

Making Mothers: Reducing the Maternal Mortality Rate in Rural Sierra Leone

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Abstract

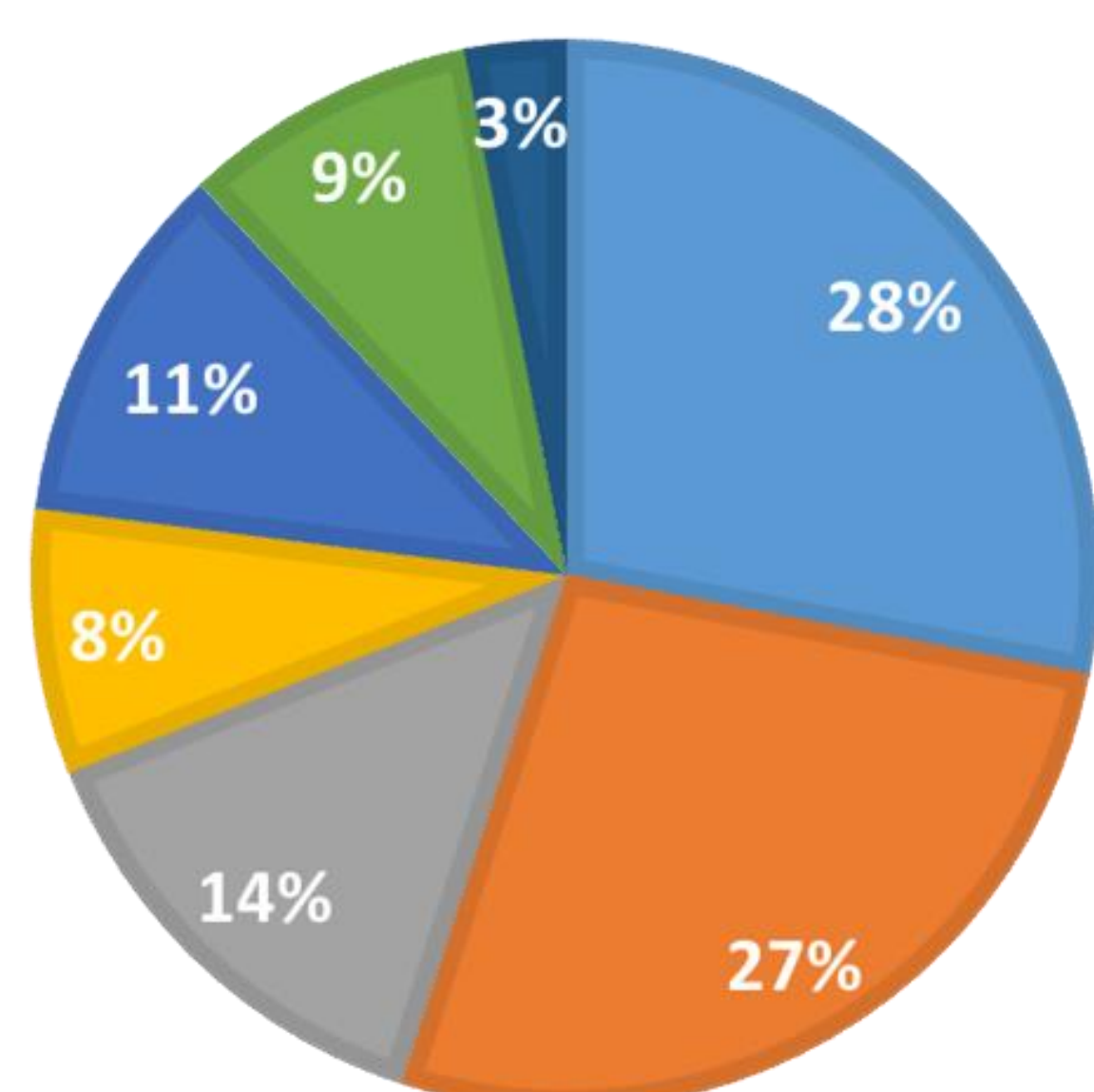
Maternal mortality is a concern in developing nations, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa. In order to reduce the maternal mortality rate (MMR) in rural Sierra Leone, an organization which distributes birthing kits to Sierra Leonean women to aid with home deliveries was created. A reduction of maternal deaths caused by hemorrhage and infection is anticipated.

Background

- Most maternal deaths are preventable and occur in underdeveloped nations.
- MMR in Sierra Leone= 890 deaths per 100,000 live births (5th highest worldwide) (1)
- < 50% of deliveries occur with skilled attendants, <20% occur in health facilities (2)

CAUSES OF MATERNAL DEATH WORLDWIDE BY PERCENTAGE

- Pre-existing conditions
- Pregnancy-induced high blood pressure
- Infections
- Blood clots/embolism
- Severe Bleeding
- Abortion complications
- Obstructed labor and other



Methods

The Kit:

One time use sterile birthing kit
Targets maternal death caused by hemorrhaging and infection.
Contents: plastic sheet, alcohol free hand wipes, gloves, cord tie, razor blade, gauze, pamphlet



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Making Mothers



Worldwide

Making Mothers Worldwide (MMW) was established as an organization of medical students.

