

Marie Stopes Uganda promotes access to modern contraceptives

By Vision reporter

Marie Stopes Uganda; promoting access to and utilization of modern Contraceptives in Uganda
For over 25 years, Marie Stopes Uganda (MSU) has provided a wide range of high quality, affordable, client-centered Sexual Reproductive Health services to Ugandan men, women and young people. We are part of the Marie Stopes International (MSI) global partnership with a presence in 37 countries.

Uganda FP 2020 Goal is to reduce unmet need for family planning to 10% and increase the modern contraceptive prevalence rate to 50%. However, shortage of skilled health workers to provide long term reversible contraceptive methods and permanent contraception remains an impediment to achieving this goal.

Therefore, Marie Stopes Uganda is spearheading advocacy aimed at optimizing the delivery of family planning by addressing the shortage and uneven distribution of healthcare workers through task sharing of surgical methods of contraception to clinical officers. In this regard, MSU;

- Coordinates and facilitates the national task sharing task-force chaired by the MOH with membership from Parliament of Uganda, the Population Secretariat, the Health Service Commission, PPDARO, and members of the Uganda Family Planning Consortium.

- Research – MSU conducted an implementation research on task sharing which revealed that with appropriate training and support, Clinical officers were able to safely perform surgical procedures

- Conducted a review of the legal and policy



A mother receiving family planning advice from a nurse

framework on Task Sharing and identified how these can be streamlined to facilitate Task sharing, such as through orders by the Director General of Health Services. Besides the task-sharing innovation, Marie Stopes Uganda has promoted access to family planning through provision of services via its various service delivery channels namely;

1. 15 static centres

MSU provides comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services through a network of 15 Clinics across Uganda. The facilities provide a wide range of services including; comprehensive family planning, post abortion care, primary health care, STI screening and treatment, cancer of the cervix screening and treatment, ante and post-natal care, as well as HIV counselling, testing and referrals.

2. Uganda Reproductive Health Voucher project

The URHVP is a four-year World Bank funded project, who's over aching goal is to increase

access to skilled care among poor women living in rural and disadvantaged areas during pregnancy, delivery and the post-natal period, in South Western and Eastern Uganda. MSU is implementing the project on behalf of Ministry of Health to facilitate the safe delivery of 156,000 women in both public and private health facilities. The Project recently introduced a family planning voucher to enhance uptake of postpartum family planning.

3. Social Marketing

MSU has Uganda's longest running social marketing program of health products which are marketed and distributed to private providers and pharmacies. Our products include Uganda's preferred condom, Lifeguard also popularly called the Ladies Choice. Misoprostol which is the MSU brand of Misoprostol is potent for the prevention and treatment of post-partum hemorrhage, as well as the treatment of incomplete abortion and "Back up" which is a single tablet emergency contraceptive

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4. Marie Stopes Ladies

The Marie Stopes (MS) Ladies model is an innovative, scalable, low cost model designed to overcome challenges of accessing high-quality healthcare in Uganda by supporting nurses and/or midwives in peri-urban areas to expand their service delivery. Nurses and/or midwives selected to be MS Ladies are provided with training, equipment, and on-going support to establish their own community-level businesses delivering high quality maternal and reproductive health services to underserved women and girls at an affordable price within their homes in peri-urban areas. To date we have 50 MS ladies delivering FP services to women within the privacy of their homes.

5. MSU Call Centre

MSU operates Uganda's leading specialised SRHR call center. Through this channel, we provide FP Counselling, information, and referrals to up to 9,000 callers in 16 languages monthly. The call centre is open seven days a week and is a toll-free phone line (0800 220 333). You can also reach us on facebook @ MarieStopesug, WhatsApp on 0754001503 or our website on www.mariestopes.or.ug