



CHAMPS

Building
Knowledge.
Saving
Children's
Lives.



CHAMPS Ethiopia Annual newsletter 2021



HHR | HARARGHE
HEALTH
RESEARCH

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HYGIENE
& TROPICAL
MEDICINE





Introduction

CHAMPS is working to create a world where all children are able to thrive. Using minimally invasive tissue sampling, histopathology, molecular and microbiologic diagnostics, clinical data abstraction, and verbal autopsies, CHAMPS' global network identifies and analyzes specific causes of stillbirth and death in children under five and shares that data to drive life-saving interventions.

Our Mission

Child Health and Mortality Prevention Surveillance (CHAMPS) works to save children's lives by collecting, analyzing, and sharing accurate, timely data about the causes of child mortality in the regions where it is highest.

Our Vision

A world where evidence-based interventions offer every child an equal chance to thrive.



CHAMPS Community Engagement Activities

We have conducted various community activities over the past year. Our activities focused on health education related to maternal and child health, increasing MITS acceptability, strengthening the death notification system and organizing outreach campaigns providing health services for the community.



Image: An engagement meeting with leaders of Community-based Organizations (CBOs), religious leaders and public figures to help strengthen acceptability of CHAMPS in the communities we are working in

Increase MITS Acceptability

The first MITS was done in February 2019, after that, the number performed each month has fluctuated due to various issues: rumors, culture and burial time, amongst others. The social and behavioral science team assesses the issues that concern the community and negatively impact the study and conduct rapid assessments, organize community gatherings and mass awareness creation sessions and work with influential people in the community to increase MITS acceptability.



Image: awareness creation during outreach campaigns



Image: health education during market day

Community Health Volunteers

Different community members have been recruited as volunteers to work with CHAMPS. These community members are religious leaders, CBO leaders, lead mothers, development army leaders and midwives who actively participate when death happens in the community and notify the CHAMPS team in good time. We offer volunteers refresher training on CHAMPS activities so that they can cascade the information through their community, helping to increase MITS acceptability.



Image: community health volunteers during notification training

Outreach Campaigns and Community Service

Providing health services to the community is our way of offering an immediate benefit to the community to show the commitment CHAMPS has towards improving maternal and child health. We have been able to provide clinical health services with the help of the health centers. For example, we offered care givers' training to an orphanage where more than 89 children are living, more than half of them are under two years of age. At Gale Mirga, Kersa we provided clinical health services to the community.



Image: Outreach clinical service given to different location



We found that malnutrition is the main factor contributing to child deaths in Kersa and the surrounding area. As a contribution towards addressing this, we conducted a nutrition demonstration event which was attended by 50 people. During the program participants prepared a variety of foods and learned how to cook nutritious food for their children. We also gave health education on feeding practices.



Image: trained women prepared nutritious foods and shared their experience to other mothers

Radio program and listening group

This year the radio program focused on DeCoDe panel results (the DeCoDe panel determines what caused the death of the children whose families allow us to perform MITS). The radio program talked about causes of death including neural tube defects and meningitis and what can be done to address these health conditions. Besides, the program provided updates on CHAMPS activities. Listening groups help to cascade the program to the community and give us feedback on the community's reflection about the program.



Image: listening group following a program transmitted by Haramaya Fana FM 94.8

MITS Update DeCoDe Result

CHAMPS works in three site (Kersa, Harar and Haramaya) and within 48 kebeles. Around 200 death notifiers were trained to notify when a child died at home within 24 hours of the death. The proportion of deaths in rural areas communities is high, and the community death notification system helps us to reach these families within the timeframe that the child is eligible for MITS. This year we received 1233 death notifications from the hospital in the three wards (maternity, pediatric and NICU) and from the community. Among these, 458 and 320 were eligible for CHAMPS and MITS eligible respectively. Following this, 310 families were approached for consent, of whom 270 families consented for MITS. A total of 150 cases were reviewed by the DeCoDe panelists. Meanwhile, we were able to provide a confirmed cause of their child's death to around 100 families.

