

SMARTER, HEALTHIER CITIES

CHALLENGE: IMPROVE HOW CITIES MANAGE MATERNAL AND NEWBORN EMERGENCY REFERRALS

Universal health coverage is increasing the demand for health services, especially among poor pregnant women, as the financial barriers to accessing quality care are removed. Yet countries are struggling to meet the increased demand for quality maternal and neonatal services. A lack of coordination in urban, emergency referral systems is negatively impacting the poor—in terms of the value of the health services they receive—and creating system-wide inefficiencies in the use of scarce resources, such as hospital beds equipped to deal with the most serious maternal and neonatal complications.

The story is a complicated one, but essentially a lack of information, coordination and confidence in the referral system means that women and newborns aren't getting appropriate and timely care. Women with the most serious complications often are turned away from overburdened hospitals, which have admitted patients (many self-referred) that could have delivered in lower-level facilities. Families even refuse to transport women that need more advanced care, because they aren't confident that they will be well received or given timely and compassionate care. In the face of increasingly diverse and strained urban healthcare systems, how can we drive efficiencies in referral networks that lead to better population based health outcomes?

HOW MIGHT WE...

DISRUPT...

...the traditional approaches for referring pregnant women during emergencies, empowering health workers and pregnant women and their families to make informed decisions about care seeking during labor and delivery?

PARTNER...

...with Ghana's Greater Accra Regional Health Directorate to strengthen its Maternal Call Center to improve emergency referrals for pregnant women and newborns?

LEARN...

...from and build on Indonesia's Maternal and Newborn emergency referral system, known as SIJARIEMAS, which routes referrals based on pre-defined algorithms?

CO-DESIGN...

...an open source solution that combines referral automation and human intelligence (through a call center) to effectively manage emergency referrals across both public and private facilities in a defined catchment area?

JOIN...

...a community of practice, such as the Open Referral Initiative, to explore how referral solutions are approached outside the health sector.

EXPLORE...

...the boundaries of IOT use, leveraging real-time data platforms (e.g., sensors), and analyzing 'big data' to build and refine algorithms to support smarter, healthier and more resilient health ecosystems.

...TO IMPROVE HEALTH?

DESIGN PRINCIPLES



Focus on Population Health

Maximize resources to improve maternal and newborn health across the population.



Think Scale

Deliver maternal results now. Lay the foundation for better emergency management across the health sector.



Deploy Tech Smartly

Use technology to empower healthcare workers and patients. Add clear, quantifiable value.



Promote Open Source

Lay the foundation for an open source referral application. Build on existing efforts.



Know the Stakeholders

Understand the local ecosystem and how to align incentives to promote collaboration, data sharing.