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Introduction of the Levonorgestrel Intrauterine System (LNG-IUS) in the Public Sector in Kenya Shows Early Positive Uptake

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Background

- While modern contraceptive use has increased from 32% in 2003 to 53% in 2014, 18% of currently married women still have an unmet need for FP services and 31% percent of FP users discontinue use of a method within 12 months (KDHS).
- Injectables are the most popular contraceptive method used (43%) while use of intrauterine contraceptive devices (IUCDs) remains low (5.6%) (PMA2015/Kenya-R4).
- 60% of modern contraceptive users obtain their contraceptive method from government public health facilities (KDHS 2014).

What Is LNG-IUS

- First introduced globally 30 years ago, the levonorgestrel intrauterine system (LNG-IUS) is one of the most effective forms of contraception.
- It has revitalized interest in intrauterine devices in Europe and the US; however, availability of LNG-IUS products in the FP2020 focus countries is limited due to their high cost.
- Studies have indicated that in settings where the unmet need for FP is high, increased availability of more affordable LNG-IUS products increases demand and uptake of the method among women.



Implementation Research Aim

To investigate the effects of adding a hormonal intrauterine device as an FP method option within a broader strategy to strengthen long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) services at governmental public health facilities in Kenya.



Methodology

- MCSP, in partnership with the Kenyan Ministry of Health (MOH), sourced a donation of generic LNG-IUS from the International Contraceptive Access Foundation.
- LNG-IUS was introduced in 31 public sector facilities in Kisumu (15) and Migori (16) counties where MCSP was already working to strengthen FP/LARC services.
- From April 2017, providers administered short interviews to consenting women immediately after insertion to document
 - the reason for choosing the method
 - their demographic information.
- Follow-up phone calls were conducted to assess early continuation rates as well as user experience and satisfaction.

Results



- As of June 2017, 110 LNG-IUS adopters were enrolled in the study.
- Follow-up with 79 women was conducted 4–5 months after insertion.

Characteristics of Adopters

- 28 yrs** Average age (youngest 16 years, oldest 44 years)
- 86%** Were married
- 55%** Had 1 or 2 children
- 70%** Were either not using contraception or were switching from a short-acting method
- 55%** Were in the 1-year-postpartum period

Conclusion

- The uptake of LNG-IUS is promising with high numbers of new FP users, as well as women previously using short-acting methods, adopting the method.
- The high proportion of postpartum adopters is also promising, as a target group with high need for both spacing and limiting.

Results, cont'd

LNG-IUS Adopter Experience 4–5 Months Post-Insertion

Adopter satisfaction

- 91%** were satisfied with their decision
- 90%** would recommend it to other women

Changes in bleeding pattern:

- 19%** 19% had no changes in bleeding pattern
- 54%** had reduced or no bleeding
- 14%** had spotting
- 11%** had increased bleeding

Impact on adopters' lives

77% of women experiencing absence of bleeding and 95% of women experiencing reduced bleeding viewed the change as having a positive or neutral impact on their lives.

14% of adopters reported experiencing a “major” problem (most commonly cramping or pain during sex, too much bleeding, or abnormal discharge) while only 2% were still experiencing the problem at the time of the follow-up interview.

Two LNG-IUS adopters had expulsions and five had the LNG-IUS removed.

- The study is continuing to collect data on the reasons for adoption, user satisfaction, user experiences, implementation challenges, and opportunities for scale-up.

