Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Afghan Women and Children

Past

Present

Future

Ratha Loganathan, Senior Afghanistan Health Officer, USAID
Health Situation - Post-Taliban 2002

• Health Indicators:
  – Under-five child mortality rate: 172 deaths per 1,000 live births per year
  – Maternal mortality ratio estimated at 1,600 per 100,000 live births per year

• Health System Infrastructure:
  – Inequitable distribution of health services
  – Insufficient number of health workers
  – Poorly trained workforce
  – Shattered Infrastructure
## Health Sector Progress Over the Past Decade

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>2002-2004</th>
<th>2010</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternal Mortality Ratio</td>
<td>1600 deaths per 100,000 births (1)</td>
<td>327 deaths per 100,000 births (2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Under 5 Mortality Ratio</td>
<td>172 death per 1,000 live births (3)</td>
<td>97 deaths per 1,000 live births (4)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Infant Mortality Ratio</td>
<td>165 deaths per 1,000 live births (5)</td>
<td>77 deaths per 1,000 live births (6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate (Modern Method)</td>
<td>10% (7)</td>
<td>20% (8)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Fertility Rate</td>
<td>6.3 (9)</td>
<td>5.1 (10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antenatal Care Coverage</td>
<td>16% (11)</td>
<td>60% (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skilled Birth Attendance (% Delivery)</td>
<td>14% (13)</td>
<td>34% (14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult Life Expectancy</td>
<td>42 years (15)</td>
<td>64 years (16)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous Afghan national health surveys were limited in data collection and analysis compared to AMS.

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USAID Objective: A Healthier Population

USAID has adopted a four-pronged approach to improving the health of Afghan people, especially women and children.

1. Meet the immediate healthcare needs of the population by supporting the provision of primary healthcare services;
2. Increase demand for and access to quality health products and services through the private sector; and
3. Address the long-term sustainability of the healthcare system by strengthening the capacity of the Afghan Ministry of Public Health at the Central and Provincial levels.
4. Improve the health-related behaviors of individuals, families, and communities;
Key Success Factors - Improvements in Maternal Health

- Expanding access to basic, life-saving primary care
- Increasing human resources, especially skilled midwives
- Scaling-Up Emergency Obstetrical Care
- Introducing Key Community-based Interventions
- Improving Quality
Expanding Access to Basic, Life Saving Primary Care

Standardized Basic Package of Health Care Services

- Specific services offered
- Type and number of staff
- Facility features
- Equipment and supplies required
- Essential drugs and dosage offered
Increasing Human Resources, especially Skilled Midwives
Scaling –Up Emergency Obstetrical Care

• PPH accounts for almost 56% of all maternal deaths in Afghanistan.

• MoPH has made EmOC a cornerstone of Afghanistan’s maternal health activities.

• From 2006-2001, number of BPHS facilities providing EmOC increased from 26 to 78.
Introducing Key Community-based Interventions

Prevention of PPH at Home Birth in Afghanistan

CHW Form

1. CHW’s Name
2. Village/Health post
3. District

4. Name of the pregnant woman
5. Name of the husband
6. Drug serial #

7. CHW visiting homes
8. Woman with no menstruation
9. Counting number of months
10. Education on BP CR and PPH
11. Participants ID card

Prevention of Postpartum Hemorrhage

Participants No: _____________
Improving Quality

• Developed quality assurance standards

• Engaged communities to define quality

• Introduced quality improvement collaborative method to accelerate improvement in health outcomes

• Annual Balanced Scorecard to Monitor Performance
Other Success Factors Contributing to overall Improvement in the Health Sector

- Forging effective partnerships
- Empowering Women
- Implementation and procurement reform
- Building host country systems and capacity
- Innovation
Despite the Success, Work Remains

• Although gains in the health sector have been significant, Afghans continue to face serious health challenges
  – Two-thirds of women still give birth at home without a midwife or skilled attendant;
  – more than half of the women under age 20 have no formal education;
  – maternal mortality is still unacceptably high.

• One in 13 children dies before their first birthday, one in 10 children dies before age five, and one Afghan woman dies from pregnancy-related causes every two hours.
Despite the Success, Work Remains

- A long-term partnership between Afghanistan and the international community remains critical.

- USAID/Afghanistan is committed to maintaining and building on the gains made over the past 10 years.