

pahal

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER BY UP-TSU



About UP-TSU

Uttar Pradesh Technical Support Unit (UP-TSU) was established in 2013 under a Memorandum of Cooperation signed between Government of Uttar Pradesh (GoUP) and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) to strengthen the Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescence health (RMNCH+A) and nutrition. University of Manitoba's India-based partner, the India Health Action Trust (IHAT) is the lead implementing organization.

UP-TSU provides technical and managerial support to GoUP at various levels of the health system and that includes maternal, new born, child health, nutrition and family planning. UP-TSU also supports the GoUP at the state level in policy formulation, planning, budgeting, human resource management, monitoring, contracting, procurement, and logistics to improve healthcare throughout the state.

IN THIS ISSUE

Resumption of RMNCHA+ Nutrition Services

pg | 02

• Family Planning

pg | 03 - 08

- Facility Level Initiative
- Community Level Initiative
- Nutrition
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- IEC/BCC

Your suggestions, innovative ideas and feedback are invaluable to the success of our program.

Write to us at iec.uptsu@ihat.in

A NOTE BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

With immense pleasure, I present to you the seventh issue of 'PAHAL'. It chronicles the concerted efforts of the GoUP and UP-TSU to restore access and delivery of RMNCH+A & nutrition services in Uttar Pradesh, while managing the COVID crisis.

From the UP-TSU's array of strategic innovations, the top picks showcased in this issue are the TSU efforts to convert to online ecosystem - real-time UPHMIS data updation by ANMs, and the LaQshya Resource Package to ensure NQA standards. The issue also features UP-TSU's fillip to immunization services through community outreach, and the support for COVID sero surveillance in coordination with KGMU.

COVID-19 has brought about some unforeseen challenges. But being the most creative beings, we always come up with solutions commensurate with the difficulties. Hence, I believe that our prolific collaboration with the GoUP will continue producing impactful strategies and cutting-edge innovations to help the health systems deliver through any adversity.

I hope you have an enjoyable and stimulating read.

(Dr. Vasanthakumar N.)
Executive Director



Online mentoring by Dr. Amrita in DCH Siddharth Nagar



Participants from DWH Farukhabad participating in zoom poll



External team during LaQshya assessment with facility staff in DWH Hardoi before COVID 19



Training of staff in Bio Medical Waste in district Hardoi before COVID 19

Strengthening Systems through the Crisis with the 'LaQshya Resource Package'

By February 2020 in Uttar Pradesh, 13 district hospitals had managed to achieve the national LaQshya certification, and 26 state-certified facilities were awaiting the national assessment. This progress was abruptly interrupted due to the COVID lockdowns, as the GoI suspended further National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS) assessments indefinitely. Resolved to salvage the outcomes of the LaQshya initiative despite the pandemic, UP-TSU collaborated with UP-NHM and developed the cutting edge 'LaQshya Resource Package' for continuing online education of facilities. This interactive package is a PowerPoint-based compendium comprising 8 Areas of Concern subdivided into 54 quality assurance standards for labor-room, and 55 for maternity OT respectively. Each slide of the compendium is lucidly explained through voice-overs. The innovation also aims to strengthen facilities' linkage with the NHM hub by continually prepping them with appropriate information and motivation.

The State Program Manager and the General Manager-Quality Assurance, UP-NHM, guided the strategic innovation at each step. As resource persons, Chief Medical Superintendents and domain specialists from high caseload public health facilities conducted the sessions based on their respective areas of expertise. In a short while, UP-TSU has facilitated training of facility-teams of 23 district hospitals and 3 state-assessment-qualified CHCs online using the 'LaQshya Resource Package'.

Interview Byte (Ms Shweta Chaudhary, Hospital Manager, DWH Ballia)



1. How was the online training experience?

It was a good experience as it gave me an opportunity to receive professional training and enhance my skills while being at my workplace.

2. What did you like the most about the training?

The training was interactive where we had the opportunity to share our feedbacks and ask questions through the chat-box which got answered timely. It was a new learning experience as I could not only see the trainer, but also refer to the presentations simultaneously in my personal space. The quiz was also quite engaging.