CHAMPS-Ethiopia sites

CHAMPS implementation sites are Kersa, Harar and Haramaya. A total of 48 kebeles are selected catchment areas under the Demographic Surveillance System (DSS). The pictures below illustrate Hospital and health centers where we are working.



Image: Weter health center



Image: Kersa health center



Image: Haramaya General Hospital



Image: Bereka health center

Clinical activities within the Community

The clinical team resides in two hospitals, Haramaya District Hospital and Hiwot Fana Specialized University Hospital. The community team in Kersa is located at the DSS office and Kersa health center with frequent travel to the community. There are 12 MITS practitioners who are doctors, health officers, pathologist, nurses and midwives by profession.

Besides its daily routine activities, the Haramaya clinical team offers a free treatment service for people who need support. For cases that need further investigation, patients will be linked to the hospital or any other medical center. The clinical team at Hiwot Fana Hospital also gives health education session weekly in the three wards, covering topics including: danger signs during pregnancy, general hygiene, infant feeding and exclusive breast feeding practice.



Image: health education session at water health center

CHAMPS microbiology, molecular and pathology laboratories

The laboratory team undergoes training to keep up to date with the high technology laboratory machines they are using. Staff in the microbiology lab were trained online and certified to use the Micro Scan and also underwent basic first aid training and a training on Gazelle Hemoglobin variant instruments. The laboratory process samples of 3317 Antenatal COVID19 serum samples, 7584 ANC COVID-19 and 1640 MBIRA samples. The pathology laboratory located in Hiwot Fana hospital also provides free pathology services.



Image: microbiology and molecular laboratories



Image: pathology laboratory

Launching Pregnancy Surveillance

For the past year the groundwork has been finished and on June 20, 2021 data collection for pregnancy surveillance started. All women, in their reproductive age group within the CHAMPS catchment area participated in this surveillance. The program aims to improve registration of pregnant women, encourage better attendance at antenatal care and follow-up, detect stillbirths and other medical problems in time and consider potential enrollment to CHAMPS surveillance. The program provided ultrasound machines to health centers with the intention of improving outcomes at child birth. Since the program was launched, 3943 pregnant women and mothers who gave birth within one year were enrolled in the study.



Image: woman given ultrasound service

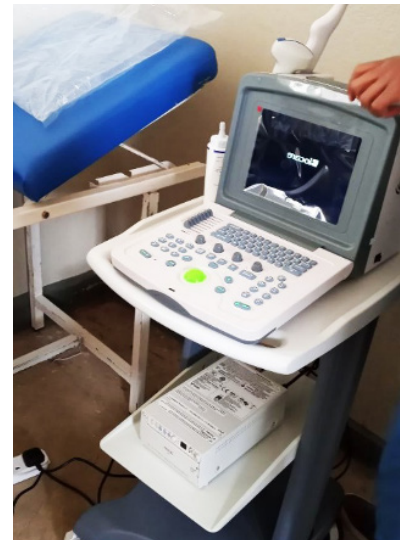


Image: introducing pregnancy surveillance for women in the community

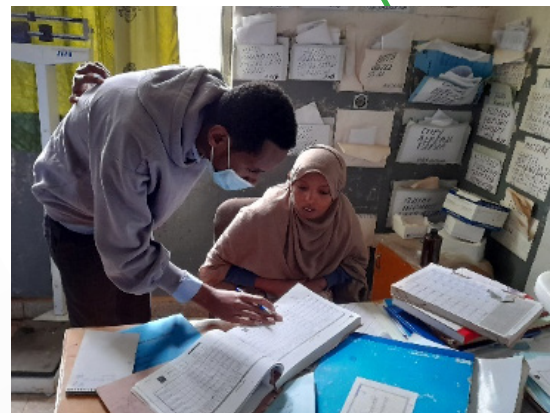


Image: field visit and training of PS detectors



Continuous work of Data to Action (DtA)

CHAMPS transforms data into action, working at the local, national and global levels to ensure sustainable changes in policies, systems, and health interventions to accelerate improvements in child health. The Data to Action journey starts by delivering the cause of death to MITS participant families. This year, over 160 families were informed about the cause of death of their child and given health specific health education. Our aggregated findings were also shared with health centers, CBO leaders of the community, hospitals and NGO's working on maternal child health within east Hararghe and the regional health office.

