ENSURING QUALITY ACCESS AND LEARNING FOR MOTHERS AND NEWBORNS IN CONFLICT-AFFECTED CONTEXTS (EQUAL)

EQUAL is a multi-country research consortium generating evidence on effective approaches for delivering life-saving maternal and newborn health (MNH) care in countries affected by conflict. We are a group of research partners united in our shared commitment to reduce maternal and neonatal deaths by ensuring quality health services are accessible to every woman and newborn, regardless of where they live. Our work focuses on the DRC, Nigeria, Somalia, and South Sudan – countries with the highest burden of maternal and neonatal deaths worldwide.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project Name: EQUAL
Funder: UK Aid from the UK government
Length: July 2021 – April 2026
Locations in South Sudan: Aweil East

SOUTH SUDAN STUDY OVERVIEW

In South Sudan, the International Rescue Committee (IRC) will lead the EQUAL consortium to conduct research in two priorities areas:

1. Policies and Practices Impacting MNH

   **WHAT:** A Political Economy Analysis to better understand the politics, financing, and practices affecting maternal and newborn health in South Sudan.

   **HOW:** A desk review of relevant academic, policy, and operational documents from the health system alongside key informant interviews with diverse stakeholders.

2. Community-delivered MNH care

   **WHAT:** A study in Aweil East to design, implement, evaluate, and iterate on an effective and client-demanded, community-based maternal and newborn health care program to reduce adverse MNH outcomes and improve uptake of evidence-based interventions. This applies a harm reduction approach to reduce the risk of deaths in areas with high rates of maternal and newborn mortality and low access to facility-base care.

   **HOW:** EQUAL will lead implementation research using a mixed-methods approach to assess the feasibility, acceptability, appropriateness, cost, and effectiveness of a community-based maternal and newborn care program to deliver evidence-based interventions in rural, humanitarian contexts.

For more information visit www.EQUALresearch.org or contact Dr. Naoko Kozuki (Naoko.kozuki@rescue.org)