3. Do you think these trainings are as efficient as physical trainings?

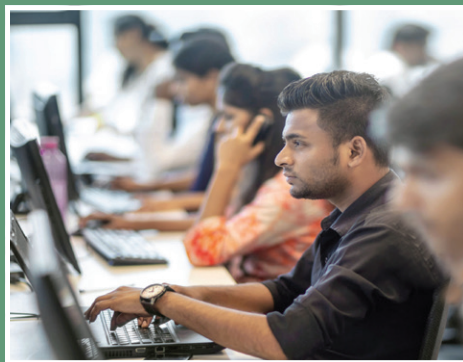
Online training is a convenient platform as it doesn't require travelling, lodging and other arrangements. It leaves us with ample time to resolve participants' queries unlike physical trainings where travelling consumes much of the day leaving us with less time to interact with the resource persons. In a way we are agreeably getting accustomed to it.



Nationally certified facility DWH Bijnoor



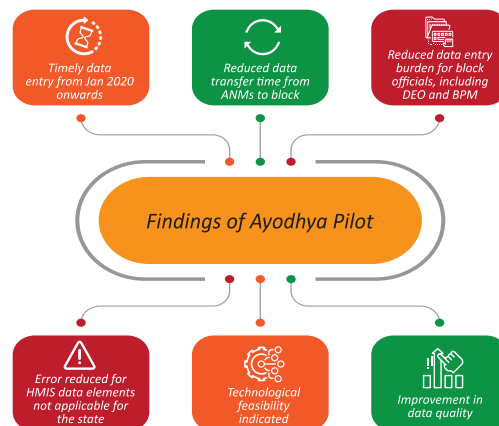
State certified facility DWH Hamirpur



The ANM Tablet at Sub-Centers: Scaling Digital Health Solutions for Improved Database Management

As a part of its constant endeavors to improve data quality in HMIS/UPHMIS, the GoUP piloted an android-based application for facilitating data entry at the sub-center (SC) level. Helmed by ANMs, the intervention was organized in Ayodhya district of UP from January-March 2020. The upshot of this exercise was the timely entry of data – 99% facilities uploaded information by the 30th of each month – and a reduction in data validation errors from 52% in the months preceding the pilot to 1% post-launch.

Pleased with favorable outcomes, the GoUP decided to scale-up the initiative in 29 additional districts by July 2020. In August, it also



Findings from the Ayodhya Pilot



established a call-center with the provision of inbound as well as outbound calls to support ANMs on data-related queries and troubleshoot real-time issues bugging the application. The call-center operated more than 8,000 calls in the opening month.

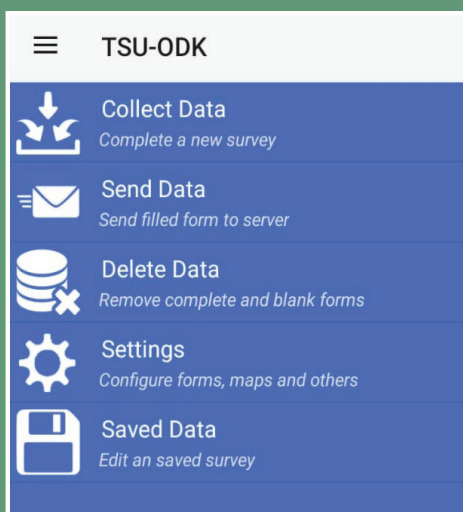
Initial evidence suggests that data completeness levels in coverage districts continued to be maintained post-intervention – non-blank values remained at 92% while non-zero entries were sustained at 38%. Additionally, an investigation into internal data consistency revealed that validation errors in 29 districts had reduced from 8% to 1% in the space of a single month – July to August 2020. Given the encouraging results, plans are afoot to ensure complete state-wide coverage by October-November, 2020.

