

Increasing Use of Skilled Care at Childbirth in Low-Resource Settings: Evidence from the Skilled Care Initiative



Authors: Ellen Brazier, Brahim Bassane,
Djénéba Diallo, Rod Knight, Margaret Perkins,
Angela Mutunga, Tuntufye Mwakajonga

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The Skilled Care Initiative

5-year operations research project implemented in Burkina Faso, Kenya, and Tanzania to test and evaluate strategies for increasing skilled care during childbirth through:

- Improving the availability & quality of maternity care
- Promoting the use of skilled care before, during, and after childbirth.

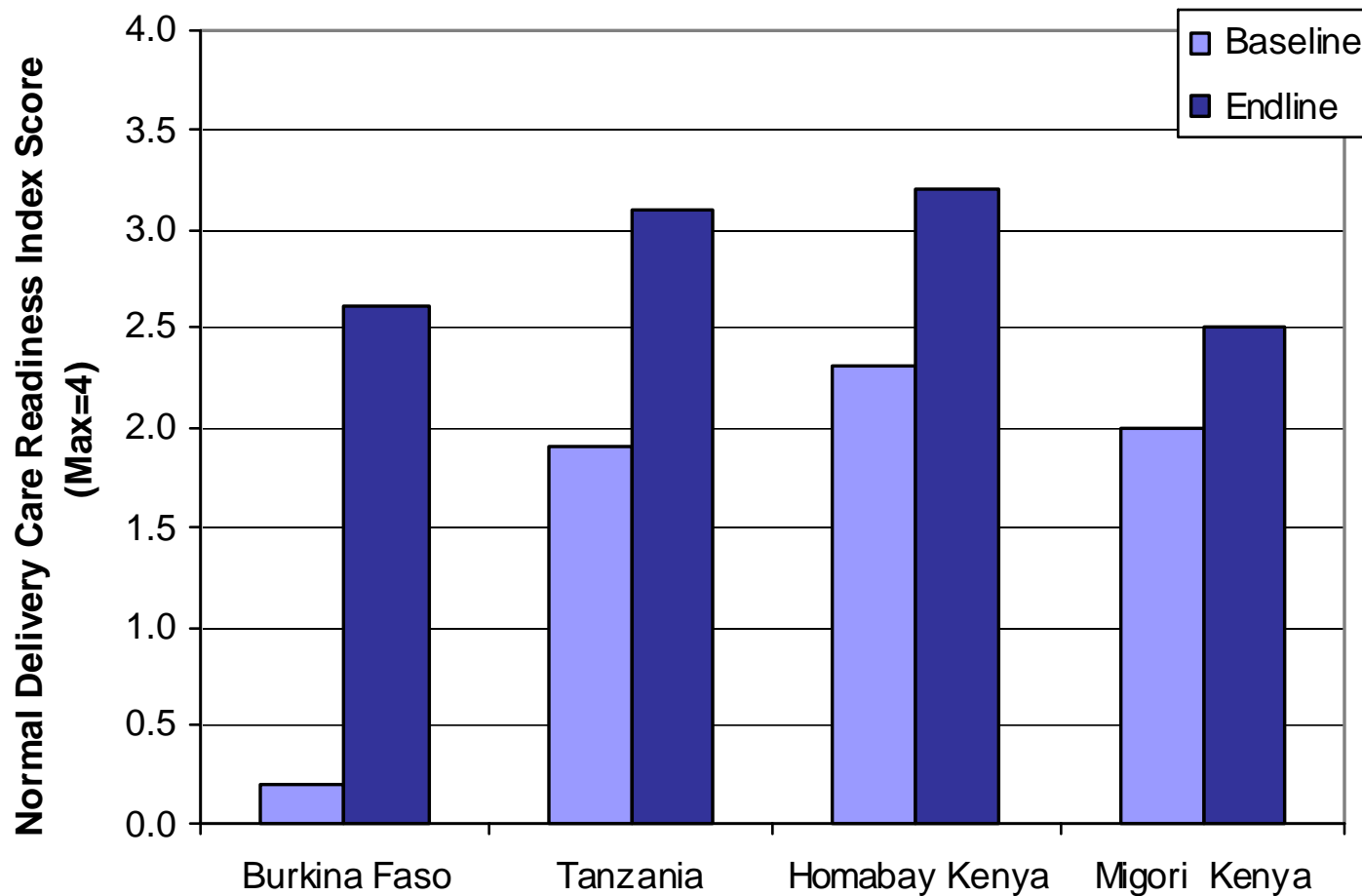


The SCI Evaluation Design

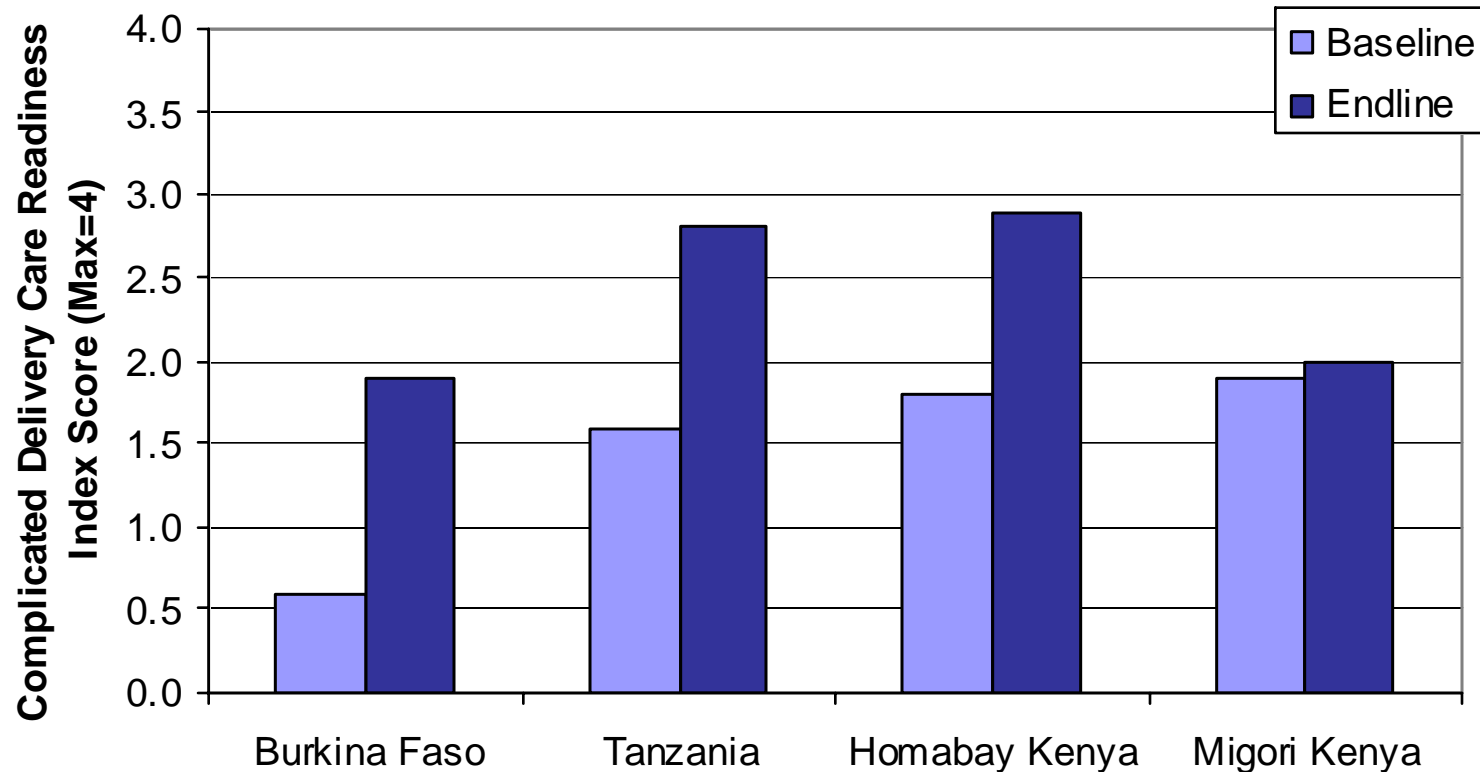
- Pre-test, post-test study with household and facilities surveys measuring:
 - Quality and availability of skilled care
 - Knowledge, attitudes, and care-seeking behaviors during pregnancy and childbirth
- Factors associated with **household preparation for delivery** and **delivery at a health facility** explored through univariate and multivariate analysis.



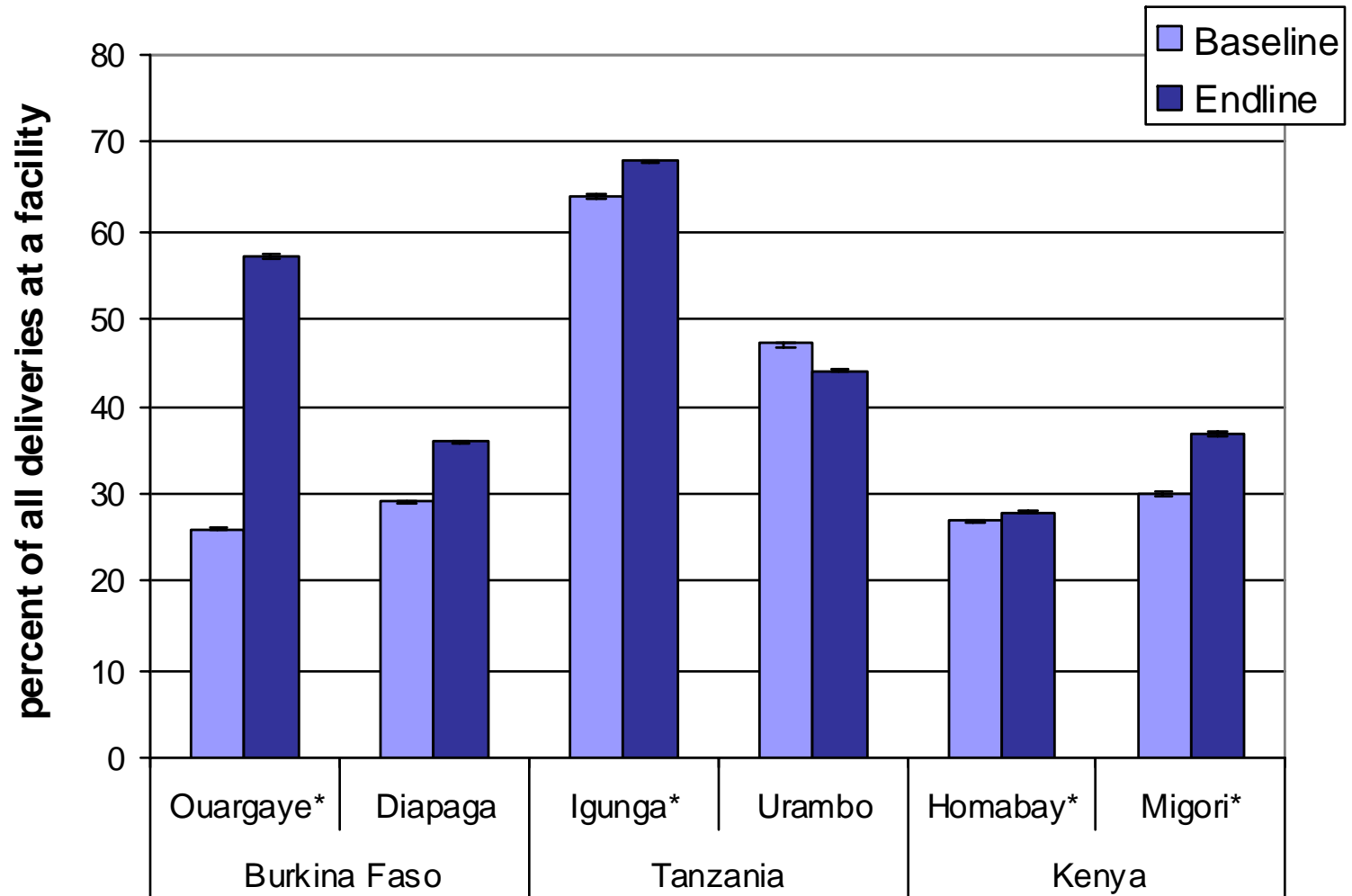
Changes in Facility Readiness for Normal Delivery Care



