

Rotary



Rotary Action Groups 2021 Annual Report

This excerpt about the

Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health

is published on the pages 45 – 48 of the general document

Rotary Action Group for Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health (RMCH)

Topic: improving maternal and child health

Membership

In 2020-21, RMCH reported nearly 12,833 members in twelve countries. Among those, 11,654 are Rotarians, 174 are Rotaractors, and 1,005 are non-Rotarian/non-Rotaractors. 396 Rotary clubs and four Rotaract clubs are also members of the group. The group's membership is concentrated in Germany, Nigeria, India, Korea, and USA. The group is administered by 15 Rotarian board members who are from USA, Germany, Austria, India, and UK.

Annual Membership Dues: US\$25

Lifetime Membership Dues: US\$100

Other Membership Dues: Germany: US\$200 (lifetime), but US\$100 if the club is a member

Projects and Activities

The group supported 26 projects in 2020-21: six TRF-funded projects, one multi-district project, five district projects, and 14 club projects. The type of assistance provided to clubs and districts is as follows:

Technical Support

- RMCH coached clubs and Rotarians on developing TRF global grant applications by providing community assessments, securing funding, identifying international partners, helping with project design, advising on proposal writing, and incorporating sustainability into projects. The group also carry out follow-up evaluations of impact. Several members of our RMCH Board are also TRF Cadre members, who the group calls upon to discuss project ideas with clubs seeking support. The group cooperates with many projects around the world, on some of which they lead and others on which they serve as a cooperating organization. The group has five workstreams: 1. Improving reproductive, maternal and child health in Nigeria, 2. Skill building for medical personnel, 3. Women's empowerment and health, 4. Skills training for women and girls through Saheli Centers, and 5. Support for indirect causes of improved outcomes for women and girls.
- The best example of how RMCH monitors a project is their signature project in Nigeria in which RMCH monitors maternal deaths, contraceptive use, related trainings, and reporting coverage. The data is reviewed monthly with local and state stakeholders to identify where additional efforts are required to improve the quality of care and/or quality of data coverage. The skill building projects often include the collection of data on skill levels of various levels of health providers from medical staff to community health workers. Planning new training strategies required periodic review of skill levels to improve health indicators and use our resources efficiently.
- The most significant tool RMCH developed around impact recording is the Maternal and Perinatal Death Surveillance and Response (MPDSR) data base, which will become a mandatory reporting tool across all 36 states and the Federal Capitol Territory (FCT) of Nigeria. When combined with national or state level surveys, RMCH will have a good understanding about trends and levels of critical indicators for maternal and child health in Nigeria

Fundraising

- RMCH raised funds over the past year from action group members, the broader Rotary network, donors outside of Rotary, and external organizations / corporations. The RMCH is well positioned with a variety of partners to support projects. While not all projects are large, requiring major funding, nor do all partners want to cooperate with funding (would prefer to collaborate on service efforts), RMCH has been able to generate over time the capacity to approach members and donors for funding for service projects in their area of specialty.

Training and Advocacy

- RMCH medical training teams adapt material from global sources such as WHO, JHPIEGO, FIGO and others, and they share these materials in most trainings. RMCH's focus is not to develop new materials, but rather ensure that

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the evidence-based materials created by global partners are available to leaders, providers and the local community where appropriate.

- The RMCH CALMED team and the RMCH Nigeria team have been working on health care training, and the project Big Pink has focused on the education of Rotary women on how to preserve and protect their health.
- RMCH hosts several webinars a year as RMCH. In addition, members participated in the past year in a webinar with WHO and Rotary, with the International Federation of OB-GYNs (FIGO), SOGON and UK FIGO section, and other meetings related to in their area of specialty.
- RMCH has presented results of their work in international webinars, national seminars, and local meetings so that everyone can learn about opportunities for learning, replication and scale up.
- Reproductive maternal child health awareness campaigns have largely been the work of Population Media Center in Nigeria, where they produce and distribute made for television material and soap operas about changing social norms and the opportunities for choice in health care.

Partnerships

- In every country where RMCH works with a focus on scaling up, the group has long term relationships with government ministries, usually the state and national Ministries of Health. RMCH may also seek cooperation with social security systems in the future as another mechanism for gaining universal health coverage and insights into the role of health insurance in achieving long term program goals.
- The RMCH Germany Chapter has received funding from BMZ, Germany for support of the maternal health work in Nigeria. In addition, RMCH cooperates with a range of private donors for leveraged support in areas such as supplies (e.g. contraceptives), communication, and advocacy. In India, the group cooperates with the Apollo Hospital network for support for health and well-being maintenance. Members of the Big Pink effort for women's wellness receive discounts for basic health maintenance services from the hospitals if they show their Big Pink card.
- The group also leverages a partnership with Population Council which offers them additional expertise in reproductive and maternal health, new contraceptive technologies in particular.
- Partnerships with Ob-Gyn Societies and midwifery societies (ICM) both in Nigeria and around the world allow RMCH to gain cooperation as well as access to the best practices and gain insights into how to best scale up successful intervention.

Signature Initiatives

National Maternal Health and Family Planning Campaign in Nigeria:

RMCH leads this signature program in partnership with governmental and non-governmental agencies in Nigeria and around the globe such as the Federal Ministry of Health and State Ministries of Health of Nigeria, Planned Parenthood of Nigeria (PPFN), Society of Gynecology & Obstetrics of Nigeria (SOGON), UNFPA, Population Council (PC), and Population Media Center). The goal of the program is to improve the access to and quality of family planning and maternal health services. Recently, The Federal Ministry of Health in Nigeria gave a mandate through collaborative efforts with RAG-RMCH to support reduction of maternal and perinatal morbidity and mortality through a long-standing commitment to improving the health of its population. This includes family planning, capacity building of health workers and Maternal and Perinatal Deaths Surveillance and Response (MPDSR); as well as community dialogues to improve access to quality essential maternal and newborn health services and medicines. This is demonstrated in the 2021-2022 Reproductive Maternal, Newborn, Child, Adolescent and Elderly health Plus Nutrition (RMNCAEH+N) operational Plan, among others. They were involved in many initiatives:

1. The media campaign for the RMCH Family Planning Campaign was launched being one of their most successful intervention.

