Repositioning Family Planning in Rwanda

How a taboo topic has become priority number one, and a success story

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The story of the dramatic rise of family planning use in Rwanda and lessons learned
Rwanda's population, an estimated 11 million, is one of the most densely concentrated in the world...
## Selected health indicators in Rwanda, 1992—2008

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>infant mortality</strong></td>
<td>85</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>62</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>under-five mortality</strong></td>
<td>150</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>103</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>antenatal care (1st visit)</strong></td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>96%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>skilled birth attendance</strong></td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>53%</td>
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<td><strong>maternal mortality</strong></td>
<td>---</td>
<td>1071</td>
<td>750</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>total fertility rate</strong></td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
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<td><strong>contraceptive prevalence rate</strong></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>27%</td>
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Source: Demographic and Health Surveys
How did family planning become priority number one?
Multilevel evidence-based advocacy and policy efforts: family planning as issue of health and economic development
Increased access to quality services
Increased access to wide range of methods

full range (implants and IUDs) integrated at health centers

permanent methods: vasectomy initiative
Lessons Learned

Advocacy critical—multilevel and targeted district mayors, ministries, parliamentarians, military...
Lessons Learned

Coordination is key, as is national implementation plan.
Lessons Learned

Choice of methods, confidentiality and improved logistics systems are essential.
Lessons Learned

Motivating providers works, but needs to be sustainable
Current challenge: keeping the momentum going
Repositioning family planning in Rwanda—strong political commitment and leadership, mechanisms to foster advocacy, widespread availability of high-quality family planning services
Thank you

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