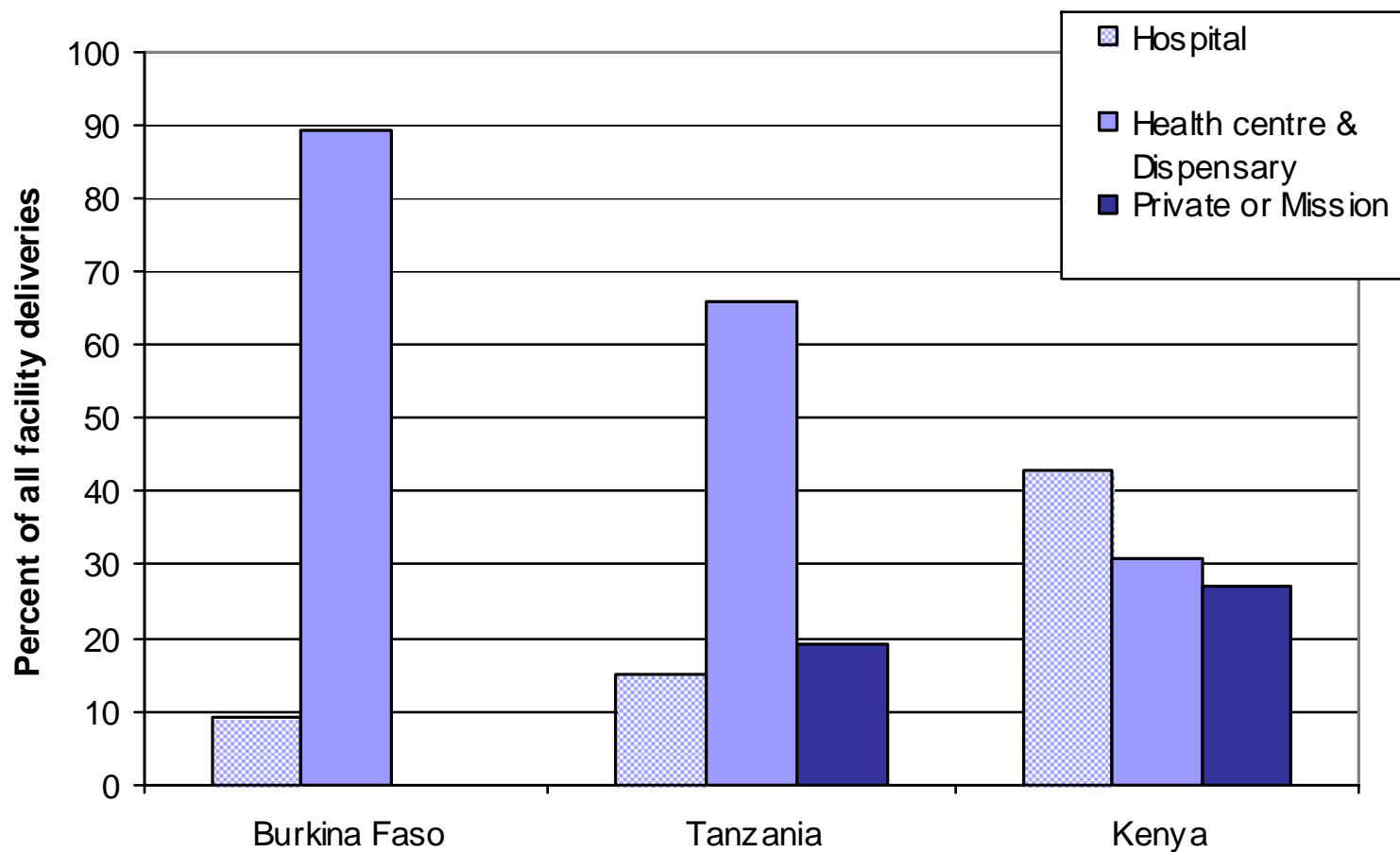
Changes in Facility Readiness for Complicated Delivery Care



