**Do user fee exemption policies for maternal health services work? Studying the impact of Free Delivery and Caesarean Policy in Senegal.**

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**ABSTRACT (100 words)**

This study investigates the impact of a user fee exemption policy (Free Delivery and Caesarean Policy, FDCP), introduced in 2005-06 in Senegal. We study the impact of FDCP on facility-based deliveries, caesarean births and antenatal care. Using household surveys covering a period from 2003 to 2009, multivariate logistic regressions are conducted to study the impact of FDCP across different groups based on their socio-economic status, place of residence, ethnicity and mother's education. Although FDCP substantially increased utilisation of maternal healthcare services; this increase was not equitable. Efforts to improve access among the most vulnerable groups need to be strengthened.

**Areas of study**

Maternal health, access to healthcare, equity, health systems