ABSTRACT

Neonatal deaths place a significant burden on women, families and the health system as a whole. Neonatal mortality rates appear to be declining but still contribute a higher percentage of under-five mortality rates.

The study aimed at determining patterns of neonatal mortality and their associated determinants in six selected high prevalent countries in West Africa.

Data for this study was drawn from Demographic and Health surveys for six selected West African countries over not less than three survey years with a total sample of 230,035. All study variables were extracted from the women and children's data sets. Separate analyses were conducted on data for each country as well as the pooled dataset accounting for weights through the survey data analysis functions. Adjusted and unadjusted Logistic regression analyses were performed to determine associations between neonatal mortality and independent variables. Also, Pearson Chi 2 test of association was used to determine significance of variations in NM trends in the countries.

The study revealed that significant variations exist in NM trends in the selected high prevalent countries. There was a general decline over all the survey years in all countries with the exception of Benin. Also, birthweight was found to be consistently associated with NM in Benin and Ivory Coast in all survey years.

Increasing child survival is intricately linked with reducing NM rates especially in Africa and more so as SDG 3 aims at a reduction to 12 per 1000 live births by 2030. There should be continuous in-service training for front line staff for effective management of neonatal emergencies especially in the rural areas.