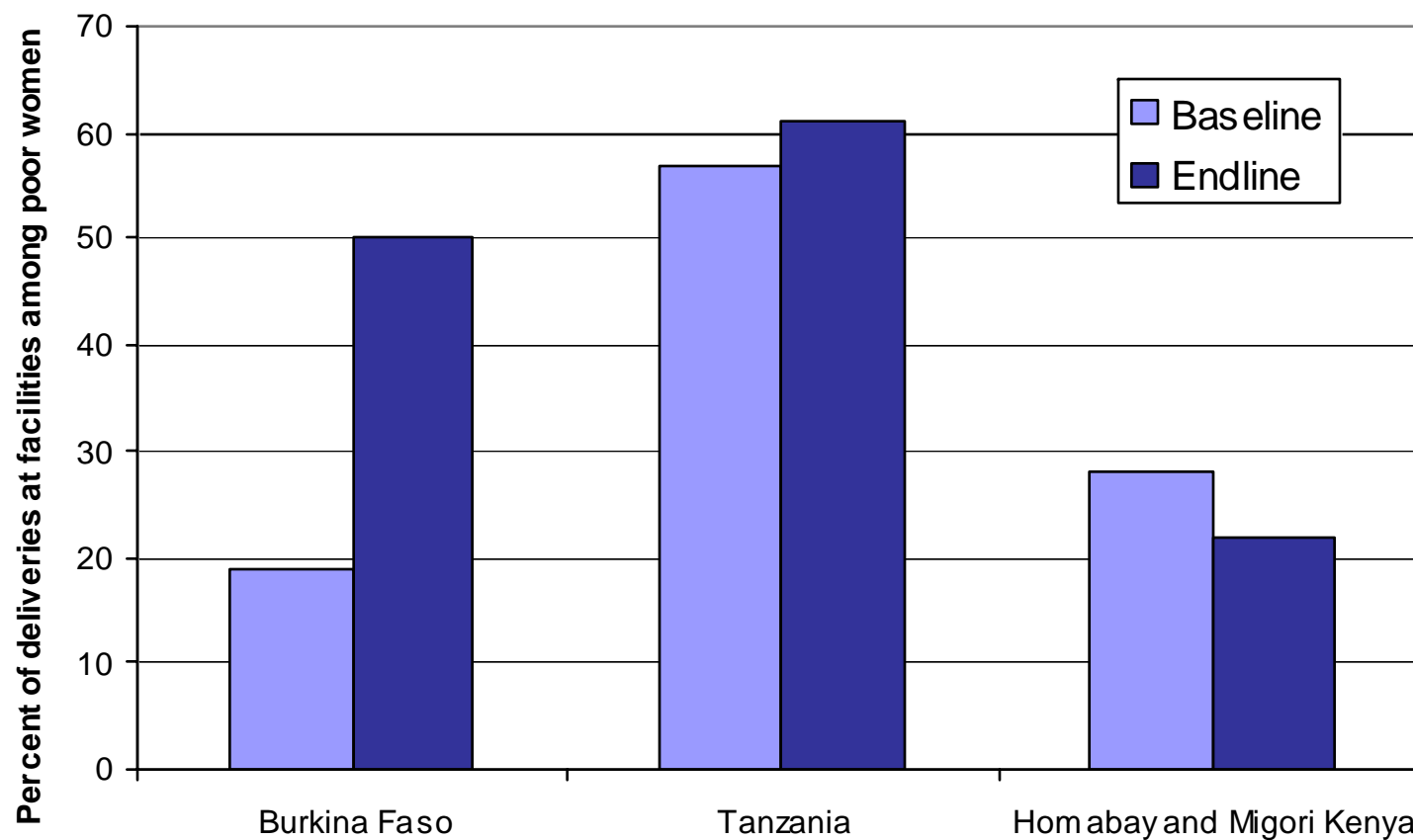
Percent of Births at a Health Facility



Distribution of Births across Health System



Delivery at Facilities Among Poor Women



Understanding Women's Care-Seeking During Childbirth: A Causal Pathway

EXPOSURE TO MESSAGE → **AWARENESS** → **ACTION**

Exposure to birth preparedness message during ANC counselling

Exposure to birth preparedness message through community campaign

Awareness about safe motherhood

Husband involvement in decision-making

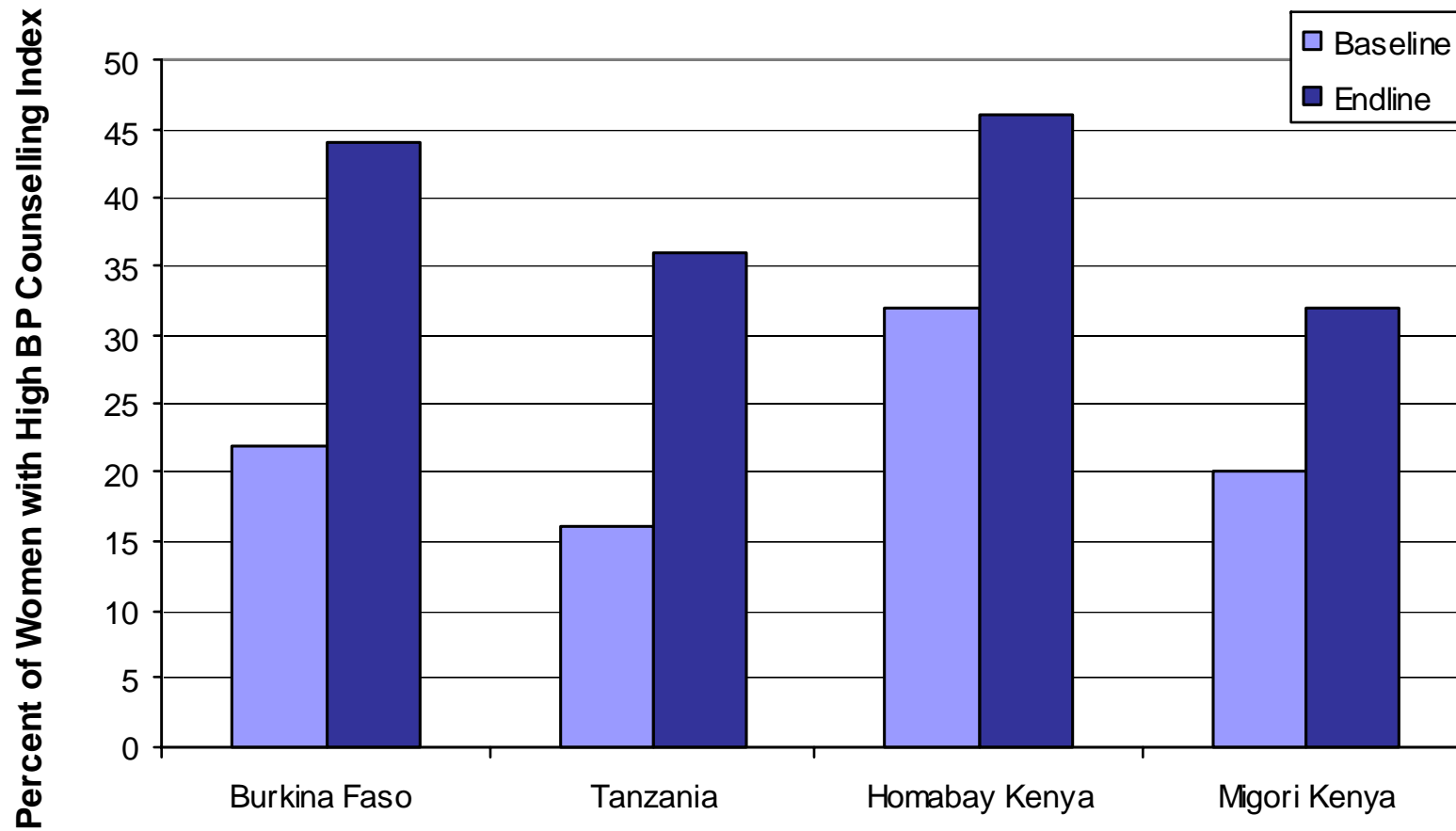
Household planning & discussion for skilled delivery care

