Section C: Gadchiroli, India

Robert Parker, MD, MPH
“... ‘scientific’ research [at the community level] can be a powerful change maker ... It can knock on the doors of policy makers, governments, and international agencies and awaken them to the grassroots problems as well as to the possible solutions. Time and again we have found this ‘action-research’ approach worked successfully—both at the level of communities as well as national and international for a. In an ongoing battle between hospital-centered technocratic health care versus people-centered empowering health care, we are trying to tilt the balance towards [empowering] people by way of research and demonstrations.”

—Abhay and Rani Bang
Overview of Search Activities

- Sickle Cell Study
- Community Priorities Assessed
- ARI Studies
- HBNC Study
- State-wide Child Mortality Study
- ANKUR Study
- Trials of HBNC in India and Other Countries

Gynecology Study → Community-based Services and Actions → Dissemination, Training, And Research Center ("Scale Squared")
Entrance to a Clinic and Hospital

Photo: Bob Parker
Training Center

Photo: Bob Parker
Replication and Scaling-Up

- Child mortality studies as an advocacy tool
- Use of the SEARCH experience as a “Scale-Squared” center through publications, popular media publicity, site visits, training courses, and ongoing research
- Extension and evolution of home-based neonatal care (HBNC) in seven NGOs, the ANKUR project
- Introduction of HBNC into government services in five pilot areas of India
- Trials of HBNC in other countries (Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, eight countries in East Africa)
The ANKUR Project

- Seven selected NGOs in Maharashtra State
- Rural areas, tribal areas, and an urban slum
- Two-year baseline data collection of newborn mortality
- Orientation and training in the SEARCH model of HBNC in 2001-2002
- Completed the intervention phase in 2005
- Completed the evaluation, analysis, reporting of results, and an overall case study in 2006
NGO Leader Holding a Planning Meeting

Photo: Bob Parker
Village Meeting: Women and Men Sit Separately

Photo: Bob Parker
Tribal Village Home

Photo: Bob Parker
Close Relationships of the Team

Photo: Bob Parker
Health Workers Discuss Their Training

Photo: Bob Parker
Examining a Newborn Baby
A Newborn Receiving an Injection

Photo: Bob Parker
Caring for Low Birth Weight (LBW) Babies

Photo: Bob Parker
Record Keeping as Part of the Process

Photo: Bob Parker
Summary of Results

- 51% reduction of neonatal mortality rate
  - The reduction was 67% by “intent to treat” estimates
- 38% reduction of 1- to 12-month mortality rate
- 47% reduction in infant mortality rate
- 56% reduction in 1- to 4-year mortality rate
- 31% reduction of sick neonates needing medical attention
Some Lessons Learned from ANKUR

- Importance of advocacy and early participation of the community in understanding the problems of newborns
- Critical role of adequate orientation and dedication of NGO leaders and staff through interaction, well publicized ceremonies, and site visits to see HBNC in action in SEARCH villages
- Development and implementation of participatory training of TBAs, VHWs, and supervisors
  - The training was staged, interspersing actual practice in their communities with the training sessions
- Some adaptations of the program were necessary in the tribal and urban settings
Some Lessons Learned from ANKUR

- The use of baseline data and prospective monitoring to document the impact of HBNC
- The SEARCH model of HBNC is an intensive program, requiring careful attention to inputs, processes, and quality in any replication or scaling-up
- The importance of establishing plans for sustainability early in the life of the project
Questions

- How did SEARCH balance the goal of testing a new approach to reducing neonatal deaths with the need to respond to the community’s priorities?
- How important is it to have scientifically valid data to support the findings of community-based PHC interventions?
- How would you take the next step of integrating effective neonatal care into “safe motherhood” and child health programs within a comprehensive PHC package?