



# MCHIP Azerbaijan

## Final Report March 2011 – April 2012



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## Table of Contents

<b>Acronyms</b> .....	3
<b>Acknowledgements</b> .....	3
<b>Background</b> .....	4
<b>Program Objectives</b> .....	4
<b>Objective 1:</b> Expand newborn resuscitation competency-based training package .....	5
<b>Objective 2:</b> Develop a competency-based package on clinical assessment of the newborn .....	6
<b>Objective 3:</b> Strengthen training of birth attendants conducted by Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology .....	6
<b>Objective 4:</b> Initiate incorporation of the training packages into national curricula for birth attendants ..	7
<b>Looking Ahead</b> .....	7
<b>Annex 1: M&amp;E Framework</b> .....	8
<b>Annex 2: Success Story</b> .....	9

## Acronyms

AAP	American Academy of Pediatrics
AMU	Azerbaijan Medical University
HBB	Helping Babies Breathe
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCHIP	Maternal and Child Health Integrated Program
MNCH	Maternal, Neonatal, and Child Health
MOH	Ministry of Health
NRP	American Heart Association's Neonatal Resuscitation Program
PHRC	Public Health and Reforms Center
RH	Reproductive Health
RIOG	Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology
RPC	Republican Prenatal Center
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

## Acknowledgements

MCHIP Azerbaijan was implemented in a relatively short timeframe (March 2011 – April 2012) and relied on the good will and thoughtful participation of many people in Azerbaijan and in the US, including leaders and colleagues from USAID/Baku and the following Azerbaijani institutions: the Ministry of Health (MOH) and its Public Health and Reforms Center (PHRC), the Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology (RIOG), the Republican Prenatal Center (RPC) and the Azerbaijan Medical University (AMU). The American Academy of Pediatrics/*Helping Babies Breathe* staff and the American Heart Association/Neonatal Resuscitation Program provided key technical inputs. The MCHIP experience in Azerbaijan is a successful example of how limited resources can have a large impact by leveraging global technical expertise, collaborating with local experts and by ensuring country (MoH) sense of ownership of the process and products.

## Background

Consistent with the Azerbaijan Ministry of Health (MOH) health strategy to improve overall quality of maternal, neonatal and child health (MNCH) care, national clinical practice guidelines were developed on MNCH and RH topics including antenatal care, newborn care, emergency obstetrics and modern contraception. While progress has been made in many areas, training providers to competency in key skills has remained a challenge.

In Azerbaijan 89%<sup>1</sup> of births are assisted by trained attendants but the high rate of neonatal mortality (28/1000)<sup>2</sup>, including the high proportion of neonatal deaths due to asphyxia (23%)<sup>3</sup>, prompted the request to MCHIP to develop newborn-focused training materials to complement the existing clinical practice guidelines. Priority areas of focus for MCHIP were neonatal resuscitation and initial clinical examination of the newborn. Materials were developed in close collaboration with institutions responsible for both pre- and in-service training.

## Program Objectives

Objective 1: Expand newborn resuscitation competency-based training package

Objective 2: Develop a competency-based package on clinical assessment of the newborn

Objective 3: Strengthen training of birth attendants conducted by Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology

Objective 4: Initiate incorporation of the training packages into national curricula for birth attendants

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<sup>1</sup>Azerbaijan Demographic Health Survey, 2006.

<sup>2</sup>Azerbaijan Demographic Health Survey, 2006.

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organization Statistics, 2006.

## Results

MCHIP finalized competency-based training packages supporting the dissemination and use of selected newborn clinical practice guidelines developed by the MOH and partners, including USAID-bilateral partners. Materials include two videos: *Assessment of the Healthy Newborn* and *Newborn Resuscitation*, as well as skills development checklists, clinical scenarios, job aids and *NeoNatalie* newborn simulators. Materials were developed in collaboration with the MOH and key stakeholders including the Public Health and Reforms Center, the Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education, Azerbaijan Medical University, the Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Republican Perinatal Center and the Scientific-Research Institute of Pediatrics.

