



Long-term effects of donor support to maternal and child health service delivery improvements at sub-national level in Uganda: a qualitative study.

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Introduction

Tremendous progress was achieved in maternal and child health service delivery improvement with donor support to strengthen the health systems and respond to chronic service delivery challenges.

However, there is a dearth of information on the long-term effect of such support.

Objective

To assess the long-term impact of donor support on maternal and child health service delivery in western Uganda.

Methods

- An exploratory qualitative study was conducted between November 2021 and January 2022 in three districts in the region that received donor support.
- Interviews were conducted among a purposively selected sample of 25 health managers and providers.
- Analysis was conducted following a thematic content analysis technique

Results

- Overall, results reflected a consistent ten-year improvement in maternal and child health service delivery improvements in maternal and neonatal mortality reduction, improved uptake of antenatal care services, facility deliveries and postnatal care.
- Service delivery bottlenecks included; understaffing of critical cadres at urban health facilities such as sonographers, anaesthetic officers who upgraded but never promoted and without commensurate salary increases.
- management of Non-Communicable Diseases among pregnant women which was faced with inadequate human resources and rampant drug stock out.
- The peri-Urban health facilities' capacities were not matching population coverage hence leading to high patient load.

Conclusions

Despite improvements in service delivery, barriers still exist within the health systems which impede quality service delivery and ought to be addressed for optimal health systems performance now that donor support is dwindling by the day