

# 'It takes a village'—Community-based methods for improving maternal and newborn health

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A series of studies are published in a special supplement that presents results of the Maternal and Newborn Health in Ethiopia Partnership—a three-year pilot program funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation with the goal of improving the health of Ethiopian mothers and their newborns. This special issue of the *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health* is published by Wiley on behalf of the American College of Nurse-Midwives.

High mortality rates for pregnant women and newborns continue to be a major [health](#) concern in Africa, with Ethiopia being one of the most affected countries. Maternal mortality rates in Ethiopia are more than 650 deaths per 100,000 [live births](#) compared with 13 deaths per 100,000 live births in the United States. Among the annual 2.7 million pregnancies in Ethiopia, as many as 18,000 mothers die each year.

Furthermore, prior evidence shows that death among newborns in Ethiopia within the first month of life (neonatal mortality) has had only a moderate decline from 49 to 39 to 37 deaths per 1,000 live births in 2000, 2005, and 2011, respectively. "While Ethiopia has reduced under-5 mortality by two-thirds, deaths among newborns within the first month of life still accounts for 63% of all infant deaths and 42% of deaths under age 5," says Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*, Frances E. Likis, DrPH, NP, CNM, FACNM, FAAN.

"Nurses, midwives and community-level health providers working together with women, families and community leaders have an opportunity to help save the lives of mothers and babies," explains Lynn Sibley, PhD, RN, CNM, FACNM, FAAN, Professor at Emory University's Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing and Rollins School of Public Health, and Principal Investigator of the Maternal and Newborn Health in Ethiopia Partnership. "This special issue provides practitioners with insight into the community-based efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality in Ethiopia."

The supplement includes 11 articles that document the results of the Maternal and Newborn Health in Ethiopia Partnership. This initiative strives to improve health care for mothers and newborns in rural Ethiopia by:

1. improving the capacity and performance of frontline health workers;
2. increasing demand for focused maternal and [newborn health](#) care, and improving self-care behaviors; and
3. developing the effectiveness of lead districts to improve [health care](#) and services for women and their newborns.

"This collection of articles enhances our knowledge of maternal and child survival in poor, rural communities in developing countries," concludes Dr. Sibley. "Many countries will benefit from understanding how to reduce mortality in mothers and their [newborns](#) through community-based interventions."

**More information:** Editorial: "Reducing Maternal and Perinatal Mortality Through a Community Collaborative Approach: Introduction to a Special Issue on the Maternal and Newborn Health in Ethiopia Partnership (MaNHEP)." Marge Koblinsky. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI:

JMWH.12174).

"Improving Maternal and Newborn Health Care Delivery in Rural Amhara and Oromiya Regions of Ethiopia Through the Maternal and Newborn Health in Ethiopia Partnership." Lynn M. Sibley, Solomon Tesfaye, Binyam Fekadu Desta, Aynalem Hailemichael Frew, Alemu Kebede, Hajira Mohammed, Kim Ethier-Stover, Michelle Dynes, Danika Barry, Kenneth Hepburn, Abebe Gebremariam Gobezaehu. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12147).

"Knowledge and Skills Retention Among Frontline Health Workers: Community Maternal and Newborn Health Training In Rural Ethiopia." Abebe Gebremariam Gobezaehu, Hajira Mohammed, Michelle M. Dynes, Binyam Fekadu Desta, Danika Barry, Yeshiwork Aklilu, Hanna Tessema, Lelissie Tadesse, Meridith Mikulich, Sandra Tebben Buffington and Lynn M. Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12146).

"Factors Shaping Interactions among Community Health Workers in Rural Ethiopia: Rethinking Workplace Trust and Teamwork." Michelle M. Dynes, Rob Stephenson, Craig Hadley and Lynn M. Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12135).

"The Effect of Community Maternal and Newborn Health Family Meetings on Type of Birth Attendant and Completeness of Maternal and Newborn Care Received During Birth and the Early Postnatal Period in Rural Ethiopia." Danika Barry, Aynalem Hailemichael Frew, Hajira Mohammed, Binyam Fekadu Desta, Lelisse Tadesse, Yeshiwork Aklilu, Abera Biadgo, Sandra Tebben Buffington and Lynn M. Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12171).

"Improving Coverage of Postnatal Care in Rural Ethiopia Using A Community-based, Collaborative Quality Improvement Approach." Solomon Tesfaye, Danika Barry, Abebe Gebremariam Gobezaehu, Aynalem Hailemichael Frew, Kim Ethier Stover, Hana Tessema, Lamesgin Alamineh and Lynn M. Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12168).

"Use of a Mobile Video Van Show for Maternal and Newborn Health Community Behavior Change in Rural Ethiopia." Binyam Fekadu Desta, Hajira Mohammed, Danika Barry, Aynalem Hailemichael Frew, Kenneth Hepburn, Christine Claypoole,. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12111).

"A Regional Comparison of Distribution Strategies and Women's Awareness, Receipt and Use of Misoprostol in Rural Amhara and Oromiya Regions of Ethiopia." LynnM. Sibley, SydneyA. Spangler, Danika Barry, Solomon Tesfaye, Binyam Fekadu Desta and Abebe Gebremariam Gobezaehu, *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12136).

"Interpretation of National Policy Regarding Community-Based Use of Misoprostol for Postpartum Hemorrhage Prevention in Ethiopia: A Tale of Two Regions." Sydney A. Spangler, Abebe Gebramariam Gobezaehu, Tewodros Getachew and Lynn M. Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12154).

"Building District Level Capacity for Continuous Improvement in Maternal and Newborn Health." Kim Ethier Stover, Solomon Tesfaye, Aynalem Hailemichael Frew, Hajira Mohammed, Danika Barry, Lamesgin Alamineh, Abebe Teshome, Kenneth Hepburn and Lynn M.

Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12164).

"An Evaluation of Equitable Access to a Community-Based Maternal and Newborn Health Program in Rural Ethiopia." Sydney A. Spangler, Danika Barry and Lynn Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12133).

"A Qualitative Study of Attitudes and Values Surrounding Stillbirth and Neonatal Mortality Among Grandmothers, Mothers, and Unmarried Girls in Rural Amhara and Oromiya Regions, Ethiopia: Unheard Souls in the Backyard." Mitike Molla Sisay, Robel Yirgu, Abebe Gebremariam Gobezeayehu and Lynn M. Sibley. *Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health*; Published Online: February 18, 2014 (DOI: JMWH.12156).

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