

## "the training that saved a life"

### Story of Ayesha, a Lady Health Visitor in Rural Health Center, Kewai of District Mansehra

Ayesha is a middle aged woman working as a "Lady Health Visitor (LHV)" for the past fifteen years in the Rural Health Center (RHC) at Village Kewai, a remote locality of District Mansehra in the Province of Paktunkhwa (previously known as the famous North Western Frontier Province of Pakistan). The Community Uplift Program (CUP) Pakistan, a national NGO came across Ayesha while conducting the end project evaluation of the Maternal & Child Health (MCH) Project funded by American



Ayesha in her office in RHC Kewai

Red Cross (ARC) and implemented by Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) in District Mansehra. While conducting a semi-structured interview, Ayesha said; *"during my association with the government health department I have received several trainings but with no real substance. Some two years ago, we were informed that PRCS is organizing training for LHVs LHWs and Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs) in emergency obstetric care, birth planning and basic life saving skills as part of the MCH Project. This training gave me not only knowledge and skills but also a motivation for proving proactive support to the community.*

*Some months ago, a young man from the local community came to our RHC. He asked the dispenser for medicines that could stop the excessive bleeding of his wife who had just delivered a baby boy. The dispenser was about to give him some medicines, when I entered the dispensary and insisted that I accompany him to examine his wife.*



Abida of CUP talking to Ayesha

*When I reached the house the poor woman was lying on floor in a very precarious state. Although the umbilical cord was cut, the placenta was still inside her body. I rushed the bleeding woman to the RHC in an ambulance and using the knowledge and skills with regard to post partum care and constant prayers to the Creator, I was able to stabilize Zarmina Bibi, who lives healthy today with her infant son Zahid....."*

The training organized through the MCH project implemented by ARC/PRCS Project laid emphasis on counseling and on awareness-raising so that pregnant women are aware of the danger signs during pregnancy and during the post partum period. *"We have developed a good working relationship with PRCS and also maintain a birth planning register which takes into account the status of each pregnant woman and is meant to reduce the three delays that are the cause of fatalities during delivery. We also conduct regular meetings with female community assistants trained by the MCH Project to sensitize women of reproductive age about reproductive and child health issues",* says Ayesha enthusiastically". I left Ayesha emotionally charged and satisfied that with more of such LHVs and projects such as the MCH project implemented by ARC/PRCS, we might soon be turning a corner to reduce the maternal and infant mortality rates in Pakistan in our journey to meet the Millennium Development Goals.

Abida Khan

Field Data Collector of CUP Pakistan

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