

Abstract

Shifting Away from Doorstep Distribution of Contraceptives in Urban Bangladesh: Effects on Discontinuation and Acceptance of Family Planning

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The paper describes the effects on discontinuation and acceptance of family planning of an operations research intervention on alternative (to the conventional doorstep distribution of contraceptives) service-delivery strategies for MCH-FP services. In partnership with relevant government agencies and a national non-governmental organization (NGO), Concerned Women for Family Planning (CWFP), the study was tested in two areas of Dhaka City - during 1996-1997. Two alternative strategies (featured with the withdrawal of door-to-door contraceptive distribution) were tested in two areas of Dhaka City. In one area, a range of MCH-FP services, including distribution of contraceptives, was delivered from the static Primary Health Care Clinic (PHCC). At another area, a transitional arrangement was made to provide pills and condoms to a group of clients at common sites in the neighborhood (e.g, schools, clubs) known as Community Service Points (CSPs). Both of the strategies were complemented by selective (targeted) home visits to the nonusers of modern family planning with the purpose of motivating them to become acceptors. The government and NGO population programmes in various countries are now undergoing major changes that entail broadening of the service package from family planning to reproductive and other essential family health services, and introduction of less resource-intensive service-delivery strategies. However, a fear is widely persistent in this regard that these restructurings might adversely affect the family planning program performance. Findings of the paper are likely to provide important insights on these pertinent issues.