



Performance-Based Financing and Maternal Service Utilisation

A Perspective from Primary Healthcare Clinics in Koulikoro, Mali

Fatoumata Traoré¹

¹ Department of Research, USTTB Bamako (University of Sciences, Techniques and Technologies)

Correspondence: ftraor@outlook.com

Published: 10 June 2019	Received: 14 March 2019	Accepted: 09 May 2019	DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.18943733
--------------------------------	--------------------------------	------------------------------	--

Author notes

Fatoumata Traoré is affiliated with Department of Research, USTTB Bamako (University of Sciences, Techniques and Technologies) and focuses on African Studies research in Africa.

ABSTRACT

Performance-based financing (PBF) has been widely implemented across sub-Saharan Africa to improve health service delivery. Its specific impact on maternal healthcare utilisation within the Malian context, particularly at the primary care level, remains insufficiently explored from a frontline implementation perspective. This perspective piece aims to critically examine the mechanisms through which PBF influences the uptake of maternal health services in rural primary healthcare clinics, focusing on intended and unintended consequences for service provision and community engagement. The analysis draws on the direct professional experiences and observations of healthcare providers and district managers within the Koulikoro Region, synthesising these insights with a review of relevant programme documentation and regional health data. A key theme identified is that while PBF incentives for quantified outputs, such as antenatal care attendance, led to an initial increase in reported coverage, they simultaneously diverted clinical attention and resources away from less-easily measured aspects of quality care, including patient counselling and postnatal support. The PBF model, as implemented, produced a dual effect: it stimulated measurable gains in service utilisation metrics but risked undermining the holistic, relationship-based care essential for sustained maternal health improvements. Future health financing reforms should integrate qualitative care indicators into incentive structures, ensure more equitable resource allocation to remote clinics, and strengthen community accountability mechanisms alongside financial incentives. performance-based financing, maternal health, primary healthcare, health systems, Mali, health policy This perspective provides novel, grounded analysis of the on-the-ground operational tensions between quantitative targets and qualitative care under PBF, offering critical lessons for designing more effective health financing policies in similar resource-constrained settings.

Keywords: *Performance-based financing, maternal healthcare, primary healthcare, sub-Saharan Africa, health systems strengthening*

Article Highlights

Core Tension

- PBF increased reported antenatal coverage but diverted attention from quality care.
- Financial incentives created tension between quantitative targets and qualitative patient support.
- The model's design overlooked less-easily measured aspects like counselling and postnatal care.
- Findings advocate for integrating qualitative indicators into future financing reforms.

The study identifies a dual effect: PBF boosted service utilisation metrics while potentially eroding the comprehensive care model needed for long-term maternal health outcomes.

A grounded analysis of frontline implementation tensions in Mali's primary healthcare clinics.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

REQUEST FULL PAPER

 **Email:** info@parj.africa

Request your copy of the full paper today!

SUBMIT YOUR RESEARCH

**Are you a researcher in Africa? We
welcome your submissions!**

Join our community of African scholars and share
your groundbreaking work.

 **Submit at:** app.parj.africa



Scan to visit app.parj.africa

Open Access Scholarship from PARJ

Empowering African Research | Advancing Global
Knowledge