Use of skilled delivery care

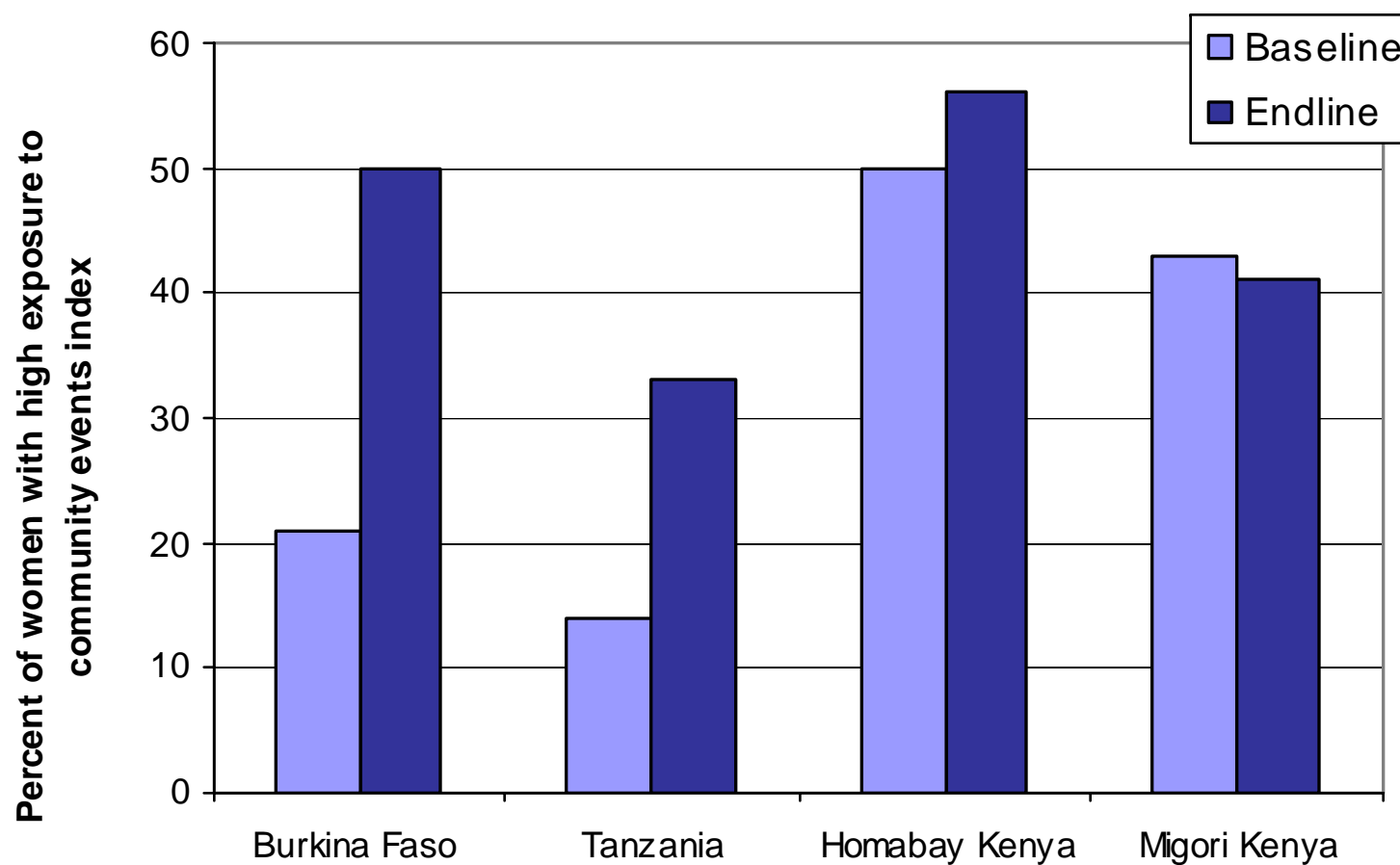
Evidence from the Skilled Care Initiative