Nationally, we communicated our findings to the Ethiopian Public Health Institute and Ethiopian Ministry of Health. We have prepared manuscripts for international journal publication and presented at conferences.

As a part of our health education work, we filled billboards and distributed health information brochures. We purchased folic acid and distributed it to health centers to be given to women who are at risk of giving birth with neural tube defects.



Image: CHAMPS Ethiopia team meeting with EPHI



Image: presentation of our findings with Oromia Health Bureau



Image: Neural Tube Defect health education at Haramaya Hospital

Improving ANC with better medical equipment

An event organized by Haramaya University to share findings from the CHAMPS project was held on 29th of November, 2021. Dr. Nega Assefa, Principal Investigator of the study, explained some of the key findings from the research; Including the role of the mother's health: poor maternal health has been found to be one of the factors contributing to child mortality, and this can be explained by pregnant women not attending ANC and may contribute towards stillbirth, early infant death and even the mother's death. Dr. Nega also explained how we are using our data's to influence the community, health institutions, policy makers and organizations who are doing intervention on child health.

The event was attended by Dr. Jemal Yusuf, Haramaya University President, Dr. Yadeta Dessie, Haramaya University Health and Medical Science College Executive Director, Ms. Miski Mohammed, East Hararghe Zone Chief Administrator and Deputy Board Chairman of Haramaya University and Mr. Mohammedin Kebirhusen, Head, East Hararghe Zone Health Office. Guests representing the community also attended the event.

The University availed medical equipment worth of 5.2 million Birr to health centers in East Hararghe Zone and the Harari region. Ultrasounds, beds with mattress, adult weight and height measurement devices, blood pressure monitors, wheelchairs and blood level testing machines were provided to support the pregnancy surveillance activities.

Dr. Jemal Yusuf described how Haramaya University is focusing on social service and problem solving research, while Dr. Yadeta Dessie explained how CHAMPS work is helping in the reduction of child mortality and sharing its data with the community.

participants highly appreciated the support of equipment for improving women and children's health.



Image: handover of medical equipment

Theater For Development (TFD)

TFD has been used as an approach to teach the community about child health and main causes of death. The causes of death that have been identified during the DeCoDe panel are shared with the community through drama performances. TFD sessions were conducted in Harar around Shewaber (the biggest market in town) and the two hospitals (Hiwot Fana and Jgol Hospital). Sessions have also been conducted at Weter, Kersa where more than 100 spectators attended.



Image: performance at the school in Kersa



Image: TFD at Dulo selama

Scientific meetings and activities

CHAMPS scientific meetings have been a part of development research plans and ideas for new grants and to discuss the publication of results from CHAMPS study. Trainings were conducted, such as courses on various topics including IT and Good Clinical Practice. Masters and Doctorial programs for staff and students have already been selected and are preparing to enroll in the programs at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine. There are journal clubs to discuss scientific papers, and workshops have been held to encourage staff to lead a journal club session. Nine abstracts were presented at the American Society for Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) and two were presented at European Society for Pediatric Infectious Diseases (ESPID). Furthermore, nine staff presented at Scientific Members and got approval to be submitted to ASTMH.

Events

The CHAMPS team has participated events to provide sensitization on its activities on child and maternal health. These events helped us to reach the community directly and indirectly. Programs included: March 8 celebration, a pregnancy conference and research workshops.



Image: attending pregnancy conference at the health center



Image: research workshop organized by Haramaya University

Community Advisory Board (CAB)

This past year our CAB members were updated with our findings. We described how we are sharing our data to families, communities, health officials and government officials who are involved in health policy in Ethiopia. Members provided us with insightful information about how best to communicate and engage the community, since they represent different community member constituencies.



