

# Applying Behavioral Science to Address Postpartum Hemorrhage in Madagascar

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Sara Flanagan,<sup>1</sup> Jana Smith,<sup>1</sup> Maddie Kau,<sup>1</sup> Charlotte Warren<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ideas42, <sup>2</sup>Population Council



## BACKGROUND

- Postpartum hemorrhage (PPH) is the leading cause of maternal mortality in low-income countries, including Madagascar.
- Studies have observed low provider adherence to recommended best practices for PPH prevention and treatment during facility-based births.

## METHODS

- Formative research in Madagascar included in-depth interviews (n=47) with midwives, postpartum women, community health volunteers, and traditional birth attendants.
- The goal was to generate insights around behavioral barriers inhibiting midwives from consistently following best practices for PPH prevention, detection, and management.
- These insights informed an iterative co-design process, including user-testing and revision in collaboration with midwives, to generate behavioral solutions that addressed these barriers and supported quality of care.

## FINDINGS

We generated a set of key insights into behavioral barriers, including:

- Perceived low risk of PPH among midwives, which leads to undervaluing prevention and monitoring measures;
- Limited feedback on compliance with recommendations or consequences of current performance, which inhibits continuous improvement of clinical practice; and
- More broadly, a context of cognitive scarcity amidst structural challenges, which affects ability to respond to complex emergencies.

- We used behavioral design methodology to generate evidence-based insights to develop context-specific behavior change solutions.
- Using a collaborative co-creation process and iterative user-testing can ensure that new interventions are responsive to midwives' needs.

Based on these insights, we designed a set of behavioral solutions that are responsive to the context. These included:

- A PPH risk and consequence visualization exercise to motivate prevention,
- A device that gives immediate feedback on timely oxytocin administration to facilitate the best practice of applying within one minute,
- Tools to facilitate allocating specific support roles to family members, and
- A glow-in-the-dark simplified algorithm poster for PPH management.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

The Advancement of PPH Care (APPHC) Partnership is co-led by Breakthrough RESEARCH and HEARD Project: addressing key barriers for PPH prevention and treatment.

To learn more about our approach, research findings, or behavioral designs, contact [Sara@ideas42.org](mailto:Sara@ideas42.org) or [GH@ideas42.org](mailto:GH@ideas42.org)

## FUNDING

Breakthrough RESEARCH is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under the terms of cooperative agreement no. AID-OAA-A-17-00018.

FIGURE 1 Key behavioral insights

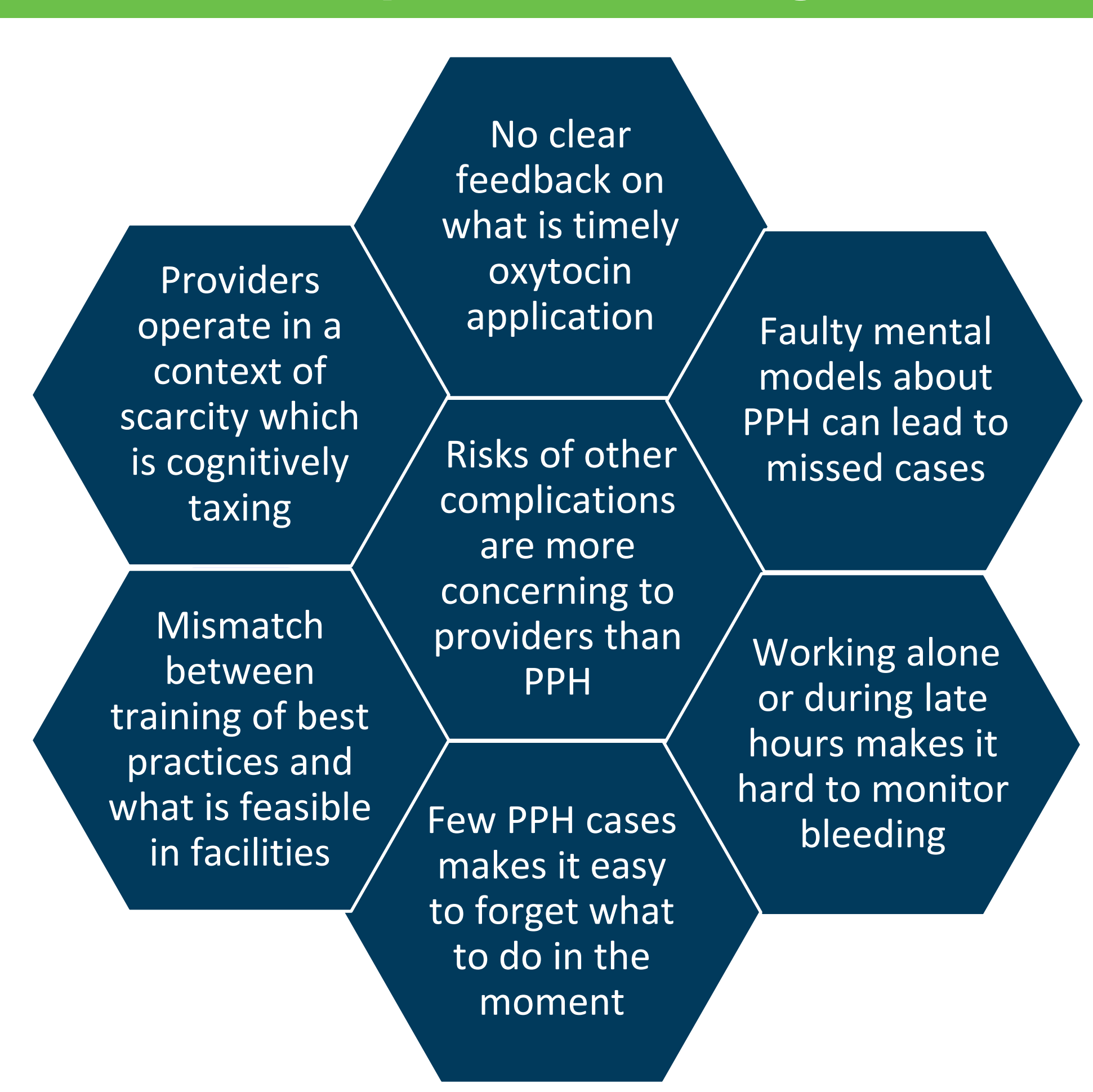


FIGURE 2 Design and user-testing process

