



ECSCA-HC

# ECSCA POLICY BRIEFS SERIES 2010

East, Central and Southern African Health Community (ECSCA-HC)

Vol.3, No.1

May 2010

## Health Workforce Competency and Facility Readiness for Safe Deliveries in Tanzania

In Sub-Saharan Africa, figures for health facility deliveries are low. Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) in the region place facility deliveries at an average of 42%. In Tanzania about 46% of women deliver at a health facility under the care of a skilled attendant. The assumption is that all facility-based deliveries are assisted by skilled attendants which may not be the case. This brings into focus the need for a closer look at the workforce competencies and facility readiness for safe deliveries.

The East, Central and Southern African Health Community (ECSCA-HC) in collaboration with the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare, United Republic of Tanzania, conducted a study in 2008 to determine the competence levels of service providers, and enabling factors provided by the facility and the health system. The study was conducted in eight districts within four regions of Tanzania mainland. It is concluded that there are gaps to provision of quality maternal and newborn services with regard to competency of health personnel, infrastructure and referral systems. This brief highlights the key findings of the study. The full report of the study can be downloaded from the ECSCA website at: [www.ecsa.or.tz](http://www.ecsa.or.tz) and Tanzania Ministry of Health and Social Welfare website at: [www.moh.go.tz](http://www.moh.go.tz)

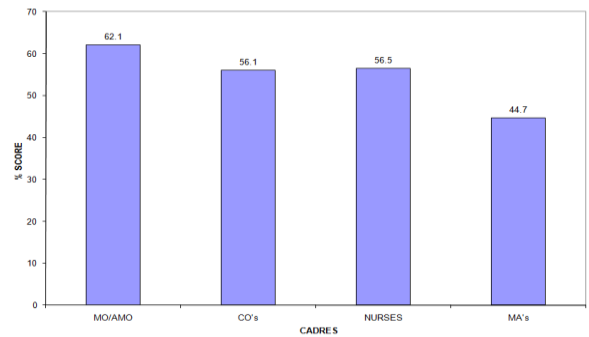
### Key Highlights

- Knowledge test score average was 56%
- Average score for active management of the third stage of labor skill was 55.3%
- Average score for manual removal of the placenta skill was 54.5%
- Average score for bimanual compression of the uterus skill 51.7%
- Average score for immediate newborn care skill was 26.4%
- Average score for newborn resuscitation skill was 25.4%
- Performance did not exhibit any statistical difference between facility levels and between different cadres
- 33% of health facilities had a functional ambulance
- 62% of health facilities had running water inside the facility
- About a third of facilities had life-saving medicines (oxytocin and magnesium sulphate)
- Availability of life-saving drugs such as uterotonics and magnesium sulphate was inconsistent at health centre and dispensary level

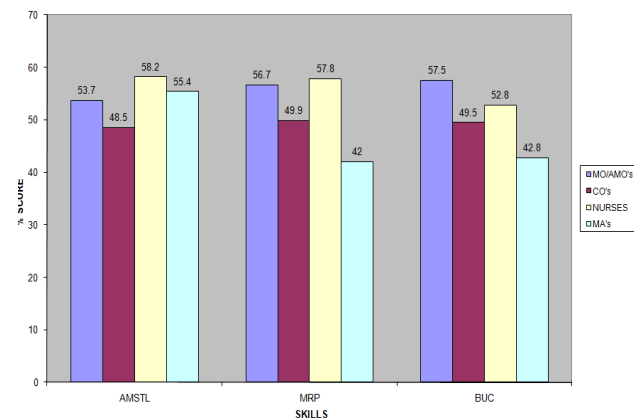
### Conclusions

- Low performance scores in both knowledge and skills for all cadres and all levels of facilities
- Inadequate infrastructure for provision of quality maternal and newborn health services
- Inadequate supply of life-saving medicines

KNOWLEDGE SCORES BY CADRE

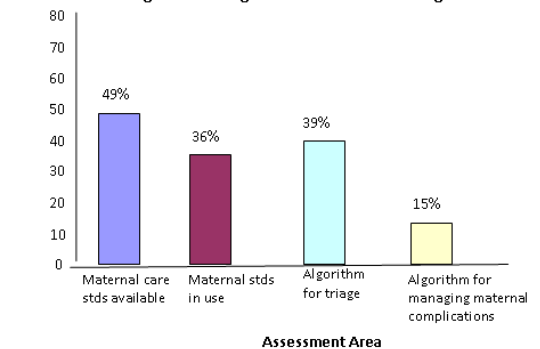


AMSTL, MRP AND BUC SCORES BY CADRE



**Key terms:** AMTSL - Active Management of the Third Stage of Labour, MRP - Manual Removal of Placenta, BUC - Bimanual Compression of the Uterus

Overall Facility Scores for standards of care, Triage and management of obstetric emergencies



**Acknowledgments:** The study cited in this brief was supported financially by the United States Agency for International Development East Africa. For further information email [regsec@ecsa.or.tz](mailto:regsec@ecsa.or.tz)