Quality Improvement in Real-time: The 'TSU-ODK' Tools

To tackle the infrequency and other inadequacies of surveys conducted by GoUP and Gol leading to lack of real-time inputs required by the program managers to improve quality of care, and identify gaps in the provision of infrastructure, medicines, supplies, etc., the UP-TSU Nurse Mentoring team has developed a set of tools to capture relevant information on a real-time basis and provide need-based support to facilities.

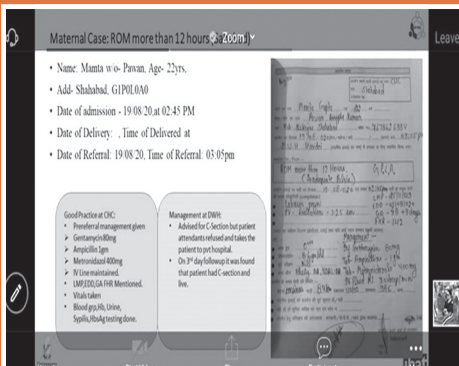
For ease of dataflow, these tools have been converted into android based apps in ODK format. This will make data collection more efficient and allow the field team to offer better onsite guidance to the staff nurses, and ANMs, to provide care in line with the National Quality Assurance Standards (NQAS). It will also support the facility managers in bridging the gaps for improved facility readiness as envisaged under LaQshya.

These android app-based tools can be used across all the 821 block-level facilities and 91 district hospitals of the 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh where the nurse mentoring program is being implemented. To ensure optimum output, UP-TSU created Standard Operating Procedures and conducted a 2-day online orientation - covering basics of the tools and the SOPs - for MH consultants, QI Mentors, NM Newborn, DTS, and ZTS via Zoom.

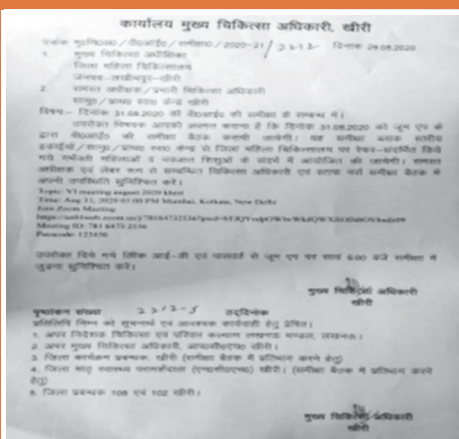




CMO Hardoi and DTS participating in Virtual VI meeting



Maternal Case discussion on Virtual VI meeting in Hardoi



Virtual VI meeting letter issued by CMO Kheri

Taming MMR through Vertical Integration Meetings

Maternal death reviews from India suggest that most of the deceased mothers had gone through multiple referrals before reaching the appropriate facility. To address such referral management challenges in Uttar Pradesh, the GoUP, along with UP-TSU, initiated monthly 'Vertical Integration (VI)' meetings where facility administration and the referral-linked workforce of block and district level health facilities come together to discuss both well and poorly managed cases in a non-punitive environment for cross-learning.

133 VI meetings were organized between April 2019 and March 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 outbreak and budgetary and logistical challenges, the UP-TSU team in consultation with other government authorities decided to conduct future meetings online.

The first such 'Virtual' VI meeting was conducted in Kheri on 26th June 2020. Chaired by ACMO –RCH, the meeting was attended by 53 participants, including all medical officers in-charge, doctors, and staff nurses.

Based on positive feedbacks from the participants, a subsequent VI meeting was organized in August 2020 in Kheri, followed by similar 'Virtual' meetings in Ayodhya and Hardoi.

Establishment of New EmOC and LSAS Training Centers at 6 Medical Colleges of Uttar Pradesh

1. Strengthening of EmOC/LSAS services at FRU by upskilling MBBS Doctors in complementary skills.
2. In Uttar Pradesh, only JNMC Aligarh and KGMU Lucknow are currently accredited for EmOC training. In order to strengthen service delivery system, the process for accreditation of 4 more Medical Colleges is underway –SNMC Agra, IMS BHU Varanasi, MLN MC Prayagraj, and GSVM Kanpur to provide EmOC training.
3. Similarly for LSAS training in Uttar Pradesh, only KGMU Lucknow, SNMC Agra, LLRM MC Meerut and MLB MC Jhansi are accredited and in order to strengthen service delivery system, the process for accreditation of 2 more Medical Colleges is underway – GSVM MC Kanpur and JNMC Aligarh to provide LSAS training.