Trained members on the usage of the kit and culture of Sierra Leone

MMW held information assemblies for women

Demonstrations and explanations of birth kit were provided

Open dialogue, encouraged community participation



Kits were distributed to just over 500 households

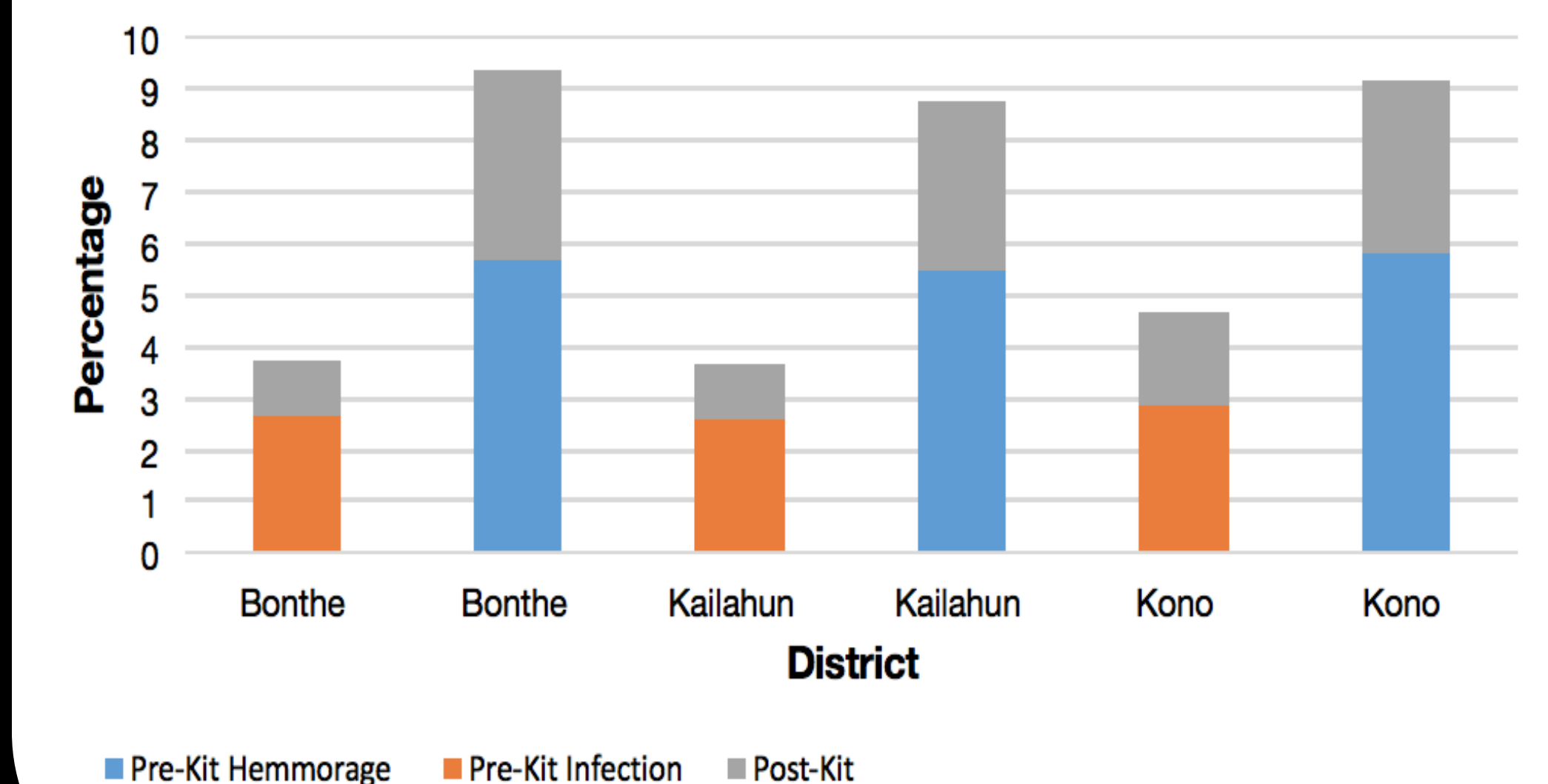
Methods of contact to request additional kits were established

Kits was provided at no cost, given responsible use

Results

- Positive community response, majority participated
- 25% decrease in maternal mortality
- 40% decrease in hemorrhaging
- 60% decrease in infection

Percentage of deaths among women of reproductive age that are due to infection and hemorrhage



Conclusions

- Increase in educated birth attendants lead to a decrease in unsafe birthing procedures
- Significant decrease in MMRs are expected (~20%) in future
- MMW could partner with UNICEF or the WHO to expand program to other underdeveloped nations

References

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