Image: Community Advisory Board, Kersa



Image: Community Advisory Board, Harar



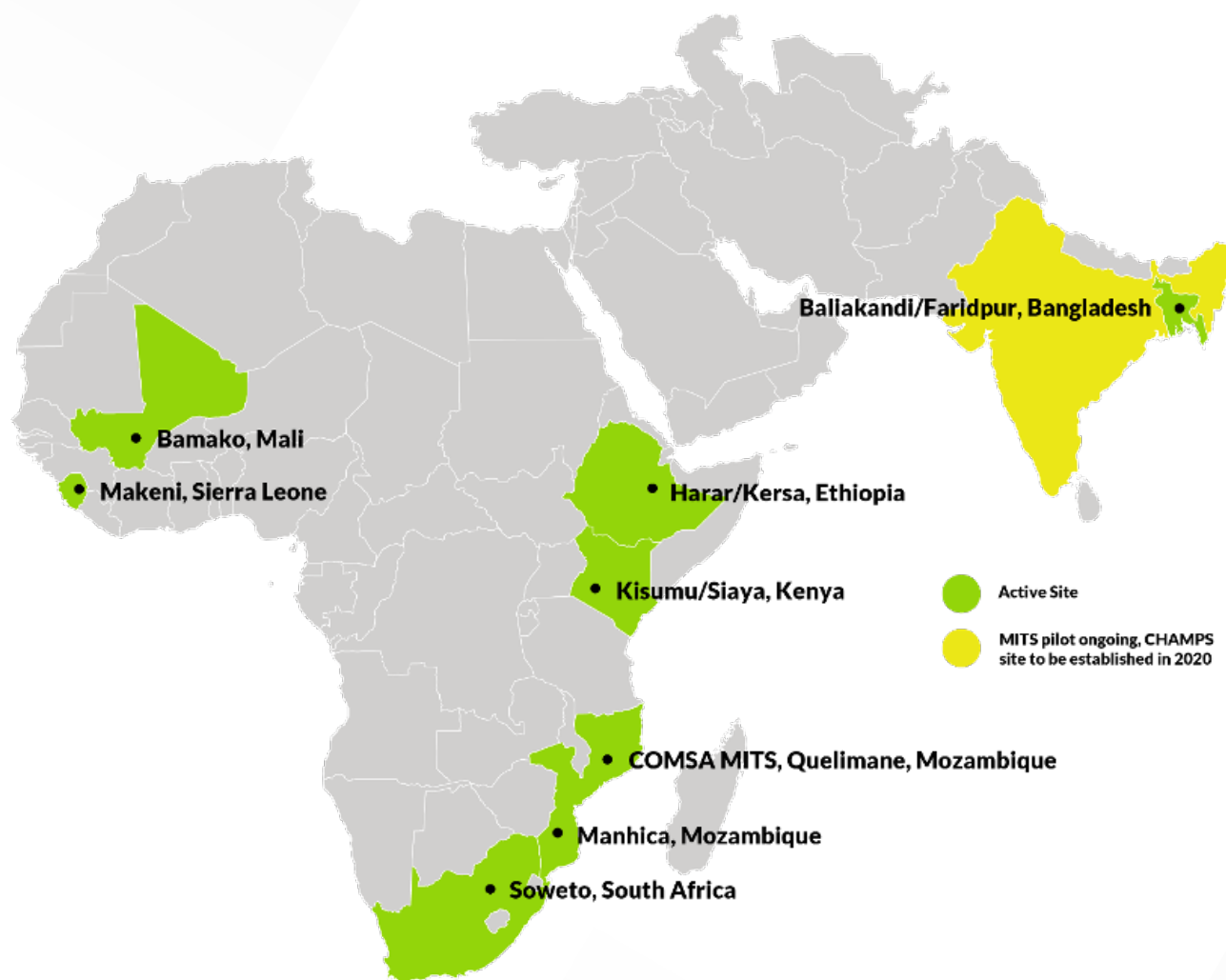
Gallery







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