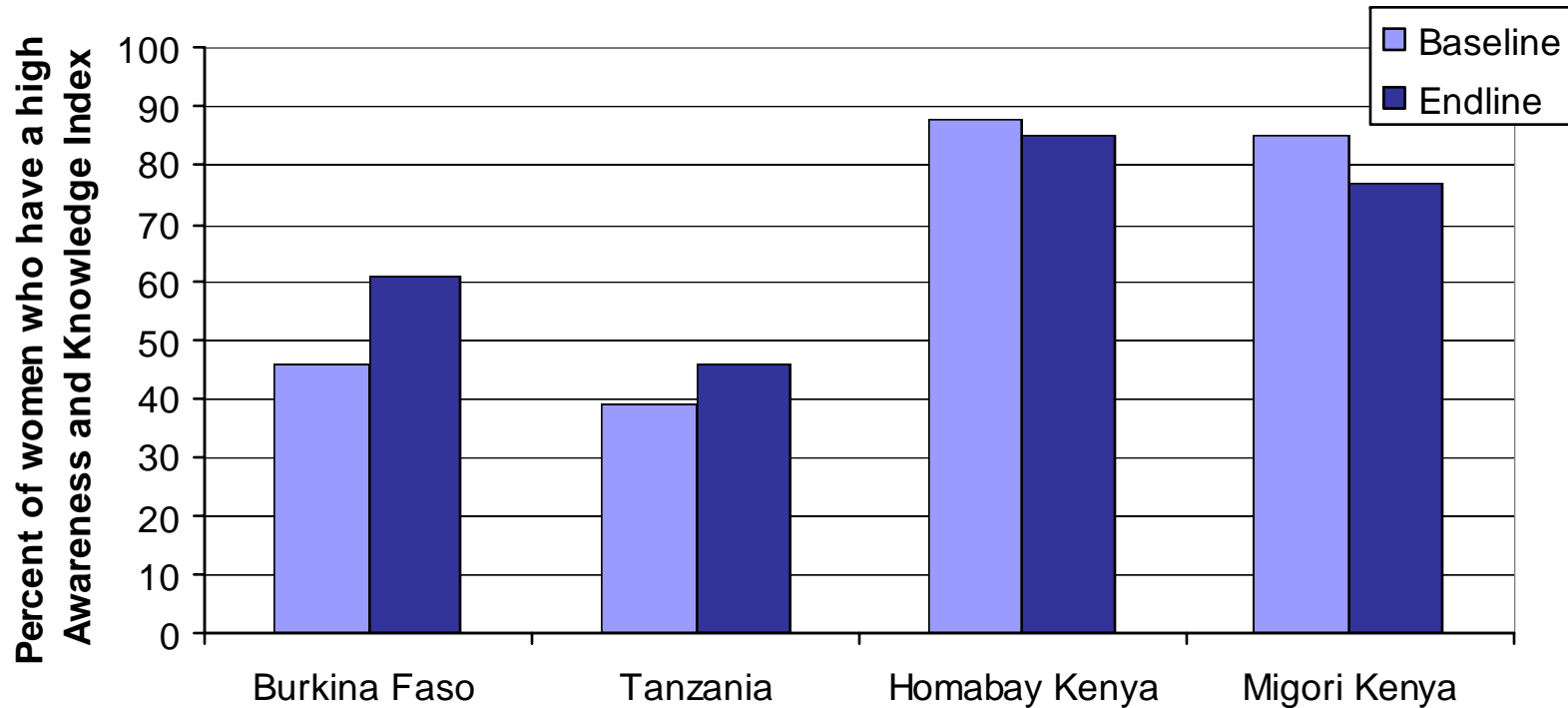
Changes in Antenatal Counselling on Birth Preparedness



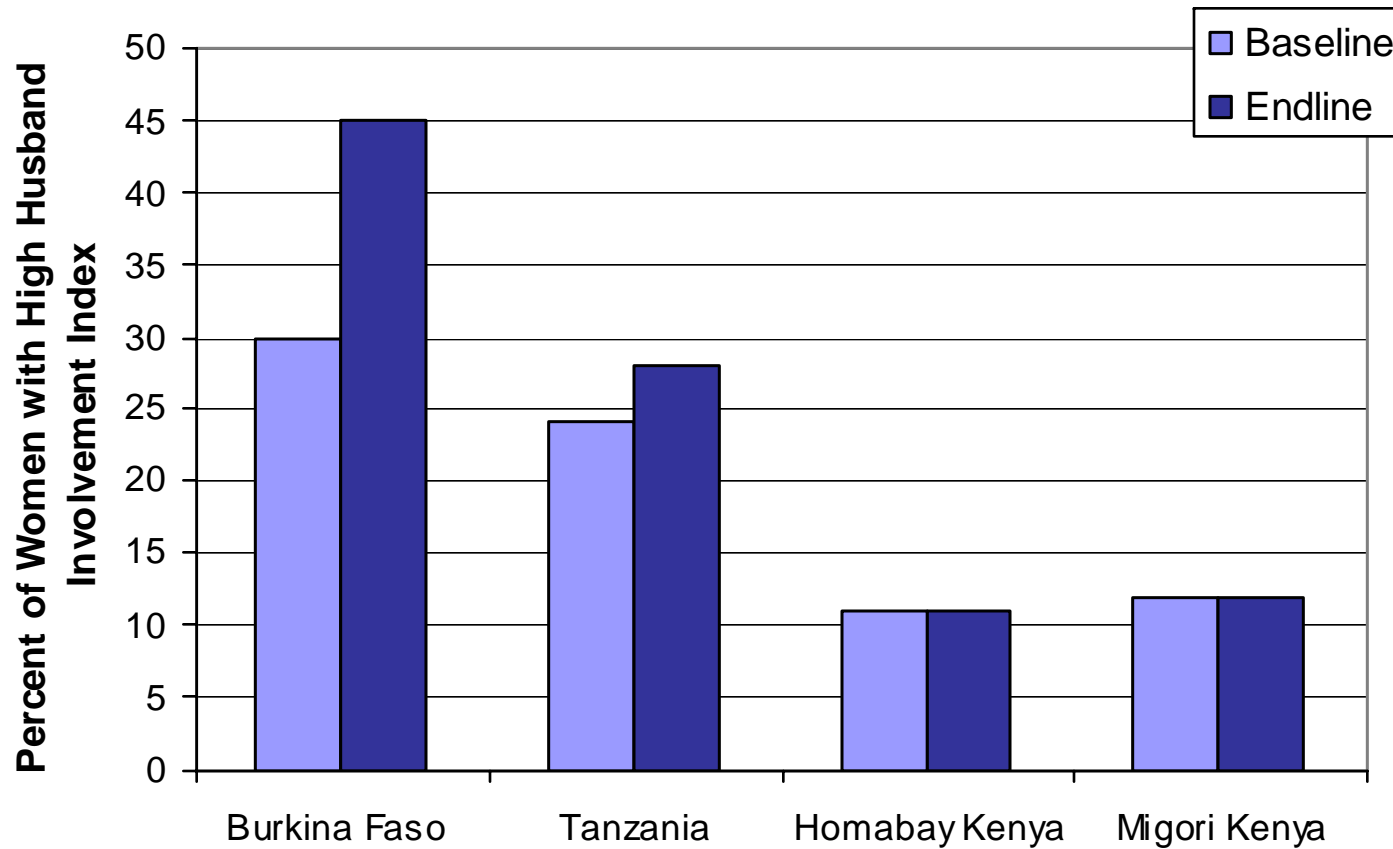
Changes in Exposure to Community Campaign on Birth Preparedness



