



# Child Health Task Force Update

**TACKLING CHILDHOOD PNEUMONIA**

**FIGHTING FOR BREATH**



**March 30, 2021**

**OCT – NOV 2020**

On World Pneumonia Day 2020 our advocacy focus was for **improved and equitable access to oxygen to prevent children dying from pneumonia.**

*Every year, 4.2 million children suffering from severe pneumonia in low and middle income countries urgently need medical oxygen to survive.*

Like other causes of pneumonia, COVID-19 can result in **hypoxemia – a potentially fatal oxygen deficiency in the blood.** Hypoxemia leaves patients fighting for breath. Medical oxygen can be the difference between life or death.

However, medical oxygen is often unavailable to children and newborns suffering from severe pneumonia or other causes of hypoxemia, whose lives are at greatest risk. Where it is available, it is often unaffordable for the poorest and most vulnerable. COVID-19 has exposed gaps in oxygen systems to the world resulting in increased investments in oxygen systems.

Together with partners (UNICEF, CHAI and Murdoch Children's Research Institute) we collaborated on a **global and country-level estimation of children with severe pneumonia who need medical oxygen.** This data was shared in a [global press release](#), calling on donors and governments to invest in strengthening oxygen systems and to maintain and strengthen essential routine health services critical for child survival, alongside national press releases and advocacy activities in beacon countries to help raise awareness and drive commitment in national settings.

# **PNEUMONIA BEACON COUNTRY**

## **2020 KEY HIGHLIGHT ACHIEVEMENTS**

### **Bangladesh**

In 2020, a Save the Children Hong Kong supported field project was implemented in six sub-districts in a southern district of the country, aiming for **improved vaccination coverage, breastfeeding counselling and quality of care** for sick under five children within the project area.

Nationally, in collaboration with UNICEF, Save the Children advocated MOH to adopt **iCCM adaptation guidance** to ensure programme continuation of routine essential services throughout the country. Save the Children also facilitated a **National Pneumonia Coalition** which was active to review and follow up on Global Forum issues throughout the year of 2020.

### **DRC**

A **multisectoral committee of pneumonia**, led by Save the Children, set up an advocacy national strategic plan on the availability of oxygen endorsed by the MoH. The committee also organized the **national quantification meeting on the availability of essential drugs** for the survival of women and children, including Amoxicillin DT.

With partners like CHAI, Save the Children also conducted a **study on the availability of oxygen and emergency medical equipment in the 26 provinces**.

Save the Children have also carried out an **intensive media campaign** to raise awareness on avoiding pneumonia in DRC in collaboration with the MoH and by using social media.

### **Ethiopia**

Following the reduction in uptake of many essential health services from the first incidence of COVID 19 in the country, Save the Children has been supporting the government and adapting its programs to sustain delivery of life saving interventions. One of the interventions was **broadcasting of TV messages on child pneumonia prevention and treatment in COVID-19 pandemic**, as other means of public reach were restricted do to banning of public gathering.

Save the Children also supported **capacity building training for 48 Maternal, New-born, Child Health and Adolescent Health Team members at the MOH**.

### **Kenya**

Through technical assistance and financial support to support the process of policy change at the MOH, Save the Children supported: i) use of first line **oral antibiotic for treatment of pneumonia** at the community level ii) the approval of recommendations of **community case management of non-severe pneumonia** for children under five years iii) revision of existing **iCCM Guidelines**.

Through a **Pneumonia in Urban Slums of Nairobi Project**; aimed at improving comprehensive pneumonia case management in urban settlements in Nairobi, Save the Children rolled-out **online training of 296 health care workers including the 30 nurses** on the integrated pneumonia case management and COVID-19 management using the new pneumonia guidelines.

## Indonesia

Partnering with UNICEF, CHAI and others, Save the Children collaborated closely with the MoH in 2020 to improve and finalize **an integrated action plan on pneumonia and Diarrhoea (NAPPD)**.

Additionally, in response to the negative impact of Covid-19 on community-based programmes, Save the Children supported vaccination sessions for children and worked closely with district health offices.

Successful advocacy efforts included: National commitment on **roll-out of Pneumonia conjugated vaccine (PCV)**; Releasing of the Decree from Head of District Health Officer (DHO) on **implementation of IMNCI** and Standard Operational Procedure (SOP) for IMNCI at primary health facility for all Puskesmas in Bandung District.

