EMPHNET
The Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network

امفنت
الشبكة الشرق أوسطية للصحة المجتمعية

Real-Time Neonatal and Stillbirth Mortality Audits

Project Information

- **Department: Center of Excellence for Applied Epidemiology**
- **Unit: Research and Policy**

OBJECTIVES

The Neonatal and stillbirth audit aimed at decreasing neonatal mortalities and stillbirths among Syrian refugees in Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps through investigating risk factors related to death and improving neonatal quality of care. Audit was conducted by EMPHNET as an independent organization to promote greater acceptance of the practice and a more collaborative review of findings. Thus, creating an enabling environment to conduct auditing.

REGIONS OF WORK

The project was implemented in Zaatari and Azraq Syrian refugee camps in Jordan.

BENEFICIARIES

Pregnant women and newborns from Syrian refugees' resident in Zaatari and Azraq camps in Jordan.

PROJECT PHASES

The neonatal and stillbirth mortality audit project involved three main steps and procedures to perform the audit in both camps:

I- Applied the established and validated methodology in all Neonatal and Stillbirths Deaths Audits

II- Responded within 24 hours for a notification on neonatal death and stillbirth received from health providers and focal points in the camps who were responsible for reporting mortalities. Conducted authorized reviews with families, especially women, and filled the audit form.

III- Electronically reported to UNHCR within 72 hour of death notification with an analysis of the risk factors that led to death. Additionally, developed technical and annual reports contained full situation analysis, risk factors, and programmatic and sustainable recommendations to enhance provided services.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Since 2017, EMPHNET had carried out neonatal auditing services in both Zaatari and Azraq camps. Since then, EMPHNET utilized its experience and knowledge to conduct audits in a no-blame, interdisciplinary approach to provide data for decision making and improve the care provided to all mothers and babies. In 2025, EMPHNET's certified and experienced technical staff continued to perform these audits in both camps and reviewed and updated procedures and instruments` database based on UNHCR guidelines. EMPHNET kept enhancing the reporting system that already built over the last seven years. This was through identifying common risk factors and characteristics of preterm deliveries that lead to neonatal deaths and stillbirths, along with other potential contributing family-related factors. It provided a complete neonatal death and stillbirth classified database and programmatic recommendations to address current gaps and implications of the practice. As a result, the above mentioned was expected to positively impact the healthcare service delivery and ultimately contribute to preventing future newborn deaths.

Project Start and End Date	**January 2026 - March 2026**
Partner Organizations	**United Nation Higher Council for Refugees (UNHCR), Save the Children Jordan**
Funded by	**Save the Children**

Currently . . .

The need to build up neonatal mortality review framework in Zaatari camp in Jordan surfaced in 2013 to respond to the elevated number of neonatal deaths and stillbirths' rates observed during the unfolding humanitarian situation. The lack of feedback and misperceptions of the aim of the process, receptiveness to feedback and fear of repercussions by service providers entailed the need to promote greater acceptance of the practice and a system for more collaborative review of findings. The system that was established in Zaatari and Azraq camp and audits in both camps have shown strong connection between neonatal deaths and early/ late age pregnancy, lack of awareness in families of the importance of birth spacing between pregnancies, and the limited number and insufficient quality of antenatal visits to health care centers in camps or referral hospitals. Thus, the system was beneficial through the past seven years to reveal the leading causes and make efforts to enhance maternal and child health services in the two camps.

What's next . . .

The project is a continuation to EMPHNET efforts that started in 2017. This effort contributed to support improving the quality of the newborn care in Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps. In specific, this was through identifying the avoidable factors that resulted in neonatal and stillbirths' death, sharing them with the stakeholders for needed actions to address these factors, and bridging any gaps in the health services. Thus, more attention was to be given to improving the quality of healthcare services provided for women and babies during pregnancy and delivery, preventing and protecting women who might have been exposed to domestic violence and facilitating their access to psycho-social support within the camps, and expanding their knowledge on the importance of antenatal care and family planning. Ultimately, the above-mentioned was expected to contribute to preventing future morbidity and mortality.

Past Years Auditing Outcomes

- In 2017-Zaatari Camp: Neonatal Mortality Rate 13.8/1000 livebirths.
- In 2021-Zaatari Camp: Neonatal Mortality Rate 9.9/1000 livebirths.
- In 2022-Zaatari Camp: Neonatal Mortality Rate 9.1/1000 livebirths.
- In 2023-Zaatari Camp: Neonatal Mortality Rate 8.9/1000 livebirths.
- In 2024-Zaatari Camp: Neonatal Mortality Rate 15.0/1000 livebirths.
- In 2025-Zaatari Camp: Neonatal Mortality Rate 12/1000 livebirths.

GHD|EMPHNET Information: Global Health Development (GHD) Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) works at achieving its mission by responding to public health needs with deliberate efforts that allow for health promotion and disease prevention.

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