emphasizing on the importance of seeking medical help for obstetric emergencies. As an effort toward this the Operations Research Project of ICDDR,B has designed an intervention on emergency obstetric care at the thana level.

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Neonatal Morbidity and Care-seeking Behaviour in Two Rural Areas of Bangladesh

Shameem Ahmed, Farzana Sobhan, and Ariful Islam

Objective: Assess the pattern of neonatal morbidity and subsequent care-seeking behaviour in rural Bangladesh.

Methodology: Data were collected from 3,030 women who had livebirths between May 1995 and February 1997 in two rural subdistricts—Abhoynagar and Mirsarai—the field sites of the Operations Research Project of ICDDR,B. The women were interviewed in their homes using a semi-structured questionnaire. Bivariate analysis was done to assess the relationship between the different variables.

Results: More than two-thirds of the neonates were reported to have problems. The most common complaint was fever (40%), followed by respiratory distress (25%). Complications during pregnancy were found to be associated with increased neonatal morbidity (p<0.001). About 42% of the women did not seek help from any health service providers when their newborns had problems. Significant sex differential was observed among the male and female neonates for whom services were sought (p<0.001). In majority of the cases (48%), village doctors were consulted, followed by homeopaths in Mirsarai, whereas in Abhoynagar, the opposite trend was seen. Only a negligible percentage attended the government facilities, like Satellite Clinic, Health and Family Welfare Centre, and Thana Health Complex. However, 30% of the mothers consulted private practitioners. It was found that health care-seeking behaviour was associated with mothers’ education (p<0.01).

Conclusion: The government facilities for neonatal care are under-used, and efforts should be made to raise awareness among mothers regarding this. Steps to reduce maternal morbidity by raising awareness of complications during pregnancy may result in decreased neonatal morbidity.

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Perceptions and Involvement of Members of Zonal Health and Family Planning Coordination Committees of Dhaka City Corporation

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Objective: Assess the perception and involvement of members of the zonal health and family planning coordination committees formed by the Dhaka City Corporation.

Methodology: The Dhaka City Corporation formed zonal health and family planning coordination committees in all 10 zones of the city to link all the local service providers and to establish a mechanism for local-level planning to ensure the effective use of the available local resources through minimizing gaps and overlaps in the health and family planning service delivery system. Of the 181 registered members of the zonal committees, 126 were selected