

# Building Partnerships Towards Social and Cultural Adaptation of TWMB Training

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## Background

- Ethiopia ranks among the top 10 nations globally for number of children under the age of five with a developmental disability, including neurodevelopmental disability (NDD).
- Research demonstrates that early language interactions and the language environments that surround young children are associated with enhanced language and cognitive development later in life.
- Affordable and accessible interventions aimed at supporting early language environments, particularly in nations with limited services, have the potential to improve outcomes.
- Talk With Me Baby (TWMB) is an innovative, universal design, public-action strategy that increases early language exposure with demonstrated successful implementation in clinical and community settings in low- and middle-income U.S. regions.
- Building and expanding on existing global partnerships in Ethiopia, Talk With Me Baby-Ethiopia (TWMB-E) represents a collaborative team of U.S. and Ethiopia-based interdisciplinary professionals.

## Purpose

- The purpose of this study was to build community and academic partnerships in Ethiopia and U.S. to gain insight on ways to linguistically and culturally tailor TWMB to be implemented in Ethiopia.

## Participants

- Training and Focus Group Participants (n=14)
  - Pediatrician, Linguist, NICU/KMC Nurses, Public Health, and Early Childhood Development Specialist
- U.S. and Ethiopia Research Team (n=10)
  - Nurse Practitioners, Pediatricians, Psychologists, Public Health

## Methods

- A community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach was used to build and expand existing partnerships in Ethiopia to identify ways TWMB could be culturally and linguistically adapted to meet the needs of individuals in Ethiopia.
- An interdisciplinary team from the U.S. and Ethiopia guided initial cultural and language adaptations of TWMB.
- Key informant interviews with stakeholders (n=3) in Ethiopia were conducted to gain insight to the priorities of Ethiopia and professionals working with families of children birth to five.
- TWMB trainings were aligned with Ethiopian Ministry of Health objectives, inclusive of WHO and UNICEF recommendations.
- TWMB Ethiopia (TWMB-E) trainings were then held virtually with professionals in Ethiopia.
- Focus groups were conducted immediately following TWMB-E trainings to gain insight into future implementation.



## Results

- Qualitative interviews provided key insight to the adoptability and acceptability of TWMB-E
  - TWMB-E aligns with the Ministry of Health's Early Childhood Development
- Focus group participants provided additional insight to the acceptability and adoptability of TWMB, as well as potential effectiveness and reach.
- Supplemental training materials (e.g., videos) were developed in Amharic by Ethiopia research team members.

## Conclusions and Implications

- This study was a pivotal step for this multidisciplinary team in preparing TWMB to be paired with Kangaroo Mother Care (KMC) in Ethiopia.
- By culturally and linguistically adapting TWMB-E, our findings are readily poised for implementation as well as adaptation in similar global contexts.
- Results have led to further investigations that are underway.

## Acknowledgements

- This study was funded by the Emory Global Health Institute and Global Strategy and Initiatives.
- We gratefully acknowledge our multidisciplinary teams at Emory University and Addis Ababa University, as well as our collaborators in the hospital setting (Black Lion Hospital), and government setting (Ministry of Health).