

Home Based Life Saving Skills in Quito, Ecuador

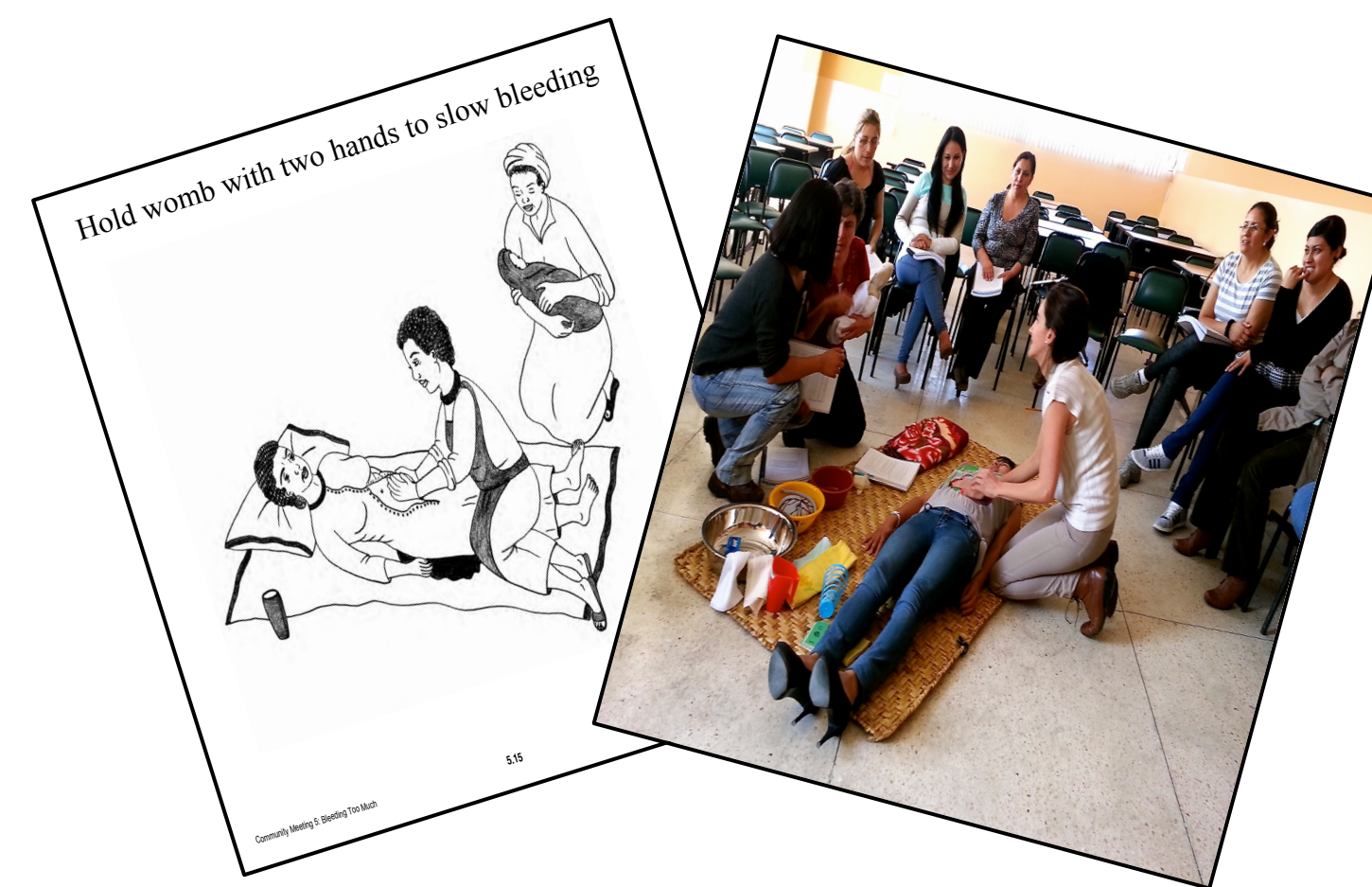
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Home Based Life Saving Skills