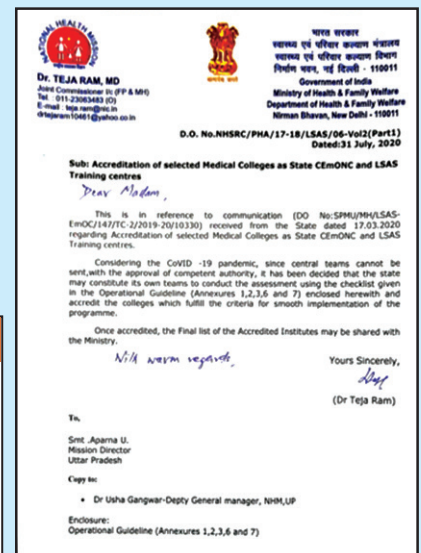
EMOC/LSAS training centers at Medical Colleges will create a pool of 48 pairs of trained MBBS Doctors to perform EmOC services in 48 First Referral Units yearly.

4. Government of Uttar Pradesh formed committees comprising competent officials from Medical Colleges which are already accredited and from Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare to run the process of accreditation of additional Medical Colleges.

5. The Department of Medical Health & Family Welfare will soon have 6 Medical Colleges each for EmOC and LSAS accreditation with a batch size of 4 each and a training duration of 6 months and hence can potentially activate 48 FRUs every year going forward

New Medical Colleges accredited:

- EMOC Training ::
 - MLN MC Prayagraj
 - SNMC Agra
 - IMS BHU Varanasi
 - GSVM Kanpur
- LSAS Training ::
 - GSVM Kanpur
 - JNMC Aligarh





Integration of RI within UP-TSU Community Outreach Activities

To improve coverage of immunization services in UP, UP-TSU integrated immunization services into community outreach intervention. The initiative aims to increase overall immunization coverage across the state, with a special focus on ensuring equitable access to quality immunization services. In line with the intervention objectives, the TSU Community Outreach State Team rolled out a comprehensive plan to train ASMs, BoCs, DCSs, and ZCSs. The plan was tuned up to adapt to the COVID-19 guidelines, with 'Zoom' chosen as the appropriate platform.

So far, a total of 240 ASMs, 57 BoCs, 27 DCSs, and 3 ZCSs have been trained under the program. Pre & post-test analyses exhibit a significant increase in knowledge among participants about immunization and vaccination coverage, and also point out a few knowledge gaps which the state outreach team intends to address in future training plans.

Cascading the program further, the ASMs/BoCs trained the ASHAs and ASHA Sanginis on RI components such as due-listing, interpersonal communication, counseling, and HMIS. UP-HMIS data for July 2020 revealed a promising trend in immunization reporting full immunization at 94% (9-11 months children), and RI sessions conducted (against planned) at 93%.

Routine Immunization Services Data (July 2020)

Figure 1 depicts the proportion of children mobilized at VHNDs for appropriate vaccines in a total of 1867 sessions, observed by ASM/BoC/DCS.

Figure 2 depicts the status of vaccine availability in the observed VHNDs.

