Sustainability and factors affecting the success of community-based reproductive health programs in rural Northwest Ethiopia

Daniel Argaw¹*, Mesganaw Fanthahun² and Yemane Berhane³

WHO/Ethiopia, P.O.Box 3069, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

*For Correspondence: E-mail: daniel@whoet.org or daniel7019@yahoo.com

Abstract

Various Community-Based Reproductive Health interventions were initiated in many developing countries but their effectiveness has not been evaluated as much as needed. A comparative cross sectional study was carried out in February 2002 among women who participated in community based reproductive health interventions in South Gondar zone, Ethiopia. The study was conducted in eight kebeles taking successful and weak program areas for comparison. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used for data collection. The qualitative method included key informants interview, and Focus Group Discussions with Community-based reproductive health agents (CBRHAs). A multistage sampling technique was employed to select 792 study subjects for the quantitative part of the study. Awareness of the presence of the CBRHA in the locality, participation in selection of the agents, acceptance of the agent, and: and telling to CBRHA about reproductive health issues were significantly higher in successful than in weak program areas [OR(95%CI) = 2.32(1.74,3.08), 3.28(1.22,9.27), 6.65(3.59,12.43), and 5.05(3.22,7.96), respectively]. In multiple logistic regression analysis awareness of presence of CBRHA in the village, acceptance of the CBRHA, and having had discussion with CBRHA maintained significant associations with type of community-based reproductive health program (successful/weak). Focus Group Discussions and Key Informant Interviews revealed better involvement of community leaders and health workers in the process of selecting and supervising CBRHA in successful areas compared to weak areas. The sustainability score of the Community-Based Reproductive Health Program (CBRHP) graded by the program coordinators was 2.92 out of 5. Acceptance of the CBRHAs, communication of the agents with community members, level of support to the agents, better involvement of community representatives in the selection process were found to be the major factors affecting CBRHP. Overall sustainability of the CBRHP was low which calls for an urgent action.

Keywords: Community based reproductive health program; reproductive health service; reproductive health programme sustainability; community-based distribution;

References