

SRI LANKAN AND ALBANIAN HEALTH AUTHORITIES INTERCHANGE EXPERIENCES ON MOTHER KANGAROO CARE METHODOLOGIES



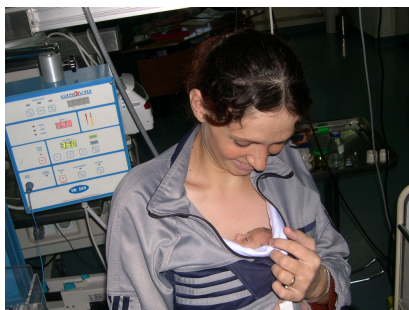
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Representatives of the Ministry of Health and health authorities of the Uva Province in Sri Lanka will interchange experience on the implementation of Mother Kangaroo Methodologies (MKM) with Albanian health authorities. A mission of Sri Lankan authorities to Albania will be held in March 2010, with the support of the UNDP Country Office of Albania, in order to raise information on the Albanian experience and achieved results on MKM implementation and to define the best conditions for the full application of the method in Sri Lanka.



In Sri Lanka, the Government identified the Mother Kangaroo Methodology as an important modality to improve the neonatal outcome and MKM is already part of the national strategy for newborn care services. With the support of WHO, Sri Lanka has established an essential newborn care course where the MKM is one module. At the moment, the method is still practiced in very few institutions and needs to be significantly extended in the Country and, in particular, in those provinces, as Uva, where the newborn care situation is particularly critical.



The Family Health Bureau of the Sri Lankan Ministry of Health has identified, among others, the following points as crucial to improve the newborn care situation:

- The Program Officers developing Newborn Care programs and the Consultants managing the low birth weight and premature newborns need more experience and hands on practice on Kangaroo Mother Care to develop the services in the country. The capacity of the relevant consultants needs to be strengthened with more exposure to the practice of Kangaroo Mother Care in the real life setting so that they can implement the practices in the institutions.

- Technical expertise on setting up Kangaroo Mother Care services is lacking in the country setting. Services of experts on setting up the services would be an advantage.
- Lack of practical knowledge, and experience.
- Capacity building/hands on practice of few master trainers in a setting where KMC is fully functioning.

During the visit to Albania, the Sri Lanka Health Authorities will know the experience carried on, at national level in the Maternity Hospital of Tirana and in the Region of Shkoder, where the method is successfully implemented with the support of the ART GOLD Albania Program in the Hospital of Shkoder and in the territorial Health Centers.

In Albania, thanks to the strong support received by the Ministry of Health who established a specific scientific committee and in collaboration with WHO, the Method is implemented in Tirana since 2004 under the coordination of Dr Eduard Tushe and extended to the Region of Shkoder in 2007, where a continuative collaboration was also established with the Italian Meyer Hospital of Florence. Activities to extend MKM to other Albania regions are currently ongoing.



In the Country, the method application allowed to achieved significant results, as the increase of breast-feeding, rooming-in activities, number of hours of method's application, equipment of territorial Health Centers to provide assistance to the newborn in case of breath difficulties or other anomalies, systematic application of follow-up activity. The training activity with doctors and nurses is also implemented with continuity. The ART Albania Program also organize training courses and round tables directed to mothers and colleagues of other health centers in the countryside, in order to spread around at the maximum level the knowledge of the Mother Kangaroo Method.

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