

The Weekly

Information Resource Bulletin

FOCUS: Family Planning

Using family planning to have smaller families helps preserve health and improve the overall quality of our lives.

Having smaller families will also contribute to improving children's health and ensuring that they have access to adequate food, clothing, housing, and educational opportunities.

We all need to work together to build healthy and productive families and communities. One of the best ways to do this is the use of family planning.

As has been discussed in the previous bulletins, women in Malawi give birth to an average of six children which makes Malawi one of the countries with high population growth.

Repeated childbirth is dangerous to the health of the mother. Women are more likely to have problems during childbirth when they have had more than four children.

There are several long term and permanent family planning methods currently being used in the country. One such method is vasectomy, which is used by men.

The goals of the Weekly Bulletin are:

- To increase knowledge of listeners on Vasectomy method
- To correct misconceptions and rumors about the Vasectomy
- To encourage listeners to seek more information about the Vasectomy method

The Problem: Low Use of Long Acting Family Planning Methods

In this bulletin, we will focus on a permanent method of birth control called vasectomy.

Vasectomy is the only long term male contraceptive method available in the country.

Vasectomy is an under-used contraceptive method in the developing world, despite being safe and effective and being the least expensive permanent method of contraception.

The vasectomy procedure is also fairly quick – taking on ten to 20 minutes to perform, according to the world vasectomy day website.

According to one of the family planning service providers in the country, Banja La Mtsogolo, national statistics, last year show that only 40 males underwent vasectomy in a six month period,

while more than 73-thousand females were active in long-term family planning methods.

As mentioned, vasectomy is a permanent method of contraception for men who are sure they and their partner do not want more children.

It involves a simple operation where a trained medical doctor makes a small cut in the skin of the scrotum and ties and cuts the tubes that carry sperm to the penis.

Like any other family planning methods vasectomy does not protect a person from sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.

By using a condom you'll protect yourself and your partner against STIs.

Activities for Journalists

Use your radio station to help your community understand how vasectomy, a permanent method of family planning method, works.

Explain to your listeners what vasectomy is and what the procedure involves.

Most vasectomies are carried out under local anesthetic. This means only the scrotum and testicles will be numbed, and the man will be awake for the procedure. He will not feel any pain, although it may feel slightly uncomfortable.

Also make the following points clear to the listeners:

After a couple decides they don't want to have any more children, they may consider using a permanent family planning method -- such as vasectomy.

As already said, vasectomy is considered permanent; once it's done, you don't have to think about contraception again.

Still, a couple needs to use contraception for at least eight weeks after the procedure because sperms stay in the tubes leading to the penis.

Vasectomy usually cannot be reversed; therefore, it should only be an option for those who no longer wish to have more children.

According to medical news website, vasectomy is a very effective and permanent means of preventing pregnancy. It is estimated that only one out of every 2,000 men who receive a vasectomy will impregnate a woman during their lives.

Have a vox pop with a man who has had a vasectomy (a family planning service provider in your area can help you identify one). Find out from him why he decided to have vasectomy? Was his wife supportive of this decision? What are the benefits he has experienced after getting this method? Does he have any regrets?

Interview a local nurse or doctor about the benefits of vasectomy.

Host a talk show or panel discussion on the topic – and include health care providers who perform the procedure.

Community engagement

Urge listeners to send SMS, call or stop by the radio station to talk about the benefits of using long acting methods of family planning.

Useful Contacts

- Sandra Mapemba; Population Reference Bureau (PRB); Phone: +265(0)999219789
- Prisca Masepuka; Banja La Mtsogolo: +265(0)999 367 903
- Jean Mwalabu; Department of Reproductive Health: +265993210392
- www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/265127.php
- <http://worldvasectomyday.org/>



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



INFORMING
DECISIONMAKERS
TO ACT



DEVELOPING RADIO PARTNERS

2