Home Based Life Saving Skills (HBLSS) is an evidence-based community-level program that was developed by the American College of Nurse Midwives. The goal of the program is to reduce maternal and infant mortality through education of women, their families, and their communities. Program topics center around prevention, problem identification, and first aid as they relate to complications that may arise before, during, and after childbirth. The format of the sessions encourages community members to build on their existing knowledge by way of discussion, demonstration, role-play, repetition, and use of illustrations. The instruction materials take into account diversity of cultural practices, literacy levels, and distance from health care facilities.

Our goal for the summer of 2013 was to pilot HBLSS in Ecuador by implementing Phase I of the program: training professional midwives on how to deliver the HBLSS curriculum. After Phase I, these midwives enter the field and train traditional midwives and community health workers, who in turn train members of their own communities. In addition, we aimed to administer pre- and post-tests to evaluate the success of the training, to follow up with participants and observe them initiating Phase II.

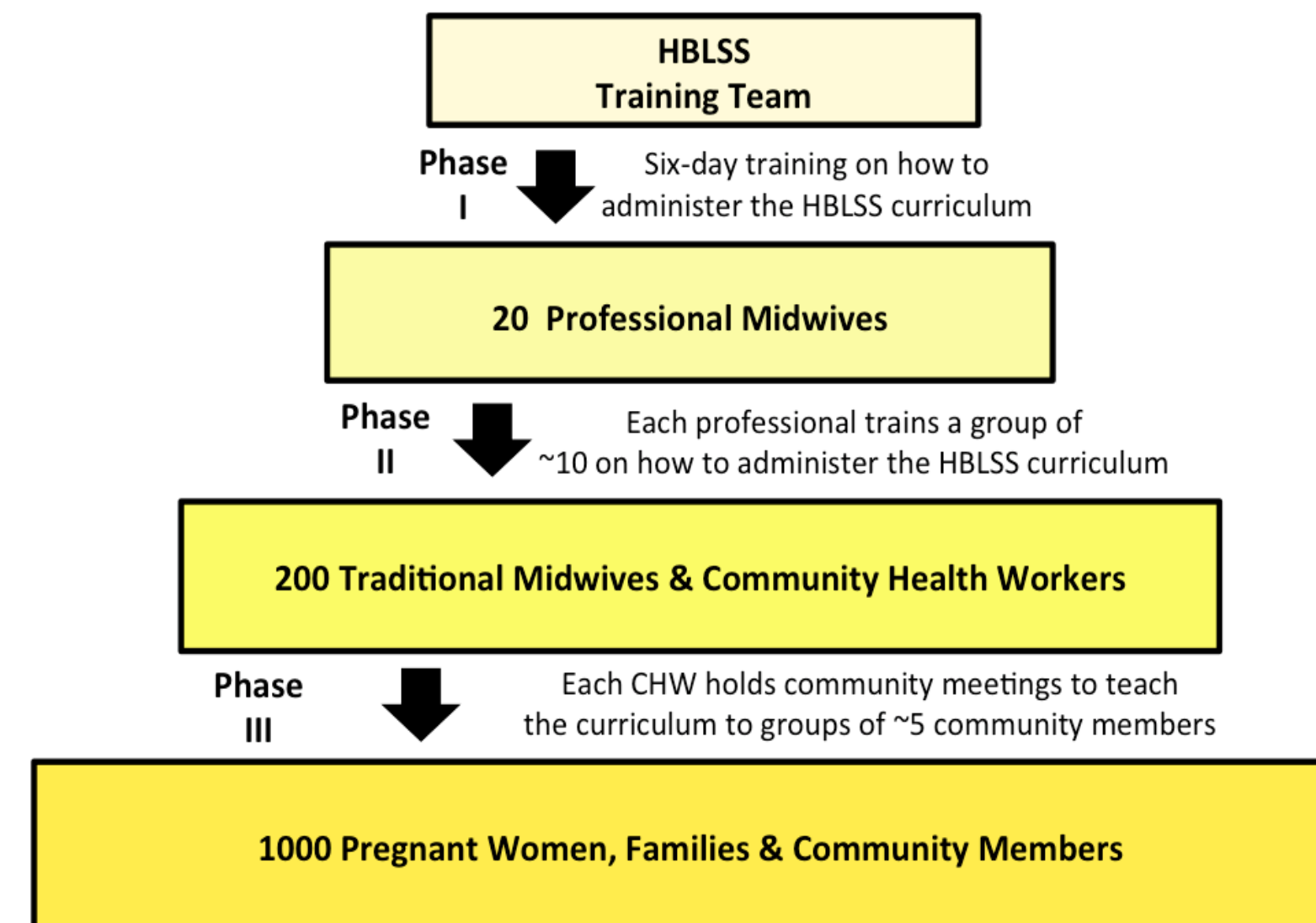


Why Ecuador?

- Maternal mortality in Ecuador is about 96.3/100,000 live births and Infant mortality is 20.4/1,000 live births
- These ratios are roughly nine times and three times those in the United States, respectively
- There are striking disparities within the country itself; Women in the rural highlands of Ecuador face a far greater risk of death than those in urban areas

Data from INEC, 2009

Projected Training Cascade



Partners

For my internship, I was part of a multi-disciplinary team:

- Megan Eagle, University of Michigan School of Nursing
- Cecilia Tapia, an *Obstetrix* (professional midwife) of the Universidad Central del Ecuador
- Dr. Bernarda Viteri, a Pediatric Resident at Maimonides Infants and Children's Hospital of Brooklyn

For Phase I of the training, we targeted both new students and returning professionals who were earning their Master's degrees and who worked in high risk areas

