

Module 1 : Introduction to Newborn Health and Care

Session 2 : Local customs and terminology about pregnancy childbirth and newborns

Day : 1

Time Required : 1 hour and 15 minutes

Purpose

To allow ASHAs, who themselves come from the local communities, to revisit their understanding of traditional customs about pregnancy, childbirth and newborns, and to identify local words used in describing these events.

Objectives

At the end of the session, the ASHAs will have developed :

1. A list of local terms about pregnancy, delivery and newborn period and the meaning of these terms.
2. A list of local customs around childbearing.

Materials

- Blackboard or white paper/flip chart paper (for small groups)
- Markers
- Notebooks and pens for each participant
- Worksheet 1: Small Group Exercise

Preparation

- Ensure availability of Worksheet 1
- Cut the Worksheet 1 to make three slips

Training Methods

Large Group Discussion (10 minutes)

Instructions to Trainers :

1. Ask the group members why they think it is important to be aware of rituals surrounding pregnancy, birth, and the first days of a newborn's life. Why is it important to know the local words used?
2. Listen to their answers and write the key responses on the blackboard. There may be more than one correct answer. Following are a few examples:
 - *Knowing the community better will help an ASHA work with the community more effectively towards improving its health.*
 - *Knowing the exact meaning of local words will enable an ASHA to have more effective communication with the community. This will decrease the gap between what women in the community mean and what an ASHA perceives.*
 - *Knowing local practices will help the ASHA determine if traditional practices should be appreciated and supported, but if harmful, she should suggest healthy practices.*

Small Group Discussion (20 minutes)

Instructions to Trainers :

1. Divide ASHAs into three groups by assigning each participant a number 1, 2 or 3. All the 1's join into a group, the 2's into another group and the 3's into a third group.
2. Distribute three slips made from the worksheet 1, one slip to each group.
3. Each group will select the group leader and a rapporteur.
4. Explain different tasks.

Group 1 will make two lists :

'Traditional practices during pregnancy' list and 'Words used during pregnancy' list. This group will discuss local customs during **pregnancy**; for example, how does a woman know that she is pregnant? When does she first communicate her pregnancy to her family, to the outside world, and to the TBA? What customs or 'do's and don'ts' are followed during pregnancy, especially about diet, work, sexual relations, etc? These points are included in the 'Traditional practices during pregnancy' list. When special words are used (such as *Inde*¹), these words and their meanings are included in the 'Words used during pregnancy' list,

Group 2 will make two lists :

'Traditional practices during delivery' list, and 'Words used during delivery' list.

This group will discuss local customs surrounding **delivery**; for example, how the community knows when labour starts, when is the TBA to be called, what happens during delivery and in the first hours after delivery; what problems may arise, how they are treated, what is the TBA equipped to do? These points are included in the 'Traditional practices during delivery' list. When special words are used, (such as the word for the liquid that comes out when the bag of water breaks), these words and the meanings are included in the 'Words used during delivery' list.

Group 3 will make two lists :

'Traditional practices during newborn period' list, and 'Words used during newborn period' list. This group will discuss local customs surrounding **newborn period**; for example, how a baby is cared for after delivery, what is the first feed the baby takes and when is it fed, traditions around breastfeeding (when and how often the baby is fed, how do they know if there isn't enough milk?). Are there any existing rituals about clothing the baby? How do they know if something is wrong with the baby? These points are included in the 'Traditional practices during newborn period' list. If special words are used, these words and the meanings are included in the 'Words used during newborn period' list.

5. Allow 20 minutes for work in the small groups.

Large Group Discussion (30 minutes)

Instructions to Trainers :

1. Let the rapporteur of group 1 present their lists. Discuss the findings in the larger group. Ask if anyone wants to add or delete anything. Discuss. Trainer should revise the lists on the same paper.

¹*Inde* : Term used in Maharashtra when a woman becomes pregnant when she still breastfeeding her baby and not resumed her menstruation. This word should be replaced by an equivalent local word while training ASHAs.

(Trainer should be careful not to pass any judgement about “right or wrong practices”).)

2. Continue as above with the groups 2 and 3. At the end of this exercise there will be six completed lists. Trainer should file these lists as output of the training session.

Summary (15 minutes)

- Have one trainee summarise the local customs during pregnancy; another trainee should summarise the customs during delivery; and a third trainee summarise customs during newborn period.
- Praise the ASHAs for their contribution.

Evaluation of the session

Objectives	Assessment Method	Output
A list of local terms about pregnancy, delivery and newborn period and the meaning of these terms	Trainer has a glossary of terms prepared by ASHAs The number of terms, variety and comprehensiveness of the list	Trainer preserves the lists of local terms about pregnancy, delivery and newborn period and the meaning of these terms prepared by ASHAs. Score these sheets by giving one point to each term and each meaning of the term
A list of local customs around childbearing	Trainer has three lists of customs around childbearing The number of customs, variety and comprehensiveness of the list	Trainer preserves the lists of local customs around childbearing, prepared by ASHAs. Score these sheets by giving one point to each custom mentioned