I am Leading by Example —Okello's Story

Some men tend to feel that services such as family planning are intended for only their partners and thus tend to pay less attention in supporting them. This attitude and behavior has negatively impacted reproductive health programs including family planning (FP) uptake. Conversely, in most cases women rely on the good will of their husbands to consent for these services.

In order to increase male participation, Uganda Health Marketing Group (UHMG) with support from the Untied States Agency for International Development (USAID) through the Social Marketing Activity (SMA) project is working through community based volunteers commonly known as Good Life Promoters (GLPs) and Good Life Clinics (GLCs) to encourage men to participate in the uptake of FP services. GLPs mobilize men and their partners to go to GLCs where they have interpersonal communication (IPC) sessions with trained health workers. This campaign is further enhanced by local radio talk shows and DJ mentions.

Christopher Okello with his wife during the Implant insertion

One of beneficiaries of this campaign, *Christopher Okello*, after listening to a radio talk show, felt the need and accompanied his wife to *Aywee* Health centre where *Fitzmann* GLC held an outreach. *Okello*, a primary school teacher encouraged men to challenge the common attitudes and practices by being actively involved in family planning.

"It is hard to see a man escort his wife for such services in this area, I want to lead by example in this ward and also encourage my fellow men to take the issue of family planning seriously by discussing it with their spouses" *Christopher Okello*.

During the outreach on March 22, 2016, Catherine 27, *Okello's* wife, opted for *Implanon*, a long term FP method. The outreach served **43 women** out if which **27** received short term FP methods and **16** received long term FP methods.

"We have three children but the high cost of living and education has prompted us to come for this service and I encourage other women to go for family planning services." *Catherine*

We learnt that if men are given the audience, they are positive and supportive in the uptake of FP services. Also, involving satisfied users, and integrating FP with other health services during outreaches are very effective ways in mobilizing FP clients.

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