Outcomes

- Planned and implemented Phase I of HBLSS, a five day training for 26 professional and student *Obstetrixes*
- Administered pre- and post-tests for two training topics. Scores for post-partum bleeding increased from 64% to 93% and scores for low birth weight infant increased from 71% to 89% among tested participants
- Developed and translated evaluation materials and training tools

Skills Developed

- Spanish language & ability to work with diverse populations
- Understanding the importance of cultural humility
- Working as part of a multi-disciplinary team
- Appreciating the need for community participation in all levels of interventions

Lessons Learned

- Being flexible is an invaluable skill
 - Many of the *Obstetrixes* had difficulty taking time off work and none were ready to perform Phase II of HBLSS while we were in the country, so we had to adjust our schedule and expectations accordingly
- Attitude and body language speak as loudly as words
 - My Spanish language skills were minimal at the start of my internship. However, I was still able to have positive communications with our trainees without a lot of spoken communication



Advice

- Apply for funding from multiple sources
- Keep an open mind
- Don't be afraid to seek advice from a supervisor



Classroom & Career Connections

Classroom

- My foundation courses taught me a lot about group facilitation, real world PODS issues, community engagement, and understanding historical factors that shape current inequities. All of my classes helped make me better informed and better able to help implement a program aimed at reducing health disparities.

Career

- My global experience gave me a broader perspective of social work, experience with diverse communities, greater ability to communicate with Spanish speaking populations, all of which I will carry into my professional career

Contact & Information



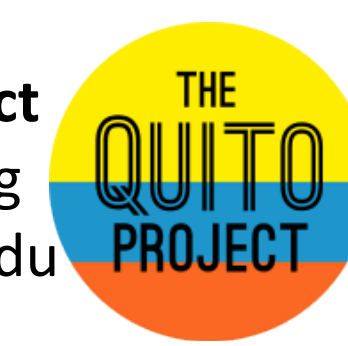
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Home Based Life Saving Skills
www.midwife.org



The Quito Project
<http://thequitoproject.org>
<https://maizepages.umich.edu>



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