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Practicum Site: Lwala Community Alliance

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Lwala Community Alliance and the Helping Babies Breathe Program Evaluation

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Introduction: communities' wellbeing. This remote practicum position was based in Nashville, TN. The purpose of this placement was to gain valuable insight into the health and wellbeing of mothers and children in Kenya and experience in creating change and advancements in their health through initiatives and program evaluations. During this practicum placement, two main projects were completed: 1) conducted a study on the success of HBB and 2) helped to complete a research report on prenatal care.

Methods: This position's main project was a protocol developed to evaluate the Helping Babies Breathe (HBB) intervention. Helping Babies Breathe is a training program established by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) to educate health workers on successfully intervening and resuscitating neonates within a minute after birth (the golden minute). The curriculum trains health workers to evaluate a baby at birth and help stimulate breathing or resuscitation by completing ventilation using a bag and mask. This technique is designed to reduce neonatal mortality. The proposal created aims to complete a pre-post study evaluating the proportion of successful resuscitations of newborn babies in new facilities implementing HBB. In addition to work on the HBB evaluation, this position included cleaning and helping analyze a dataset for a prenatal care study based in Rongo, Kenya, which prompted the completion of the discussion and conclusion portions of a report based on the data collected from the prenatal research.

Results: Currently, the HBB evaluation is planned to begin in the Spring of 2022. The IRB applications are being prepared to submit to both the Strathmore IRB based in Kenya and Vanderbilt IRB based in Nashville, TN.

Conclusions: Both the HBB and prenatal studies will aid in producing better quality interventions and outcomes for mothers and children in Kenya. This practicum experience provided insight and knowledge into hardships faced in rural and low-resource settings. It enabled data collection, review, and analysis to solve the problems faced.

