengthen partner coordination: exchanging and capturing learning

Donors

- Insist grantees integrate scale-up plans within their programmes
- Finance, incentivise, and strengthen grantee capacity to catalyse scale-up
- Finance grantees to support and enable government to scale innovations

Grantees

- Integrate scale-up plans within programme design
- Commit to exchanging learning and coordinating with other programmes

Communities

- Work with grantees to propagate innovation diffusion

Study published in *Social Science & Medicine*:

Spicer et al (2014) 'Scaling-up is a craft not a science': catalysing scale-up of health innovations in Ethiopia, India and Nigeria (in press)

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