

## Community Involvement in Reducing Maternal and Perinatal Mortality in Cross River State, Nigeria: 'The Saving Mother Giving Life' Strategic Approach in Cross River State

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**Abstract :** Introduction: Globally, community involvement in improving their own health has been widely adopted as a strategy in Sub-Saharan Africa principally to ensure equitable access to essential health care as well as improve the uptake of maternal and newborn health services especially in poor-resource settings. Method: The Saving Mother Giving Life (SMGL) Initiative implemented by Pathfinder International with funding support from USAID conducted a Health Facility Assessment (HFA) and found out that maternal mortality ratio in Cross River State was 812 per 100,000 live birth and perinatal mortality was 160 per 1000 live birth. To reduce maternal and perinatal mortality, Pathfinder International mobilized, selected and trained community members as community volunteers, traditional birth attendants, and emergency transport service volunteer drivers mainly to address the delay in decision making and reaching the health facility among pregnant women. Results: The results showed that maternal mortality ratio in Cross River State decrease by 25% from 812 per 100,000 live birth at baseline to 206 per 100,000 live birth at June 2018 and perinatal mortality reduced by 35% from 160 per 100,000 at baseline to 58 per 1000 live birth at June 2018. Data also show that ANC visit increased from 7,451 to 11,344; institutional delivery increased from 8,931 at baseline to 10,784 in June 2018. There was also a remarkable uptake of post-partum family planning from 0 at baseline to 233 in June 2018. Conclusion: There is clear evidence that community involvement yields positive maternal outcomes and is pivotal for sustaining most health interventions.

**Keywords :** maternal mortality, Nigeria, pathfinder international, perinatal mortality, saving mother giving life

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