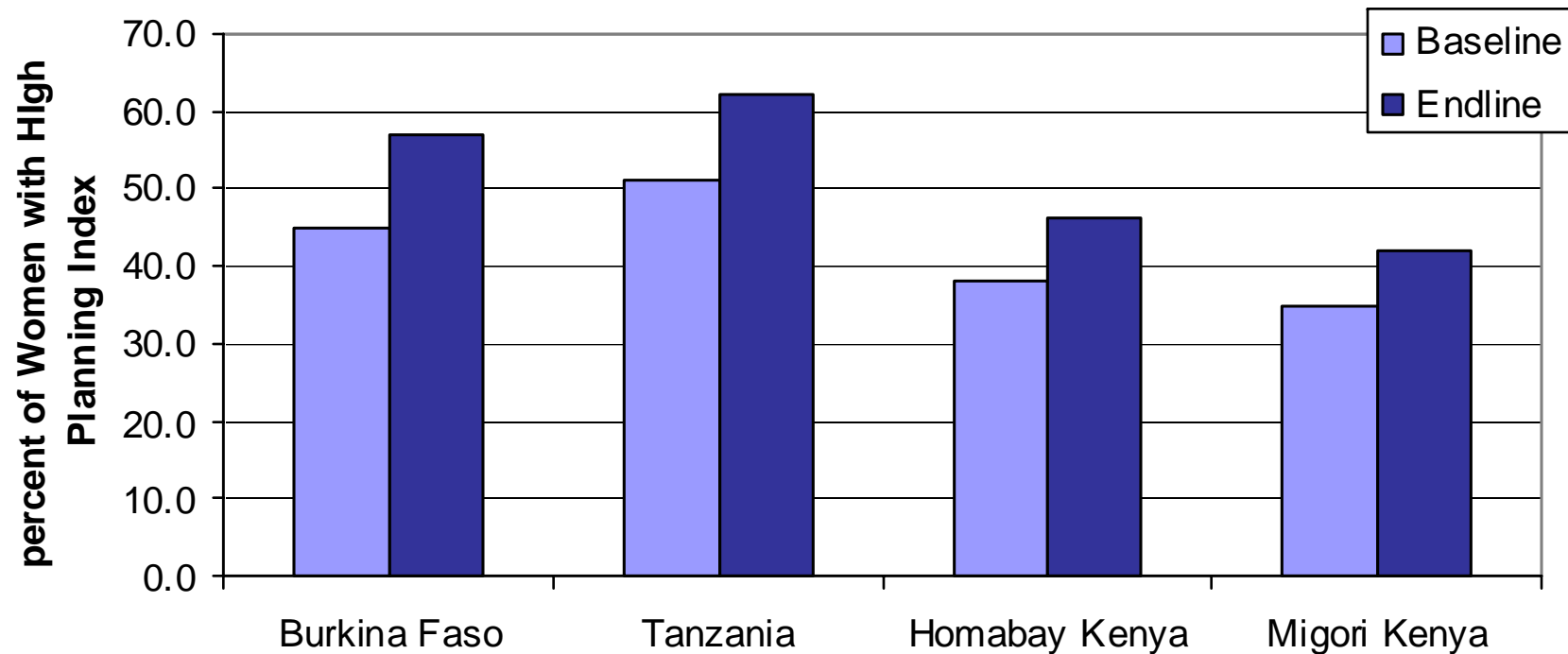
Changes in Safe Motherhood Awareness



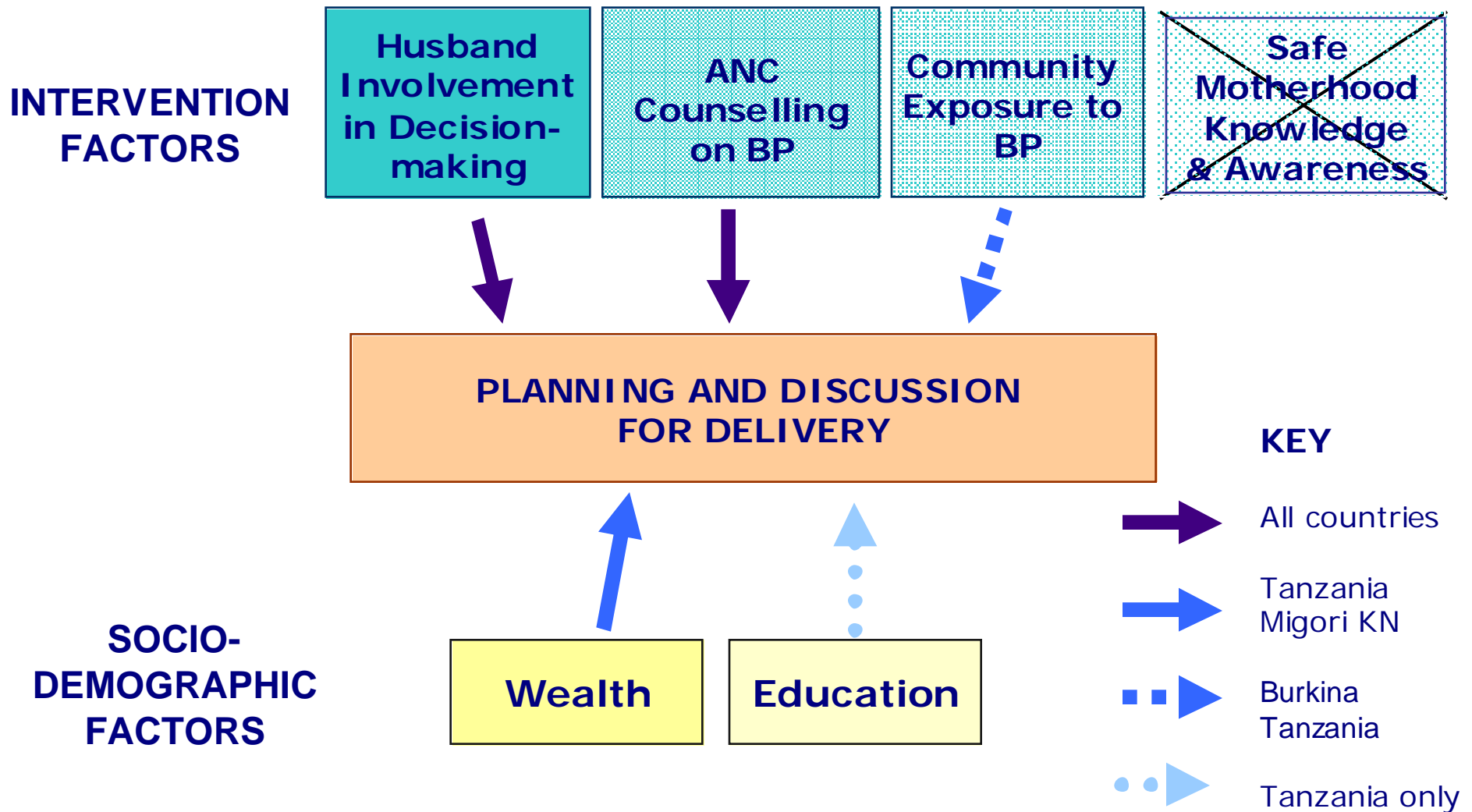
Changes in Husband Involvement in Decision Making



