BEMPU HEALTH

INDIA

PRESENCE: Bangladesh, Benin, Cameroon, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, India, Kenya, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Zimbabwe.

BEMPU Health develops innovative technologies that help newborns survive in low and middle-income countries. It delivers life-saving technology interventions, such as the TempWatch neonatal bracelet, which monitors newborns’ temperature, saving them from hypothermia. BEMPU works with pediatricians, governments and public health organizations across 14 countries where health care services are inadequate.

BEMPU is looking for:
- Investments (USD 1.5-2 million) to scale sales and impact.
- Partnerships with UN agencies and multilateral organizations working to reduce neonatal mortality, and strategic partnerships for the distribution of neonatal products.

CHALLENGE

Every year globally, approximately 20 million newborns are born below the normal birth weight of 2.5 kg. Of these, 8 million low weight babies are born in India alone. These babies are at high risk of injury and death from hypothermia and infection. In India and other low and middle-income countries, hypothermia management, especially in the community is challenging due to lack of awareness, human resources and infrastructure.

SOLUTION

The TempWatch is a bracelet that monitors a newborn’s temperature continuously during the first month of life in both the hospital and home. When hypothermia occurs, an audio-visual alarm alerts the caregiver immediately to warm the newborn with skin-to-skin care before moderate or severe hypothermia causes injury or death. BEMPU’s TempWatch is designed to overcome the constraints of hypothermia monitoring in low-resource settings. To ensure that the TempWatches reach low income families, BEMPU leverages public health organizations, UNICEF country offices, and public and private hospitals already working with Bottom of the Pyramid (BoP) communities to distribute its products.

“In Impact is definitely at the core of the company’s mission and operations.”
Max Cuveiller, Head of Mobile for Development, GSMA

In addition, BEMPU has developed and commercialized two other products for newborns: ApneBoot, a shoe that detects when babies have stopped breathing and auto-stimulates the foot to restart breathing; and KangaSling, a garment making skin-to-skin care and breastfeeding comfortable also for long periods.

IMPACT

In five years, BEMPU Health has achieved:
- 35,000 babies reached through BEMPU’s products
- 14 Countries and 320 Healthcare facilities reached
- 10,000+ lives improved
- 1,000 newborn lives saved

BEMPU has also trained 1120 health care providers (doctors, nurses and front-line workers) and educated 3,000 family members.
WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

BEMPU aims to change the level of knowledge, attitude and practice towards care for girl children, while significantly reducing neonatal mortality. 30% of BEMPU’s employees are women, and the company continues to promote gender equality throughout the organisation.

SCALABILITY

The TempWatch is has a universal design which makes its manufacturing process easily scalable. Together, BEMPU’s three products represent a yearly USD 300 million annual market opportunity globally. Over the next 5 years, the company will provide hypothermia management to 2 million newborns. This will require building a strong sales and marketing function for outreach to governments, UNICEF and private markets.

INVESTMENTS

BEMPU’s TempWatch and ApneBoot innovations have been vetted and awarded funding over multiple years by various members of the “Saving Lives at Birth Partnership”, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Grand Challenges Canada, USAID, KOICA Korea and NORAD. The total amount received from these partners is USD 2.4 million. BEMPU aims to raise USD 1.5-2 million in equity and debt to grow sales through direct selling and building a network of channel partners around the world.

PARTNERSHIPS

Through clinical evaluations and deployments of products in both the public and private markets, BEMPU has built a strong network of clinical and public health partners in India and internationally. This includes UNICEF, which has procured BEMPU TempWatch in 6 UNICEF country offices, and the Global Linkages Project by USAID which has implemented Bempu’s project in Nigeria. The company is also supported by Siemens Stiftung, Villgro, Grand Challenges Canada, ASME, and Echoing Green. BEMPU further works with clinical partners such as Niloufer Hospital Hyderabad, JIPMER Pondicherry, St John’s hospital Bangalore, and PGi Chandigarh.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES

The company leveraged two main digital innovations. The first one is the TempWatch, which is given to newborns when discharged to home, and was demonstrated to have a 98.6% sensitivity to detect true positive cases. The bracelet monitors the newborn’s temperature continuously for 30 days. If the baby is warm, the device blinks a blue light. If the baby is cold, an orange light and tune alerts the parent so they can warm the baby before hypothermia occurs. The second innovation is the ApneBoot, a foot worn device using pulse oximetry to detect bradycardia and desaturation. In the event of an apnea, it instantaneously gives a vibro-tactile stimulus to the foot sole, stimulating the nervous system to restart breathing, before prolonged hypoxia can cause injury.

FOUNDER

Ratul Narain is the Founder and CEO of BEMPU Health. He has 15 years of experience in developing medical technologies and is an Echoing Green Fellow. He holds a BS in Biomechanical Engineering and an MS in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University.

MORE INFORMATION

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