**The training packages were presented to key pre-service stakeholders and professional associations and were accepted and included in the national medical education curriculum in June 2012.**

### Objective 1: Expand newborn resuscitation competency-based training package

Through close collaboration with colleagues from the USAID-funded bilateral, Primary Health Care Strengthening project (PHCS), MCHIP Azerbaijan identified and developed components needed to complete a training package on newborn resuscitation. A film for the training package on Neonatal Resuscitation was developed with input from technical staff at MCHIP Headquarters. To reach a wide audience in country, the film was produced in Azerbaijani with Russian subtitles. Filming of the Neonatal Resuscitation training film started after the Public Health and Reforms Center provided its review and feedback on the storyboard/script. This ensured harmonization with national protocols and ownership through the Ministry of Health. The film included materials drawn from the American Academy of Pediatrics' (AAP) and American Heart Association's Neonatal Resuscitation Program (NRP) and AAP's Helping Babies Breathe (HBB) training program. Step by step illustrations on reanimation were especially useful. In addition, MCHIP developed a training handbook on neonatal resuscitation.

## **Objective 2: Develop a competency-based package on clinical assessment of the newborn**

The team identified an additional need for training materials on assessment of the newborn. An instructional video, facilitator's guide, updated checklists for skills development, clinical scenario package, presentations, and job aids focusing on the first 12 hours of life was developed. Additionally, newborn clinical simulators for demonstration and practice of the skills were procured and used to build the capacity among health care providers.

To enhance skills through visual learning, a film on the assessment of the healthy newborn was also produced. As with neonatal resuscitation, the filming of the Assessment of the Healthy Newborn training film was undertaken through close cooperation with and feedback from the Public Health and Reforms Center, which is responsible for supporting the MoH in development of health reforms and medical protocols. Using select materials from Helping Babies Breathe, as well as images from other international and national resources, and animation elements, the film was successfully completed. Importantly, the film included interviews with Dr. Sitara Hagverdiyeva – the neonatologist from the Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology in Azerbaijan – to highlight the national ownership of these training materials.

## **Objective 3: Strengthen training of birth attendants conducted by Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology**

The newly completed training packages were provided to five medical institutes: Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Republican Prenatal Center, A. Aliyev Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education, Scientific-Research Institute of Pediatrics and Azerbaijan Medical University to enhance their existing training program on essential newborn care and support the national approach to improved postnatal care. MCHIP's technical consultant, Dr Irena Zahare, first conducted a two-day competency based Training of Trainers for 24 neonatologists, pediatricians and OB/GYNs from the five institutes. NeoNatalie newborn simulators were used to demonstrate, practice and test resuscitation skills. Six of the 24

physicians were selected by Dr Zahare and the RIOG Director to serve as master trainers for a subsequent three-day, in-service training of 68 physicians from facilities across Azerbaijan. These providers work primarily in maternal and newborn health and were tasked with dissemination of the experience and tools in their respective work stations.

#### **Objective 4: Initiate incorporation of the training packages into national curricula for birth attendants**

On April 3, 2012 the MCHIP team organized an official presentation of the two competency-based training packages (films and printed materials) on “Assessment of the Healthy Newborn” and “Newborn Resuscitation.” This was held at the Ministry of Health Public Health and Reforms Center with participation of key stakeholders including the Public Health and Reforms Center, A.Aliyev Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education, Azerbaijan Medical University, the Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Republican Prenatal Center, Scientific-Research Institute of Pediatrics and the Ministry of Health of Azerbaijan Republic. This presentation and discussion was focused on official acceptance of the training packages and its inclusion to the main medical sites such as the Scientific Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the Republican Perinatal Center and especially, Azerbaijan Medical University and its curriculum. All the materials were reviewed and approved by national experts. An official approval letter was provided by the Head of the Neonatology Department of Azerbaijan Medical University to formalize the integration of the training packages into the pre-service medical curriculum. The aforementioned MCHIP Training of Trainers strengthened clinical teaching sites through provision of NeoNatalie newborn simulators and training materials.

