



GBCHealth

Mobilizing Business for a Healthier World

Reaching the Health Millennium Development Goals:

The Critical Role of India's Business Sector

November 13, 2013

Investment Case #1

Corporate Support to Reduce Newborn Mortality

A staggering 780,000 Indian babies die in the first month of life; 300,000 on the first day. Newborn deaths now account for 55 percent of all under five child deaths in India and progress to Millennium Development Goal 4 will not be achieved without a central focus on reducing newborn mortality. The [leading causes](#) of newborn death in India include prematurity and low birth weight (32 percent), birth asphyxia and trauma (27 percent), and infection (19 percent). Lack of access to quality, affordable prenatal care, skilled delivery and emergency obstetric and postnatal care are the major reasons newborn mortality remains so high. 63 percent of Indian women do not get adequate pre and postnatal care and half deliver without a skilled attendant.

[Evidence](#) suggests that newborn deaths could be reduced by up to 72 per cent if all pregnant women and new mothers had access to the following products and services:

1. Prenatal Care: Pregnant women should visit a qualified medical professional at least four times during pregnancy to monitor weight gain and receive nutritional supplements, to receive immunizations (particularly tetanus toxoid) and to manage preeclampsia and infection.

2. Skilled Delivery: Women should deliver their babies with an attendant skilled in delivery, hygienic birth practices, the use of corticosteroids in case of preterm labor and antibiotics, and the use of the partograph. Critically, women must have access to [emergency obstetric care](#) even if they deliver at home. Despite the success of the Government of India's Janani Suraksha Yojana (JSY) and Home-based Newborn Care schemes, their impact on reducing newborn deaths has been limited underscoring the importance of emergency obstetric care and specialized



newborn care units at facilities.

3. Postnatal Care: 80 percent of newborn deaths in India occur in the first week of life and newborns must have access during this period to attendants who are skilled at resuscitation, prevention and management of hypothermia, Kangaroo Mother Care, infection management and breastfeeding support.

4. Home-Based Newborn Care: Groundbreaking [studies](#) by Doctors Abhay and Rani Bang showed that newborn mortality could be halved in communities where local women are trained and equipped in essential newborn care. For communities living far from health facilities this is an essential

How Can a Corporation Help?

- **Infrastructure, Product Development & Service Delivery:** provide quality, affordable products and services to strengthen facility-based prenatal care, skilled delivery and postnatal care, including home-based newborn care and, build and equip sick newborn care units in high-risk communities.

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780,000 newborns died in 2012; one newborn dies every 38 seconds



5

50% of women in India deliver their babies without a skilled attendant



7

Unsafe water and poor sanitation and hygiene practices cause high rates of newborn infection

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How Can a Corporation Help?

- **Advocacy, Awareness, Education & Behavior Change:** sponsor high-impact campaigns that stimulate greater action among governments, the private sector and civil society for newborn survival and outreach efforts to improve newborn care practices.
- **Innovation:** provide funding and/or technical assistance to experiment with innovative approaches (e.g. transport services that link women to emergency obstetric care, vouchers to encourage care seeking for sick newborns).



training program was developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics in partnership with India's Neonatal Resuscitation Program. A recent evaluation of the program in Tanzania showed a 50 percent reduction in newborn deaths on the first day of life. Other partners include the National Neonatology Forum, Indian governments and the [Helping Babies Breathe](#) partners.

"EMBRACE INNOVATIONS"

In 2008, this social business venture launched its first product – an infant warmer designed especially for premature and low birth weight babies in resource poor settings at a fraction of the cost of existing solutions. The Embrace Infant Warmer is now manufactured and sold in India and has helped 40,000 babies around the world. Embrace Innovation's vision is to create a line of disruptive healthcare technologies for emerging markets focused on mother and child health.

"BRILLIANCE"

In 2010, Phoenix Medical Systems began manufacturing and selling "Brilliance" a low cost phototherapy device to treat severe jaundice in newborns. In an innovative

partnership with US-based non-profit design firm, D-Rev, Phoenix is able to sell the product to public and private health facilities throughout India for \$400, far below the price of existing products.

"SAFE MOTHERHOOD AND CHILD SURVIVAL PROJECT"

One of the largest public-private initiatives in India's health sector, in 2005 Deepak Fertilizers and Petrochemicals began supporting a cadre of frontline women health workers in 1,550 villages to improve access to government health facilities and increase community monitoring of service delivery among a population of 2 million. Other partners include the Government of Gujarat.

"INSTITUTE FOR THE NEWBORN"

The NICE Foundation, an initiative of Kallam Anji Reddy the founder of Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, established a 120-bed, state of the art facility in Hyderabad to address the needs of critically ill and premature newborns with a special focus on the needs of tribal women. Other partners include the Government of Andhra Pradesh, the Naandi Foundation and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Examples of Corporate Support

Corporations are already investing in newborn health but much greater support is needed because the burden is so high and this is one of the most critical areas for Millennium Development Goal 4 achievement. The following are several of the leading, best practice examples of corporate engagement in newborn survival:

"FIRST GOLDEN MINUTE"

In 2009, the Indian Academy of Pediatrics with support from Johnson & Johnson India launched a program to train health workers, nurses, pediatricians, and gynecologists in newborn resuscitation practices, specifically how to use a bag and mask to prevent newborn deaths from asphyxia. This "Golden Minute"

Next Steps

If your company is interested in supporting an existing program, in establishing a new initiative or forming a new partnership with other stakeholders to reduce newborn deaths, please contact Shuma Panse at spanse@gbchealth.org or Rahul Bhargava at rbhargava@mdghealthenvoy.org.



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