2. 60 journalists from the print, radio, television, and social media were trained and instructed on effective reporting of Maternal and Child health issues, especially family planning.
3. Family Planning equipment worth 20,000,000 naira were donated to ten facilities in each of the 36 States as well as the Federal Capital.
4. In support of the Family Health Department of FMOH, RMCH, under its National Family Planning Campaign Project in collaboration with the SOGON, had 125 trainers provide training about Obstetric Quality Assurance (OQA) and Family planning to 40 doctors and nurses across secondary and tertiary facilities in all 36 states.
5. A training guide for Quality Assurance and Quality of Care was created. MPDSR is being developed for maternal and child reproductive health workers.
6. FMOH has commenced the transition of domestication of MPDSR e-platform through ICT department and Federal IT Agency Galaxy backbone with RMCH project in Nigeria. Also, a draft bill to institutionalize MPDSR in Nigeria has been submitted to the National Assembly.

With 46,000,000 beneficiaries and a budget of US\$2,000,000, this ongoing project led to a 40% increase in national CPR contribution, a reduction in unmet need for modern contraceptives by 22%, and a reduction of maternal deaths by 15%. RMCH continues to ensure that the law on the mandatory use of MPDSR and OQA databases is approved by the National Assembly and implemented by the FMOH, State Ministries of Health, and private sector stakeholders.

Preventable Maternal and Neonatal Mortality Reduction Program in a Tribal Areas of North-East India - Leveraging partnerships with Districts 1120 (England), 1145 (England), 3240 (India), and 2760 (Japan) – and organizations such as GLOWM (Global Library of Women's Medicine), MAF (Medical Aid Films), Laerdal Corporation, RMCH Rotary Action Group, International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals, NEIGRIHMS (Northeast Indira Gandhi Regional Institute of Health and Medical Sciences), and National Health Mission (Government of Meghalaya), this TRF Global Grant project was implemented in five districts in Meghalaya, India and is planned to be replicated in Uganda. In this project, there is upskilling and capacity development of the healthcare professionals (doctors and nurses) through a structured train the trainer model delivered by vocational training team visits (VTT). Modern training methods including high fidelity simulators, videos, and role playing are used. RMCH is also working to improve health seeking behavior in the communities mediated by training supported by healthcare assistants known as ASHAs. Covid related travel restrictions since March of 2020 have encouraged the development of remote learning and related e-learning portals, additional to the three planned VTT visits.

Led by Rotarian Dr. Himansu Basu, RMCH developed the CALMED based VTT program which created a training advisory network with access to experienced volunteer trainers, advisers, and a tool kit of training materials (e.g. films, apps, training simulation materials, good practice guide, etc.). This is available for Rotary clubs and districts and can be seen here. Covid led to the creation of a distanced learning VTT program supported by an e-Learning platform, introduction of peer-to-peer training, in-site simulation training, and a digital mentoring network. There have been digital technology enhancements with the creation of a cellphone-based apps, as seen here, and a Referral Management System to fast track the transferring of mothers and babies from remote communities who require emergency skilled care. RMCH's skilled doctors, nurses, and advocates equipped with relevant training materials (Tool Kit) are now available to provide expert advice on quality of care throughout the project cycle on relevant MCH projects. Their partners also help in providing additional technical guidance. With 1,860,000 beneficiaries and a budget of US\$83,000, this ongoing project continues to improve the capacity of health care providers of maternal health services and the quality of care provided to pregnant women.

The Big Pink Program: Partnered with Rotary districts in Chennai, Bhubaneshwar, Indore, Bangalore, Mumbai, Madurai, Nasik, and Apollo Hospitals, this project focuses on five areas of women's health: 1. Life education and Menstrual Health, 2. Well Women Check-ups and Vaccinations, 3. Perfect Health, Diet and Exercise, 4. Maternal and Reproductive Health, and 5. Mental Health. PDG Rekha Shetty from the RMCH Board has been able to mobilize Rotary clubs in south India to sponsor health and wellness days and provide the interface with private health services for health check-ups. With 25,000 beneficiaries, this locally funded project remains ongoing in India. The project has also been replicated in Sri Lanka and Malaysia, and soon will expanded into selected countries in sub-Saharan Africa.

Programs of Scale Participation

The objective of the RMCH's proposal, "Sustainable Improvement of Reproductive, Maternal and Child Health in Nigeria", was to enhance reproductive and maternal health and family planning systems in Nigeria. While building capacity and accountability, RMCH wants to increase the demand for professional maternal health and family planning services and increasing the supply of quality maternal health and family planning services. The goals of this project align with RMCH's goal of making a difference at scale in support of the Sustainable Development goals SDG 3 ("ensure healthy lives and well-being for those of all ages") and 5 ("achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls"). RMCH initiatives require interventions at scale to make a difference in public health indicators, and the wellbeing of communities and countries.

Notable Collaborations

Formal Collaborations: Apollo Hospitals, Population Council, Population Media Center, SOGON in Nigeria (society associated with FIGO)

Informal Collaborations: Planned Parenthood Federation Affiliates

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