

Expanding Long Term Family Planning (LTFP) Services through training based service delivery: The experience of Pathfinder International in Ethiopia.

Mengistu Asnake, Ambaw Damtew

Learning Objectives: Participants attending this session will be able to: 1) understand the existence of demand for LTFP services; 2) understand the process for expanding LTFP through service based training approach; 3) identify the outcome of the initiative in transferring skills and providing services by responding to the unmet need; 4) replicate and share lessons to similar programs in low resource countries.

Background

Quality of care in Family Planning ensures clients ease to informed choices. The availability of different method mix of FP services is the key for the continuation of contraceptive usage without interruption. Pathfinder International in Ethiopia is implementing RH/FP program through capacity building of Local Implementing Partner Organizations (IPOs). The program includes provision of Family Planning services at the community level and in clinical facilities. With the increased demand for long term FP services, Pathfinder has already integrated its training program for service providers in areas where the demand for the specific services are high and community level providers are available.

Design:

Documentation of the process during training and analysis of service delivery reports were done between the periods of October 2004 to March 2007 to see the progress in the expansion of long term FP services in the project areas.

Results/Outcome:

A total of over 500 service providers from 400 facilities were trained in providing long term FP services during the two year period and close to 90,000 clients were served with long term FP methods (IUCD and Implant) through the approach of service based training and follow up services in the facilities with trained personnel. During the training period an average of 40 clients were served by the trainees who provided them the opportunity to work in a minimal supervision after training. The experience gained through these training activities were replicated to other project areas and to pre-service training of health workers as a mechanism of sustainability

Conclusion:

The service based training approach was found to be an effective way of improving the skills of providers and addressing the unmet need in Long Term FP services and responding to backlogs in service delivery. In addition availing services increased the demand for long term FP services.