



Using evidence to expand choice,
empower women and
involve communities



Institute for Reproductive Health E-blast

June 2012

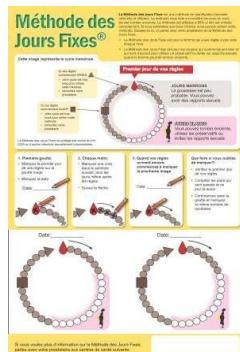
Bringing family planning direct to the consumer in Benin

Recognizing the importance of expanding family planning access beyond traditional health service delivery points, IRH collaborated with FHI 360's C-Change Project to test the delivery of the Standard Days Method® (SDM) directly to consumers. SDM's unique knowledge-based characteristics make it an ideal method to offer in non-traditional venues, outside of the health center. A paper image of SDM was developed, validated among potential users and distributed directly to consumers through hair salons and kiosks in Cotonou, Benin.

The activity objective was to test the effectiveness of a direct-to-consumer approach through delivering a [paper image of SDM](#) able to be distributed widely, increasing awareness and availability of the method in Benin. It also tested how learning about SDM from the paper image affected the sale of CycleBeads® which are available in Benin through health centers and pharmacies.

Project Results

Validation of the tool showed that women with only some education were still able to understand the eligibility criteria and successfully use the method



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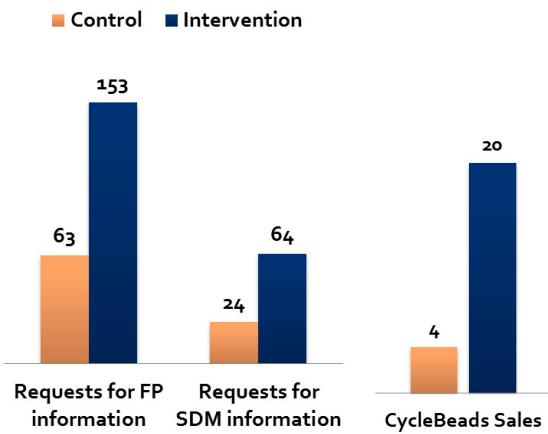
WHO Flipchart



The World Health Organization (WHO) has just released a new family planning counseling tool, "[A guide to family planning for community health workers and their clients](#)." This tool is based on the *WHO Decision-making tool for family planning clients and providers* and provides essential family planning information in a simple and concise manner through a flipchart. Community-based providers can use the tool to convey key messages to clients such as the benefits of family

with the paper image. Women were proactive in asking for help from their partner, sisters or children to better understand the paper SDM if they had difficulty.

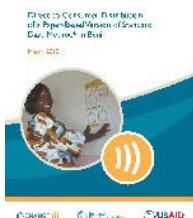
Data collected from health centers and pharmacies in the intervention (where SDM was available in hair salons and kiosks) and control areas showed an increase in requests for information about SDM/CycleBeads as well as family planning in general. CycleBeads sales from pharmacies and health centers increased in the intervention neighborhoods as compared to control neighborhoods that did not distribute the paper image.



Key Findings

- Women are able to learn how to use SDM effectively through the paper image without counseling from a health provider.
- SDM can be offered outside of the health center through non-traditional outlets such as hair salons in kiosks.
- Providing information about SDM generates demand for information about all family planning methods.
- Offering the paper image increases the sale of Cyclebeads.

Read more in the [final project report](#).



Announcements

New journal article

A new journal article titled, "The role of the Standard Days Method in

planning, the importance of informed choice, and what changes to expect with method use.

FAM Project Brief: SDM is a Modern Method



What makes a family planning method modern? This brief outlines how SDM meets important criteria to be considered a modern family planning method.

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modern family planning services in developing countries," has been published in *The European Journal of Contraception and Reproductive Health Care*. This paper describes how the introduction of SDM in developing country settings can improve the six elements of quality healthcare while contributing to the intrinsic variety of available methods. Read the abstract [here](#).

