



# MATERNAL, NEWBORN & CHILD HEALTH



## SPOTLIGHT ON REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Reproductive health is fully integrated into PCI's programs in a variety of ways, including the following:

- Reproductive health and family planning messages are included in Care Group programs, and also include male-focused messages to emphasize the importance and benefits of family planning for men as well as women.
- Within PCI's many HIV prevention, care and support activities, family planning services and counseling are included as part of an integrated package.
- PCI's youth programs support school-based health clubs, nutrition, and HIV prevention education, stressing the importance of delaying marriage, staying in school and accessing youth-friendly reproductive health services.
- PCI promoted human rights and improved access to reproductive health in remote areas of Afar, Ethiopia, reducing harmful practices, such as female genital mutilation (FGM) by an unprecedented 93%, through advocacy groups and engagement of traditional leaders.



## INTRODUCTION

Since 1961, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MCHN) has been at the heart of PCI's work. With decades of experience worldwide, PCI has consistently demonstrated its ability to affect positive life cycle changes through the provision of services, shaping MNCH behaviors, and in reducing the incidence of life-threatening diseases in mothers, infants and children and their families.

The success of PCI's MNCH strategy rests on the strength of its localized approach to empowering women, families and communities to participate in problem solving and development of sustainable solutions to improving maternal, newborn, and child health within their communities. These strategies ensure the active participation of community stakeholders, including community members, local organizations, national organizations, and government programs; integrating effective capacity-building components that take into account the traditions, influencing factors, and cultural sensitivities of family and community members; and most importantly, ensuring the sustainability of interventions.

## PCI'S APPROACH

PCI's key MNCH approaches include:

- **Continuum of care along the life cycle** that addresses the health needs of adolescents and women before, during and after their pregnancy, as well as the state of the newborn and child throughout the life cycle.
- **Evidence-based MNCH interventions** that promote antenatal care, maternal nutrition, skilled care delivery, immediate post-partum care, essential newborn care, as well as pregnancy spacing and family planning, especially for young adolescent girls.
- **Newborns: A comprehensive approach to prevention of pre-term births and care of babies born too soon and too small** by a comprehensive approach to improve preconception and antenatal care, prevention of infections, and family planning.
- **Community-based integrated management of newborn and child illnesses (C-IMCI)** response to improving newborn and child health focusing at the household level to prevent infections, pneumonia, diarrhea, and malaria.
- **Gender equity and human rights** focusing on involving men and women in decision-making to improve access, equity, and quality of health services and shifting beliefs that inequitable rights and violence against women are not the norm.
- **Indigenous populations** – Improving indigenous maternal, newborn, child and reproductive health for vulnerable groups through community group support and advocacy.



**WHAT IS THE GLOBAL PROBLEM?** Every year, more than half a million women die as a result of complications due to pregnancy and childbirth; 99% of these maternal deaths occur in the developing world. Over four million newborns die each year, with half of these deaths occurring in the first day of life, and around seven million children die each year before their fifth birthday.



## INVESTING IN INNOVATION

For PCI, the ability to imagine and create real change that challenges conventional boundaries and beliefs is at the core of transformational development, as evidenced by its long history of innovative programs and interventions. Key investments in formative research and innovative solutions have decreased the burden of maternal, newborn and child deaths. Some examples include:

- **mHEALTH: Strengthening Community Health Workers'** roles in increasing timely access to postpartum maternal and newborn care through mobile phone applications to recognize danger signs, provide an initial response and refer without delays.
- **TRIO Care Group methodology** that includes key family and community influencers such as fathers and grandmothers in sharing health messages.
- **Child Immunization Mobilizers** from primary and local religious schools to go house-to-house to encourage eligible children for vaccination.
- **Community-owned Maternal Waiting Homes** to help high risk pregnant women to access skilled care delivery and provide immediate postpartum maternal and newborn support.
- A **Kangaroo Mother Care** center to teach mothers and fathers how to care for low-birth weight babies and community outreach to support families in home-based care

## PCI IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

- Trained 768 caregivers, including parents, grandparents and traditional birth attendants in **Guatemala** on the Kangaroo Mother Care method for newborns.
- Targeted communities with high infant mortality rates in the **US/Mexico Border region** in California and 91.3% of women started prenatal care.
- Established action groups to address HIV through violence prevention and challenging the social acceptance of violence against women and children in **South Africa**.
- Supported school-based health clubs, feeding programs and prevention of HIV/AIDS prevention education in **Tanzania**.
- In **India**, directly contributed to a decrease in low-birth weight infants from 17.6% to 4.5%.
- An evaluation of PCI's Women Empowered (WE) Initiative in **Ethiopia** revealed that 82% of participating women felt more empowered and 76% of their children were eating 3 meals per day after participating in the program.
- In **Bangladesh**, engaged 175 fathers and 234 grandmothers as group leaders to promote maternal and child health and nutrition.

**ABOUT PCI:** PCI (Project Concern International) is an international nonprofit on a mission to enhance health, end hunger and overcome hardship worldwide. Founded in 1961, PCI impacted the lives of more than 10 million people last year alone through programs in 15 countries spanning Asia, Africa and the Americas.



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