

Contraceptive Use Among Women Refugees in Kyaka Refugee Settlement, Kyenjojo District, Western Uganda

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Background

Since mid 1990s, Uganda has been host to an estimated 230,000 refugees.

In 2007 Kyaka settlement, Kyenjojo district Western Uganda had an estimated 16,000 refugees mostly from Rwanda.

Family planning services for refugees in Kyenjojo district are mainly provided by the Ministry of Health.

Objectives

To study factors influencing contraceptive use by refugee women in Kyaka settlement in Uganda

Methods

We carried out a cross-sectional study in Kyaka refugee settlement during March and April, 2007. We interviewed 484 women of reproductive age 15-49 years randomly selected from all 24 zones in the refugee settlements. We conducted three focus group discussions with health workers, married refugee men and adolescents and held 4 in-depth key informant interviews. We used a health facility checklist to assess the quality of family planning services in the refugee settlement.

Results

We found that most refugee women (91.9%) were aware of at least a modern method of family planning. Contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR) was 18.2%. CPR was lowest (12.7%) in the 19-24 years age group and higher (26.0%) in the 25-34 age group. The most commonly used contraceptives were depo-provera (51.1%), condoms (29.6%) and the pill (11.4%). Contraceptive use by women refugees was found to be affected by spousal consent, the age of a woman, education status, nature of income generating activity, the number and sex of surviving children. Barriers to the use of contraception included lack of knowledge, misinformation, fear of side effects and lack of support of male partners. Current users perceive family planning services provided of good quality.

Conclusion and recommendations

Although our study showed high level of awareness about family planning, and quality of family planning services was perceived to be high, contraceptive prevalence rate is low in the settings. There is need to increase community awareness about family planning through and strengthen family planning services in the refugee settings and district.