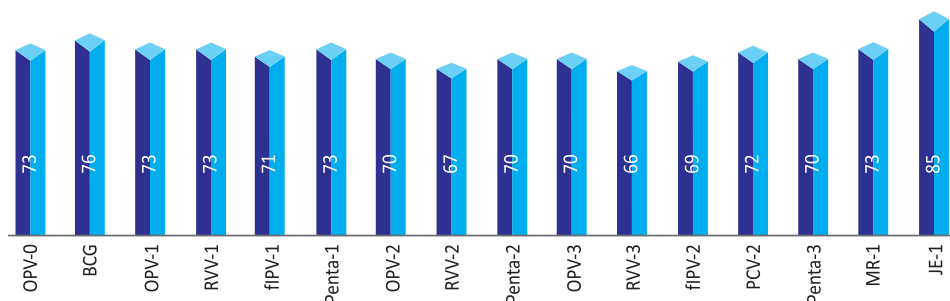


Figure1. :Antigen wise mobilization

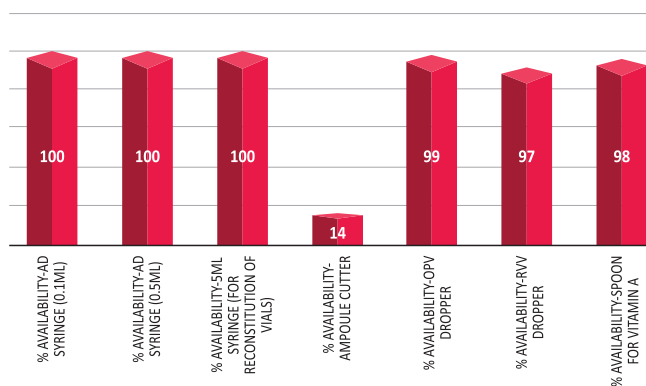


Figure 2: Availability of Logistics



Ms. Jaya Tripathi, DPO, Fatehpur while observing HBCBE (Annaprashan) during a Supportive Supervision visit.



Anamika Devi, AWW, while organizing HBCBE (Annaprashan), Husainganj, Fatehpur.



Jayanti Gupta, AWW, while organizing HBCBE (Godhbarai), Amaria, Pillibhit



HBCBE (Godhbarai), Behta, Sitapur

HBCBEs Bring Nutrition Services at Community Doorstep Defying COVID Odds

The COVID-led closure of the Anganwadi Centers (AWCs) disrupted the organization of Godhbarai and Annaprashan - the community-based events (CBEs) under Poshan Abhiyaan, aimed to promote optimal health and nutrition behaviors among pregnant women and children in the first 1000 days of life.

Godhbarai is organized for registered Pregnant Women in the 3rd and 4th month of pregnancy, whereas Annaprashan is for children who have completed six months of age. Both the events are government funded; an Anganwadi Worker receives Rs 250/- every month for organizing each CBE at the AWC on a pre-designated date.

To ensure continuity of essential nutrition services in the community during the Pandemic, the Nutrition Project of UP-TSU initiated "Home-Based Community-Based Events (HBCBEs)" in 28 Districts of Uttar Pradesh in June 2020. HBCBEs provide an opportunity for the AWWs to counsel the family, in addition to the pregnant woman or mother and also reiterate messages for the prevention of COVID19 transmission. Following an orientation by the state nutrition team of UP-TSU, the DNSs and Poshan Sakhis provided handholding support to the Mukhya Sevika and Anganwadi Workers in organizing HBCBEs during home visits.

S.No.	Month	Godhbarai	Annaprashan	Total HBCBEs	Total No. of Family Members participated
1.	June	8,038	13,820	21,858	48,749
2.	July	5,204	9,781	14,985	34,680
3.	August	3,901	7,223	11,124	30,332
TOTAL		17,143	30,824	47,967	1,13,761

Perceived Benefits of Organizing HBCBEs include:

- Reduced Probability of COVID19 transmission.
- Timely counseling of the beneficiaries and family members on key MIYCN behaviors.
- Flexibility to celebrate the event as per the convenience of the beneficiaries.
- Increased engagement of the family members.

Bytes:

Ms. Jaya Tripathi, DPO Fatehpur: I have observed HBCBEs during my supportive supervision visits, and believe that organizing CBEs at home, by using available resources at the household level is best suited during COVID times.

Anamika Devi, AWW, Husainganj, Fatehpur: Earlier, only one family member used to accompany the beneficiary for the Godhbarai or Annaprashan event at the AWC, and were always in a hurry to leave. But after we started organizing HBCBEs, the entire family including male members are participating in the event wholeheartedly.

No Water Only Breastmilk Campaign

An average of 55,548 mothers with children aged 0-6 months were reached out every month, through 42,151 home visits and 13,397 virtual counseling sessions, carried out by the AWWs with the support of Poshan Sakhis in 28 districts of UP under the NWOB campaign, from June to August 2020.



