

Uganda: Independent Evaluation Provides Insights for Strengthening Family Planning

We are proud that we have contributed to increasing the use of modern contraceptives and reducing unmet need as a part of Uganda's national family planning program by training more than 3,000 CHWs. Our program data reveals that between January 2019 and June 2021, we reached more than 300,000 women with comprehensive counseling, contraceptives, and referrals for family planning, including nearly 67,000 who had never used contraceptives before.

As a result, approximately 15,000 unintended pregnancies were averted. A recently conducted independent evaluation by the Socio-Economic Data Center (SEDC) showed that in the intervention area, Living Goods-supported CHWs enabled a 36% reduction in unmet need for family planning (from 32.2% to 20.6%), more than 10 percentage points higher than the 26% reduction found in the control arm.

Meanwhile, the modern contraceptive prevalence rate (mCPR) increased by 26% (from 37.7% to 47.5%) in the intervention group. But this was lower than districts in the control arm, which reported a 52% increase (from 30.3% to 46.2%). Approximately 53% of women of reproductive age in both the intervention and control sites reported waiting for at least two years after their last live birth before attempting to get pregnant.

The evaluation showed room for improvement in meeting unmet need for family planning services. We attribute these findings in part to the presence of several other large-scale actors in control arm districts that promoted increased use of family planning services as a part of the national program, who engaged CHWs and other community ambassadors to drive demand.

In addition, the COVID pandemic also disrupted trainings, outreach activities and supportive supervision, as well as CHWs' ability to conduct home visits, which are critical for family planning uptake. Uganda also faced a countrywide stockout of Sayana Press injectable contraceptives for part of the project period, which limited the contraceptives CHWs could offer. That said, we believe we have identified opportunities to improve and are working towards strengthening our family planning impact in the future.