Project Overview

The Translating Research into Action (TRAction) Project, funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), funds studies to develop, test, and compare approaches to more effectively deliver health interventions, increase utilization, achieve coverage, and scale-up evidence-based interventions for priority health problems. The project is managed under a Cooperative Agreement by University Research Co., LLC (URC) in collaboration with its partner, the Harvard University School of Public Health.

Through implementation research, the TRAction Project addresses “know-do” gaps, or delays between discovery of effective ways to combat the causes of poor health and the application of these proven interventions on a wide scale. Rigorous research demonstrates the effectiveness of numerous methods of reducing health disparities around the world. But national level decision-makers, donors, and program implementers in many settings often lack evidence on how to successfully introduce and implement these methods on a national scale. If each country’s Millennium Development Health Goals are to be met in the targeted timeframes, these “know-do” gaps must be closed. Thus, the USAID funded TRAction is working to support the Global Health Initiative principle of promoting research and innovation through local ownership and leveraged partnerships in order to scale up equitable and sustainable efforts to “do what works.”

Research Priorities

To address these “know-do” gaps, the TRAction Project is supporting research in a number of areas relevant to maternal and child health.

Integrated Community Case Management (iCCM)

iCCM is an approach to healthcare that involves training community-based health workers to assess, clarify, and provide basic treatment or referral for childhood illnesses including diarrhea, pneumonia, and malaria. TRAction is funding three areas of iCCM research:

- **Cost and Financing:** To develop and test a model that program planners and managers can use to assess the costs and financing of introducing and expanding iCCM programs.
- **Embedded Research:** To conduct implementation research on improving monitoring and evaluation data collection systems within iCCM programs.
- **Policy:** To identify, at the national level in select countries and at the global level, factors that have hindered or supported policy and program development regarding CCM of childhood and newborn illness.

MNCH, Nutrition, Reproductive Health/Family Planning and Tuberculosis Services in Bangladesh

This research, conducted by the International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) and supported by the USAID Bangladesh mission, aims to identify strategies for increasing access, utilization, quality and impact.
of services to improve tuberculosis care, maternal, newborn and child health, nutrition, population and family planning, and reproductive health in urban and rural areas of Bangladesh.

Malaria
TRAction-supported malaria research in Tanzania aims to determine whether high coverage of long-lasting insecticide treated bednets (LLINs) can reduce the need for indoor residual spraying of insecticides (IRS), while maintaining malaria reductions.

Disrespect and Abuse in Facility-based Childbirth
Disrespectful, abusive care of women during childbirth, such as humiliation, denial of privacy, discrimination, and overt physical and verbal abuse, is a global problem in both developed and developing countries that can discourage women from delivering in facilities with skilled birth attendants. TRAction is funding research in Kenya and Tanzania to determine the extent of this abuse and identify ways to reduce the problem.

Performance-based Financing (PBF)
Performance-based financing provides incentives to health providers who comply with national norms of care and meet the expectations of clients. TRAction-supported research will focus on how PBF schemes can improve the quality of emergency obstetric and neonatal care.

Indoor Air Pollution (IAP)
Emissions resulting from cooking with solid-fuel on poorly designed traditional stoves or open fires pose a substantial threat to health. TRAction is funding research in India and Uganda on behavior change interventions that can increase the acquisition and correct use of improved cookstoves.

TRAction is currently in the process of developing Requests for Applications in other research areas, including: recognition and referral for neonatal complications; targeting of maternal and newborn services to high risk groups; equity; integration of maternal, newborn and child health services (MNCH); and task shifting of MNCH services.

For more information on the TRAction Project:
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