Expecting mothers are now encouraged by the government to check into a Health Center a few weeks prior to their due date. Given the workload and responsibility of a typical rural mother in Ethiopia, this maybe the first ‘break’ away from family duties most will have ever had.

While there is no denying that it takes a village to raise a child, the primary caregivers are still mothers. The mother, more than anyone, needs the facts on the key actions needed to help assure the child’s healthy development. This initiative takes advantage of this rare opportunity to engage with expecting mothers and enable them to earn from each other.

To facilitate this learning and exchange, Communication for Health has developed six short films for use in maternity waiting homes. The films motivate mothers to seek essential health services for mothers and newborns, and aspire for better quality of life through real life experiences of people from the communities. The health topics raised in the videos are relevant for soon-to-be mothers, and include postnatal care, essential newborn care at home, postpartum family planning, medical care for newborn illnesses, immunization, and malaria prevention and treatment.

Midwives in the facilities, are trained to use a discussion guide to catalyze discussions among the women after watching the films.