Kaushalya Devi, AWW, demonstrating correct positioning and attachment to a beneficiary during home visit under NWOB Campaign, Behta, Sitapur.

Priming Staff Nurses and Doctors for NBSU

Through proper needs assessment and discussions with the concerned authorities, the UP-TSU identified training/orientation needs among some NBSU staff, including staff-nurses and doctors. Subsequently, UP-TSU designed a training package and facilitated the training/orientation after obtaining due approval from the GoUP.

Orientations sessions were planned factoring in the duty timings of the prospective participants. The plan also ensured that all the relevant information is shared with the participants so that they complete the training comfortably and learn everything required to work in such a sensitive unit. All sessions were conducted under the expert guidance of a practicing pediatrician. So far, orientation has been completed in Kheri, Ayodhya, and Chitrakoot, with a total of 14 staff nurses and 11 doctors oriented till August 2020.



Kaushalya Devi, AWW, demonstrating correct positioning and attachment to a beneficiary during home visit under NWOB Campaign, Behta, Sitapur.

Orientations on NBSU Case Sheet, UPHMIS Format and Attendance Register

As part of the Newborn Health Strategy, UP-TSU, with the support of NHM, set up 54 Newborn Stabilization Units (NBSU) by March 2020. These units are fully functional now and ready to provide services to neonates. UP-TSU has also developed a register, case sheet, and monthly reporting format to streamline the functioning of these NBSUs.

Lately, UPTSU planned and organized a one-day online orientation by the State Nurse Mentoring team for NM Newborn, DTS, and ZTS to ensure that these documents are fully functional and appropriately used. Re-emphasis on the establishment of NBSU, admission criteria, services offered in NBSU, patient flow in NBSU, admission register, case sheet, and UPHMIS data, were the key topics in the orientation agenda.

To build competency and improve knowledge, skills, and practices among staff nurses on NBSU components, a specific mentoring plan was developed and discussed with the team on a tri-monthly basis. The NBSU mentoring plan, among others, includes topics related to IP, essential newborn care, weighing of newborns, and newborn resuscitation. The team also discussed NBSU specific action plan to strengthen NBSU in terms of availability of space, logistics, and equipment, capacity building of staff nurses, and documentation.



SNCU Staff nurse mentoring on NBSU topics to participants in Ayodhya



Hands-on Practice by participants in SNCU Ayodhya



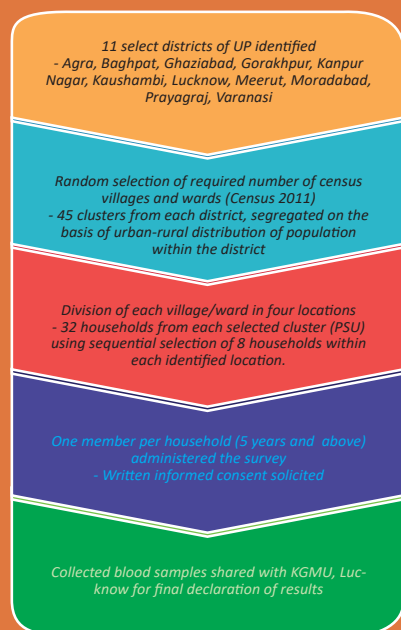
Theoretical sessions by SNCU Doctor in Chitrakoot

UP-TSU's Technical Support to UP's First SARS-COV-2 Sero Survey

With the intent to gauge the true extent of COVID-19 spread in UP, the state government approved the conduct of the first community-level seroprevalence survey in 11 districts of the state. Held between 4th-9th September, 2020, blood samples from 15,840 persons were obtained. These samples are to be tested using the Rapid Diagnostic Test (RPD) for the presence of immunoglobulin G (IgG) antibodies.

The findings of the survey are expected to shed light upon the infection fatality rate (IFR) of COVID-19 in the sampled geographies and the total proportion of undisclosed cases in the community. Besides informing public health decisions on managing the direction and spread of the pathogen in the future, an added benefit of this exercise is that it would help to provide estimates of the prevalence of Hepatitis B and C in the surveyed population.