Several programmatic guidelines and aid handbook were also developed: **Pneumonia communication toolkit** was endorsed by BAPPENAS and MoH and piloted in Bandung district; **Home Visit Guide for CHW** which emphasize ways to engage fathers; **Village Fund Guidelines** to support child health intervention by Village Officers and CHWs.

Save the Children also facilitated a digital media event, including engagement with the First Lady (The President's wife) on WPD. In addition, a TV talkshow was launched with MoH, and launched a [Vlog and Blog competition on Pneumonia Prevention and Control](#), as well as a live consultation on child caring practice at home with Child health experts (Pediatricians).

## India

Save the Children and partner efforts has resulted in **nearly all State governments budgeting for pneumonia trainings and buying of pulse oximeters** in their Annual budgets 2020-21 (aka Programme Implementation Plans).

With Philips funding, Save the Children has implemented a two-year programme **“Project Vishwaas” focusing on improving pneumonia case management and care-seeking** rolled out in two states (Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan). In addition, the MoU has signed with state run Medical College in UP to conduct feasibility study on CHARMs device. National and State teams trained on use of device .

**A Skill lab on Maternal, Newborn Child** has been set up to run health trainings including Pneumonia management. This lab will now be run using State Governemnt resources. A National Training package on Childhood Pneumonia including facilitator guidebooks finalized with Save the Children providing technical support. The training package has been disseminated and shared with all the States by the national government.

In collaboration with UNICEF and CHAI, Save the Children also developed content (16 videos/Gifs) for Ministry's **SAANS Campaign** and are handling their social media campaign for three months.

## **Nigeria**

We supported the creation, costing and dissemination of the first of its kind **Pneumonia Control Strategy**.

Save the Children also became active members of the **United for Oxygen (U4O) platform**. Save the Children established an **oxygen-delivery system** in one of northern Nigeria's hospitals so it can now treat every child suffering from severe pneumonia.

## **South Sudan**

Save the Children supported the **establishment of the Child health department in South Sudan Ministry of Health** that has been non-existing, and ensured staff training on IMNCI with special focus on pneumonia diagnosis and treatment in line with South Sudan Theory of Change. A child survival strategy has been drafted and awaiting final MoH endorsement.

The team also led **advocacy on PCV introduction** that is now included in Gavi strategy **and toward health cluster for inclusion of oxygen systems** in humanitarian pipeline in line with South Sudan clinical guidelines.

## **Somalia**

Save the Children **prioritized the rollout of ICCM** in Somalia to increase access pneumonia treatment in rural and hard to areas. In 2020 we **trained 250 FHWs/CHWs covering 218 rural villages. 116,423 (Boys 55,274; Girls 61,149)**. Children under 5 years were treated at community level by the trained FHWs of which **62,058** of them were treated for pneumonia. **6,548 children** with severe pneumonia (danger signs) were also identified and referred.

**Intensive media campaigns for pneumonia awareness** creation were rolled out that included training and partnering with media houses in Somalia/Somaliland to raise awareness and highlight the opportunities and challenges in tackling pneumonia and support them to produce and report accurate information on Pneumonia.

**An Evaluating Strategies for Pneumococcal Immunisation Campaigns in Crises (ESPICC) in Digaale IDP Camp** was conducted Somaliland in order to provide more contextual evidence for introduction of PCV vaccine in Somalia. This study is yet to be completed.

# WHATS NEXT?



2021 will be critical as we navigate clear alignments between Covid-19 and Pneumonia control, response, adaptation and the development and sharing of learning and evidence generation.

We will continue **to build on our existing strong programming and advocacy** in beacon countries in 2021 with aims to contribute to change in national policies and systems, increased funding levels, enhanced collaboration and evidence-based learning to reduce the burden of pneumonia. And most importantly, advocate for the protection of routine essential child health services which are at greatest risk of de-prioritisation in wake of Covid-19. At national level, also, continued advocacy on increased investments on Oxygen, PCV, and support for strong and resilient health systems .

We will also continue to **build political momentum** engaging in several key global moments throughout 2021, including one year later activities after the 2020 Global Forum on Childhood Pneumonia to sustain commitment and momentum.