#### **Looking Ahead**

The ultimate desired outcome of MCHIP’s efforts is the sustainable incorporation of the training materials into pre-service, continuing education and in-service training curricula for birth attendants. In addition, clinical teaching sites would conduct competency-based training on newborn resuscitation and clinical examination effectively. Continued close collaboration between the Ministry of Health, Scientific Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology,

Scientific Research Institute of Pediatrics, Republican Prenatal Center, Azerbaijan Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education and Azerbaijan Medical University – with support from partners in country – will be critical to ensure this.

## Annex 1: M&E Framework

Program Outputs	Definition	Data Source
24 <b>female</b> medical doctors trained to standard; six selected as master trainers.	Number of trainers (pre-service educators and preceptors) trained in newborn health through MCHIP	Training records
68 practicing medical doctors trained ( <b>67 female, 1 male</b> )	Scientific Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Scientific Research Institute of Pediatrics, Republican Prenatal Center, Azerbaijan Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education and Azerbaijan Medical University	Training records
60 NeoNatalie newborn simulators distributed to five main medical institutions	Scientific Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology, Scientific Research Institute of Pediatrics, Republican Prenatal Center, Azerbaijan Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education and Azerbaijan Medical University	Inventory
Training package developed and included into Azerbaijan Medical University's curriculum for birth attendants	Training package on Assessment of the Healthy Newborn and Neonatal Resuscitation and hand book for teachers on Neonatal Resuscitation	Copy of training package developed , copy of official letter on agreement for inclusion into curriculum

## Annex 2: Success Story

### ***Successful MCHIP Start in Azerbaijan, October 2011***

Through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) global Maternal and Child Health Integrated Program (MCHIP), Azerbaijan passed to a new level of cooperation and synergy between national and international health care professionals in the field of maternal and newborn health. Launched in Baku in May 2011, MCHIP aims to improve maternal and child health and reduce mortality by focusing on improving the competence and skills of clinicians who attend births. In the current initiative, Azerbaijan is developing training packages for *Newborn Resuscitation* and *Assessment of the Healthy Newborn* based on existing national clinical practice guidelines (CPG) for Neonatal Resuscitation and Newborn Assessment.



In discussion with key partners at the Ministry of Health, the Scientific-Research Institute of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the Scientific-Research Institute of Pediatrics among others, plans were made to incorporate the MCHIP-produced training packages into the national medical education system, both for pre- and in-service training. The packages represent an innovative approach to medical education in Azerbaijan by creating training films using neonatologists from local clinics, and using materials complementing national CPG<sup>4</sup>, which are designed to help practitioners make

decisions about appropriate health care for specific circumstances.

An issue that arose during project discussions with stakeholders was that Azerbaijan's CPG was four years out of date. Since updates in evidence-based medicine are continuous, the need to update CPG more frequently than every five years (Azerbaijan's practice) was highlighted. As a result MCHIP team members negotiated with members of the project's professional Working Group and the Ministry of Health to update the CPG in advance of scheduled time (2013), which enabled production of training films/packages using the most recent medical evidence for the benefit of all newborns in Azerbaijan.

The *newborn resuscitation* and *clinical assessment of the healthy newborn* training packages are ready for approval by the Ministry of Health in early 2012, after which their use will be rolled out through trainings for neonatologists, pediatricians, obstetricians and gynecologists and neonatal nurses in State Medical University, Medical Colleges and the State Institute for Postgraduate Medical Education.

Now, with USAID/MCHIP support, Azerbaijan is one step closer to achieving its Millennium Development Goals: *significantly reducing under-five child mortality (MDG 4)* and *reducing maternal mortality ratio by three quarters (MDG 5)*.



<sup>4</sup> The CPG in place when the project started were from 2008, and scheduled for updating in 2013.