

Ideas into ACTION Global Health Solutions

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Lady Health Workers: Saving Children's Lives – Pakistan

Acute Respiratory Infections (ARIs) are the leading cause of death among Pakistani children under 5. To reduce the burden of ARIs, Lady Health Workers (LHWs) in the district of Haripur are spearheading the implementation of a Community Case Management (CCM) model, whose goal is to increase early detection and prompt treatment of children with pneumonia.

Developed by Save the Children and Pakistan's Ministry of Health, the CCM model combines enhanced training of LHWs in detection and treatment of ARI with the provision of oral amoxicillin, essential equipment, supervision by formal health care providers, and community mobilization to increase care-seeking among parents of children under 5.

Since its launch in 2007, the CCM initiative has trained 270 LHWs, with 95 percent of the LHWs in Haripur currently managing ARI cases. The initiative has had a direct positive impact on the lives of some 75,000 children and their care-givers, and has resulted in a significant increase in reporting of cases in the community.

The success of the CCM experience in Haripur suggests that the approach can be replicated across all 131 districts in Pakistan. As bridges between formal health care providers and the community, 100,000 LHWs in the country can be successfully trained and supervised for pneumonia management and can help mobilize their communities to reduce the burden of this disease in children. Such replication would advance Pakistan's efforts to achieve the fourth Millennium Development Goal, reducing child mortality.

The Community Case Management model was developed by Save the Children and the National Program for Family Planning and Primary Health Care of the Ministry of Health of Pakistan, with support from the World Health Organization (WHO).