In this government venture, UP-TSU has extended technical support in designing the study and estimating sample size along with devising a robust randomisation plan. It also aided the GoUP in providing technological inputs for data-collection through the open-data kit (ODK). Furthermore, it facilitated the training of the 440-member data collection team, which included Medical Officers (MOs), ANMs, ASHAs, and lab technicians (entrusted with blood collection), as well as the laboratory staff at King George's Medical University (KGMU) on survey design, response elicitation and data entry. The training sessions were conducted online on 1st and 3rd September 2020.



First Meeting of the State Working Group of the MDSR

The first meeting of the State Working Group of the MDSR was held on 25th September, 2020 at SIFPSA meeting hall chaired by MD, NHM and attended by ED, UP-TSU, Sr DD and DD of NM program, M&E team from UP-TSU, Director and JD, MCH, GM and DGM, MH, professors from Queen Mary Hospital, KGMU and senior obstetricians from Avanti Bai and Jhalkari Bai hospitals.



ED, UP-TSU presented the MDSR processes and the committees of the state which were reviewed along with the current expected maternal deaths as per the current MMR of UP. The analysis of maternal deaths reported on the HMIS and UPHMIS portal along with the maternal deaths line-list were discussed. 5 case studies of maternal deaths from HPDs (2 deaths in transit, 2 in DWH and 1 in CHC) were presented by the UP-TSU team and were discussed in detail by MD, Director and professors from KGMU.

The gap in family planning services and abortion services, the functionality of blood storage units among other systemic gaps were also discussed in detail. As an impact of the MDSR meeting, 2 of the 5 case studies presented at the meeting were quoted by MD, NHM during the event on World Contraception Day, attended by the Honourable Health Minister and represented by BMGF, to highlight the importance of family planning and abortion services to reduce maternal deaths.

EDITORIAL TEAM

Dr. Vasanthakumar N., Executive Director
Sandeep Srivastava, Director - Operations
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COMMUNICATION TEAM

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Ms Deepshikha Khurana - Community Process
Ms Harshita Singh - FP
Ms Tapaswini Swain - Nutrition

Jaroori Hai Baat Karna Campaign initiated to create demand for FP along with COVID 19 preventive messaging

The state government has lately initiated restoration of key health services. Among other things, family planning has been given serious considerations for its criticality amid the hard knocks of unemployment, food scarcity and migration upon the poor.

During the lockdown, reproductive women, particularly of the lesser privileged communities, have been willfully burdened with pregnancies they never wanted in such trying times. To avert such hazards in the coming days, especially during the stay-home period, the UP-TSU led SBCC project's campaign **Jaroori Hai Baat Karna** and its BCC material was shared by DoFW/NHM in all 75 districts of Uttar Pradesh.



The over-arching goal of the campaign has been to improve mother and child health during the COVID-19 pandemic through increasing demand and uptake of family planning and reproductive health services with support of UP Government. Flyers and audio messages were developed as part of the campaign to disseminate the message about the importance of an open dialogue on Family Planning among Low Parity and newly married couples as well as with their families.

Observation of World Contraception Day 2020

Launched on 26th September, 2007, World Contraception Day (WCD) is a global campaign dedicated to **improving awareness of contraception to enable young people to make informed decisions** regarding their sexual and reproductive health. To achieve a world in which every pregnancy is wanted, the barriers that prevent young people from using sexual health services must be removed.

There are around 4 crore people between the age of 15-24 years in Uttar Pradesh (Census 2011). This extremely important population must have access to sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, and the knowledge and skills necessary to make healthy informed decisions about their lives. Keeping this in mind, the World Contraception Day, 2020 was observed across the state on 26th September, 2020, and various activities like a Media workshop, training of DHEIOs, and HEOs on WCD 2020, etc. were conducted to spread awareness and reach as many people as possible. New BCC materials like flyers and audio messages on the importance of FP were also developed and disseminated as part of the WCD 2020 activities.

