

MATERNAL HEALTH

CommonHealth's journey so far

B Subha Sri,
CommonHealth General members' meeting
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- We believe that women have the right to the highest attainable standards of maternal health and maternal health care.
- Maternal health services have to be
 - Available
 - Accessible
 - Acceptable
 - Good quality

The global scenario

- ICPD – 1994
 - Human rights based
 - Defined reproductive health – through the woman's life cycle
- Millennium Development Goals – 2000
 - Narrowed it to target oriented approaches
 - Technical solutions

Reproductive health

MMR

Skilled birth attendant

Institutional delivery

Incentive

JSY

Current challenges

- Refocusing on Reproductive Health and Maternal Health as one component
- Repoliticising maternal health to include socio political determinants

CH strategies

- Challenge the technocentric paradigm - “safe delivery”
 - Irrespective of where
 - Definition of safety
- Integrate within reproductive health continuum
- Focus on abortion

What have we done so far?

Centrestaging “Safe delivery”

- We asked several people what this meant
 - Activists
 - Academics
 - Civil society
 - Women at the grassroots
- Several domains emerged.
- Definition of “safe delivery” based on this.
- Using this as a basis of monitoring maternal health care.

Critique of maternal health policy



The Barwani fact finding

- Poor maternal health services and outcomes in spite of NRHM's investment in health systems
- Very poor governance and accountability as one of the main causes of the poor services
 - Poor quality of care
 - Apathy from professionals
 - Frequent flouting of ethical principles of care
 - Dereliction of duty
 - Absence of grievance redressal systems
 - No maternal death reviews in spite of being mandated
 - Corruption

Dead Women Talking

- Several documentations of maternal deaths by civil society groups from different parts of India including from Tamil Nadu and Kerala.
- Need to centrestage the lived experiences of the women and their families.
- Juxtaposed to indicator oriented approach that does not take into account social determinants.
- Led to the Dead Women Talking process
- Accountability as an important issue that needs to be addressed.

Increasing accountability for maternal health

- **Strengthening Maternal Death Reviews**
 - Include social determinants
 - Community involvement
- **Monitoring QoC based on safe delivery indicators**

Building capacities for maternal health

- Making Pregnancy Safer courses
 - Gender and rights based understanding of maternal health
 - Civil society organizations
 - Health system – District health officials, Programme managers
- Maternal Death Reviews and monitoring QoC
 - Civil society organizations
 - In partnership with other organizations