

Development and evaluation of a community surveillance method for estimating deaths due to injuries in rural Nepal

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Abstract

Almost 10% of global deaths are secondary to injuries, yet in the absence of routine injury surveillance and with few studies of injury mortality, the number and cause of injury deaths in many countries are not well understood. This study aimed to develop and evaluate the feasibility of a method to identify injury deaths in rural Nepal. Working with local government authorities, health post staff and female community health volunteers (FCHVs), we developed a two-stage community fatal injury surveillance approach. In stage one, all deaths from any cause were identified. In stage two, an interview with a relative or friend gathered information about the deceased and the injury event. The feasibility of the method was evaluated prospectively between February 2019 and January 2020 in two rural communities in Makwanpur district. The data collection tools were developed and evaluated with 108 FCHVs, 23 health post staff and two data collectors. Of 457 deaths notified over one year, 67 (14.7%) fatal injury events were identified, and interviews completed. Our method suggests that it is feasible to collect data on trauma-related deaths from rural areas in Nepal. These data may allow the development of injury prevention interventions and policy.

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