

Increased Availability and Accessibility of Family Planning Services: An Approach Leading to Improved Contraceptive Uptake and Reproductive Behavior of Women Living in Pakistan

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Abstract : Background: Access, better counseling and quality in the provision of family planning services remain big challenges. Sukh Initiative (a project of three different foundations) is a multi-pronged approach, working in one million underserved population residing peri urban slums in Karachi and providing door to door services by lady health workers (LHWs) and community health workers (CHWs) linked with quality family planning and reproductive (FP/RH) services both at public and private health care facilities. Objective: To assess the improvement in family planning and reproductive health behavior among MWRAs by improving access in peri-urban-underserved population of Karachi. Methodology: Using cross sectional study design 3866 married women with reproductive age (MWRAs) were interviewed in peri urban region of Karachi during November 2016 to January 2017. All face to face structured interviews were conducted with women aged 15-49 currently living with their husbands. Based on the project intervention question on reproductive health were developed and questions on contraceptive use were adopted from PDHS- Pakistan 2013. Descriptive and inferential analysis was performed on SPSS version 22. Results: 65% of population sample are literate, 51% women were in young age group- 15-29. On the poverty index, 6% of the population sample living at national poverty line 1.25\$ and 52% at 2.50\$. During the project years 79% women opted for facility based delivery; private facilities are the priority choice. 61.7% women initiated the contraceptive use in last two years (after the project). Use of family planning was increased irrespective of education level and poverty index- about 55.5% women with no formal education are using any form of contraception and trend of current modern contraceptives across poverty scores strata equally distributed amongst all groups. Age specific modern contraceptive prevalence rate (mCPR)(between 25-34) was found to be 43.8%. About 23% of this contraceptive ascertained from door to door services- short acting, (pills and condoms) are common, 29.5% from public facilities and 47.6% are from public facilities in which long acting and permanent method most received methods. Conclusion: Strategy of expanding access and choice in the form of providing family planning information and supplies at door step and availability of quality family planning services in the peripheries of underserved may improve the behavior of women regarding FP/RH.

Keywords : access, family planning, underserved population, socio-demographic facts

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