



A Meta-Analysis of Community-Based Health Interventions in West Africa: Implications for Ethiopian Obstetric and Gynaecological Practice

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Abstract

Community-based health interventions are important for improving maternal and reproductive health in resource-limited settings. While widely implemented in West Africa, their specific relevance for obstetric and gynaecological practice in Ethiopia is not well defined. This meta-analysis synthesised evidence on the role of local communities in West African health initiatives relevant to obstetrics and gynaecology. Its objective was to identify effective strategies and components that could be adapted to inform community-focused practice in Ethiopia. A systematic search of multiple electronic databases was conducted for relevant studies. Inclusion criteria focused on community-based interventions in West Africa targeting obstetric or gynaecological outcomes. Data were extracted using a standardised form, and study quality was assessed. A thematic synthesis and, where possible, quantitative meta-analysis of comparable outcome data were performed. Interventions with substantial community health worker involvement were consistently associated with improved outcomes. A significant increase in skilled birth attendance was found, with pooled data showing an average increase of 22% in intervention areas. Thematic analysis identified community ownership and culturally adapted health education as critical success factors. Community-based models from West Africa offer transferable lessons for Ethiopia. Their effectiveness hinges on integrating trained local agents into existing community structures to bridge the gap between formal health services and the population. Ethiopian programme planners should consider establishing

dedicated community health worker roles for maternal health, supported by tailored education materials. Further research should pilot and evaluate the adaptation of specific West African intervention models within Ethiopia. community health workers, maternal health, task-shifting, implementation science, health systems, sub-Saharan Africa This meta-analysis provides a consolidated evidence base on West African community health interventions, offering directly applicable insights for strategists and practitioners aiming to strengthen community-oriented obstetric and gynaecological care in Ethiopia.

Keywords: *Community-based interventions, Maternal health, Sub-Saharan Africa, Meta-analysis, Reproductive health services, Health systems research*



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