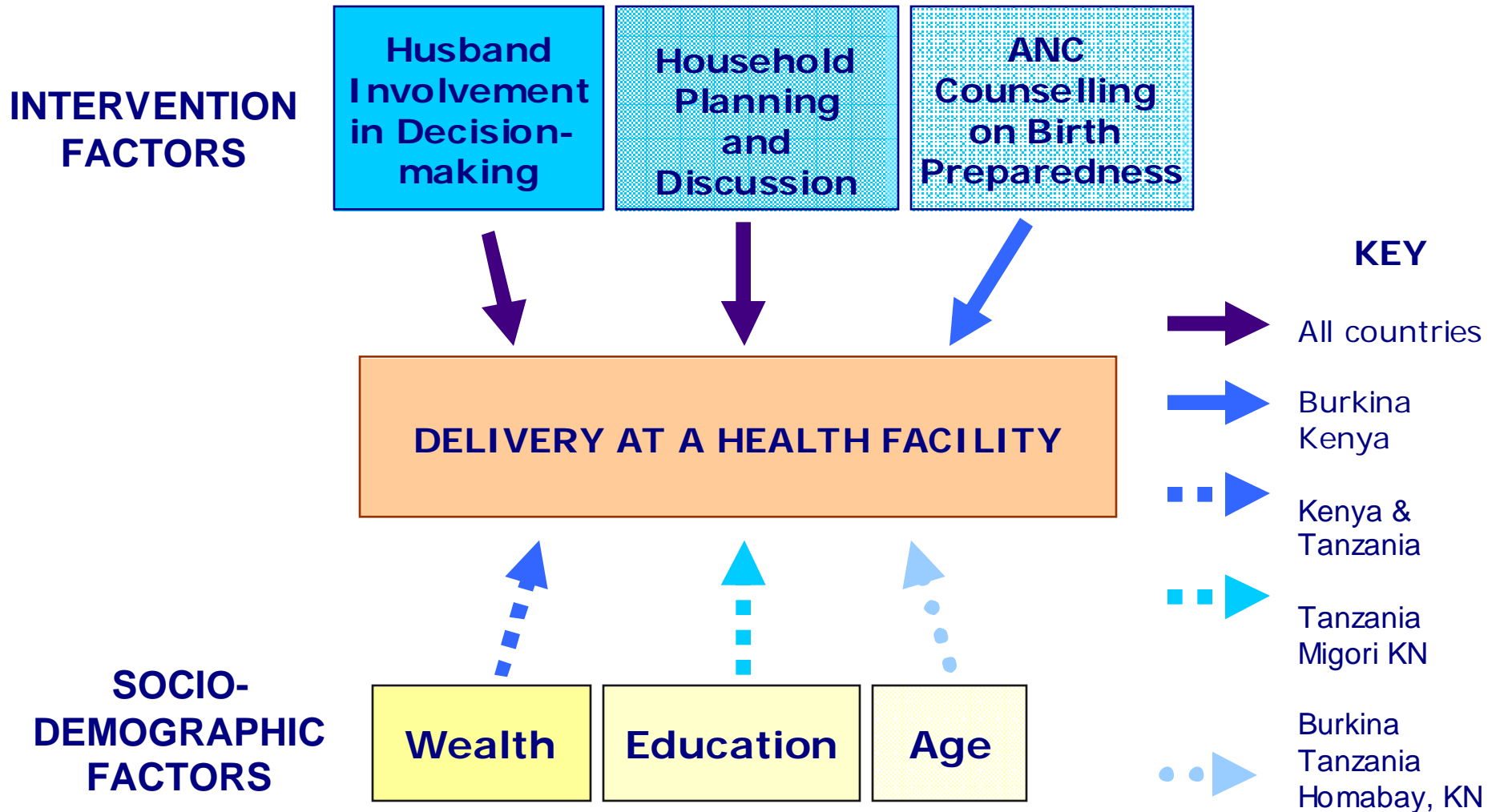
Changes in Household Planning for Delivery



Factors Associated with Planning for Delivery



Factors Associated with Delivery at a Facility



Conclusions & Lessons Learnt

Effective behaviour change interventions for increasing skilled attendance include:

- Focused antenatal care, including individualized birth preparedness counselling
- Male involvement in maternal health care-seeking
- Household discussion and planning for delivery

Knowledge — or lack thereof — was **not** a factor in women's use of skilled maternity care



Key Recommendations for Scaling Up Skilled Attendance Strategies

1. Strengthening mid- and lower-level facilities (staffing, provider skills, equipment, drugs, infrastructure, quality and content of services)
2. Improving the quality of ANC visits, including birth preparedness counselling
3. Promoting household discussion and preparation for birth
4. Engaging husbands in improving maternal health



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