Strengthening Family Planning (FP) Preservice Education (PSE) in Malawi through a Multi-Pronged Intervention

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Malawi FP Project Overview

• Two-year, USAID-funded, part of SAHCD

• Project objectives:
  o Strengthen national and district capacity for FP in PSE and in-service delivery
  o Strengthen facility-based FP services
  o Increase access to and demand for long-term and permanent methods
Needs Assessment Findings

- RH/FP curricula in need of updating
- Teaching models and up-to-date reference materials in short supply
- Lectures most commonly used teaching methodology
- Many institutions with limited computer and Internet access
Methodology

- Provide latest evidence-based technical information
- Provide ready-to-use teaching materials:
  - Slides, handouts, reference materials, classroom activities, assessment tools
- Develop individual action plans
- Follow up with participants
• 24 nursing/midwifery tutors, MOH, Nursing and Midwifery Council, others
• Topics:
  o FP methods
  o Cross-cutting issues, i.e., HIV/FP, PPFP, gender-sensitive FP services
Gender and FP Orientation

- 18 participants from PSE, MOH, Nursing and Midwifery Council
- Goals:
  - To provide greater understanding of how gender/GBV affect FP use
  - To review/develop content for Gender and FP unit of Reference Guide
PSE FP Reference Guide

- In accordance with international standards and MOH policies/protocols
- Participatory development process
- Review, endorsement by national FP TWG
- Content: technical information, effective teaching principles, participatory activities, assessment tools
Dissemination of Guide

• MOH/RHU adopted guide for all cadres in all PSE schools
• All schools given multiple copies
  o Hard copies
  o CD-ROM
Evidence of Success

- **Workshops:**
  - Pre/post-tests, course evaluations
  - Follow up: six-month post-tests, qualitative interviews, verification of action plans

- **Guide:**
  - Qualitative interviews at nine months
Results: Workshops

- CTU test scores
  - Pretest: 53%
  - Post-test: 87%
  - Six-month post-test: 86%

- Follow-up interviews revealed that participants of both workshops:
  - Integrated information/materials into courses
  - Oriented colleagues to content
  - Received strong support from administrators
“I gained new information on FP issues and acquired new skills making me comfortable to teach FP to students and colleagues.”

“...A pool of resource material to update the course outline.”

“[I am] briefing coworkers on contemporary FP issues, reviewing course outline for FP, sharing CD and handouts.”

“The [gender and FP] information and materials have been a resource and eye opener, a rich resource for teaching.”
Results: Reference Guide

• Provides technically correct, useful, and highly relevant information
• Format provides uniform, easy-to-use information and activities
“This guide has made teaching easier; all the content is in one book.”

“Very relevant, practical, [we] photocopy scenarios and role plays...[nursing] council uses as well.”

“Current information motivates tutors; information available all the time”

“One of the questions was on nurses council examinations.”

“Course outline was revised to reflect guide content, and lesson plans/slides were revised.”
Conclusions

- PSE tutors need:
  - Updates in FP knowledge and skills
  - Greater understanding of how gender/GBV affects FP use
  - Capacity building in adult learning theory and techniques

- PSE tutors will increase use of participatory teaching methods and up-to-date information when materials are made convenient and easy-to-use
Challenges

- Building continued awareness and increased use of guide
- Maintaining up-to-date technical content
- Keeping tutors’ clinical skills up-to-date
- Outcome: Did students’ knowledge of FP increase?
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