

SHARE: Savings for Health And Reproductive Empowerment

Mali Health's group-based strategy to support pregnant women

SHARE is a special savings group for pregnant women designed to help them have a successful pregnancy. Since 2016, SHARE has accompanied women before and during pregnancy, and up to 45 days after they give birth by:

- Bringing midwives from local health centers to meet with and share information with women
- Helping women prepare for delivery and make birth plans
- Helping women save for the costs of delivering at the health center
- Matching the funds women save to incentivize completion of all prenatal and postnatal care (ANC/PNC)

One of the top reasons that women do not deliver at the health center is because of their relationship with the personnel. Pregnant women often feel intimidated, have not had a good experience in the past, or simply do not feel comfortable turning to a stranger at a vulnerable time. Bringing midwives and women together allows them to exchange health information, ask and answer questions, and most importantly, to build a relationship. Women report that meeting their midwives helps them to feel comfortable, respected, and that their needs will be met.

In addition to building relationships with staff where they will deliver, the midwives and our facilitators bring educational sessions directly to their groups. The focus is informing women about their and their child's health needs during and after pregnancy, and to help them know what to expect. We also introduce information about family planning and help women access the method of their choice after they give birth, if they choose.

In addition to having access to personnel from the health center, we also help women prepare to pay all the fees associated with their maternal care and delivery to eliminate cost as a barrier. They save in a special fund for their delivery costs (about \$20), and we subsidize their savings by providing 6 000 FCFA (about \$12) for their ANC and PNC visits.

SHARE Objectives

- Encourage assisted delivery at a community health center
- Improve women's knowledge of reproductive health
- Help women become more financially independent

SHARE Results

- 100% completion of 4 ANC visits
- 100% facility-based delivery
- 100% completion of PNC visits

