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The Exemplar

April 2023

Hi Friend,


Progress in reducing neonatal and maternal mortality makes pictures like this one above possible – and we have the data to prove it.

Since 1990, Bangladesh reduced its neonatal mortality rate (NMR) from 65.6 to 17.5 neonatal deaths per 1,000 live births; and since 2000, it reduced its maternal mortality ratio (MMR) from 434 to 173 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Bangladesh also saw a 41.3% decrease in stillbirths, declining from 41.4 to 24.3 stillbirths per 1,000 total births between 2000 and 2019.

Together, these numbers introduce an important story, one that shows how [Bangladesh became an Exemplar country](#) on track to reach SDG targets for both neonatal and maternal mortality. How did the country do it? Focusing on expanding access to [family planning and antenatal care](#) are just a few ways the country is saving the lives of more children – and their mothers – than ever before.

By learning about this work, and understanding the effort that informed these data points, we can learn about the pathway that takes us from evidence to reality, confirming that sometimes a picture is worth more than 1,000 numbers. And that is worth celebrating.

Best,
Niranjan Bose

 **Gates Ventures**
Niranjan Bose, PhD
Managing Director, Health & Life Sciences

STATISTIC OF THE MONTH

Premature births and sepsis rates declined in Bangladeshi newborns by at least 50% from 2000 to 2017



Bangladesh was able to more than halve the rate of two of the most common causes of neonatal death, premature birth and sepsis, in less than 20 years.

EXEMPLARS STORIES

How Nepal reduced maternal mortality by legalizing abortion

Nepal's story of progress shows the transformative power of expanding access to abortion and making services legal. Learn how the country decreased maternal mortality by 66% over two decades.

Lessons from Kenya's family planning success story

Here's more good news worth celebrating: Contraceptive rates in Kenya rose from 15% in 1990 to nearly 60% in 2022. Hear from Sophie Chabeda of the International Centre for Reproductive Health to learn more about the key strategies that have led to the country's success.

'I look forward to a country of women who have autonomy over their bodies'

Brenda Formin, one of Cameroon's most prominent youth activists, is on a mission to empower adolescents to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Learn what's giving her hope and optimism across West Africa.

EVENTS

The International Maternal Newborn Health Conference (IMNHC) (#IMNHC2023) May 8 – 11, 2023

Our team and partners are attending this year's IMNHC to share progress on countries that are improving maternal and newborn health outcomes worldwide. A panel session facilitated by Dr. Asha George, Principal Visiting Fellow at United Nations University-International Institute for Global Health, will highlight key components of NMR/MMR progress in Exemplar countries.

World Health Assembly (#WHA2023) May 21 – 30, 2023

Exemplars team and partners will attend this year's World Health Assembly, taking place in Geneva, Switzerland. This year's theme, "Saving Lives, driving health for all," will cover conversations around access to essential health services and universal health care, among other high-priority topics.

Follow us on LinkedIn for additional updates, resources, and research.

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ABOUT

Become an Exemplar

Join a passionate and dedicated community of global health leaders working on the biggest challenges of our times. Explore critical learning from countries around the world as you tackle similar problems at home. Informed by your knowledge and voice, our robust and growing set of resources are designed to ensure the positive and most equitable global health outcomes.

