

Are Mobile Service Units a good intervention to increase Family Planning Coverage? Results from Pakistan

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Background: Pakistan's population is rapidly growing at a rate of 2.2% largely due to ineffective rural family planning coverage. Mobile service units (MSU) have been used in some countries to increase access to services and spread knowledge about Family Planning in vulnerable communities. Greenstar also initiated the concept of MSU for women living in underserved areas.**Program Intervention:** MSUs were integrated with Interpersonal Communications efforts to expedite the transmission of messages pertaining to FP methods. MSUs were selected on the following criteria: area within union council, no public health facility nearby, catchment population of 100 households and 50km radius from base station. MSUs included two outreach workers to counsel FP clients, provide FP supplies, antenatal/postnatal checkups and counseling acute respiratory infections (ARI) and diarrhea treatment for children.

Methodology: Ten MSUs were deployed from Northern unjab and Khyber Pukhtoonkhawa . Each MSU was deployed for 2 months .

Results/ Key findings: program recorded a success rate of 67% (women adopting FP) with 38% women adopting a long term method (IUCD). 92,539 clients visited the MSUs, 62,230 were FP adopters (23,416 adopted long term methods (IUCD-Multiload); 38,814 adopted short-term. The camps have generated an estimated 86,616 Couple Year Protection. Beneficiaries for Maternal and Child care were 10,800 Antenatal; 1,892 Post Natal and 12,940 children.

Program Implications: GSM's Mobile Service Units were effective in reaching underserved populations to enhance uptake of FP methods among rural women. This Initiative could be scaled up with the support of provincial Government along with rigorous media campaigns to disseminate FP messages.