THE EXTENT, CAUSES AND IMPLICATIONS OF SEASONALITY IN MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH INDICATORS: LESSONS FROM RWANDA

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KEY MESSAGE: There are strong seasonality patterns in Rwanda for births that timing of interventions, supply chain and human resource availability should take into consideration.

Background :

- Seasonality in some health indicators is a known phenomena, however, seasonality of maternal indicators and has not been investigated in detail in Rwanda.

Objective :

- **To determine the extent of seasonality of these indicators to inform policy and implementation of interventions accordingly.**

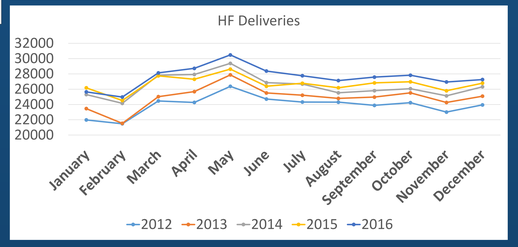
Methods :

- Data elements for key maternal and child health indicators were retrieved from the Health Management Information System by month for the past ten years.
- A comparison was made on a yearly basis.

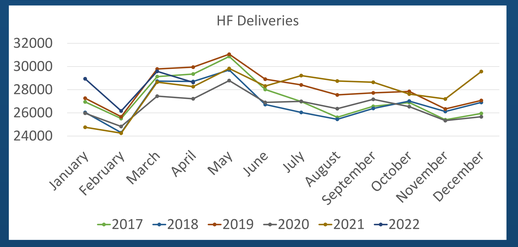
Results :

- There is strong seasonality for health deliveries, low in January and February and higher in May and June. A higher proportion of marriages are planned in July and August, which coincides with low rainfall. Other indicators follow the same trend but are not as marked.

2012-2016



2017-2022



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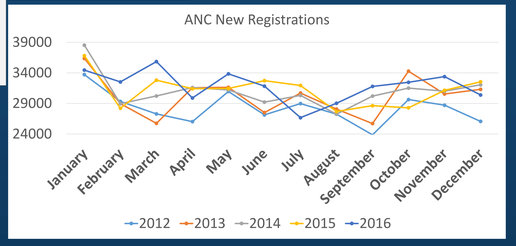

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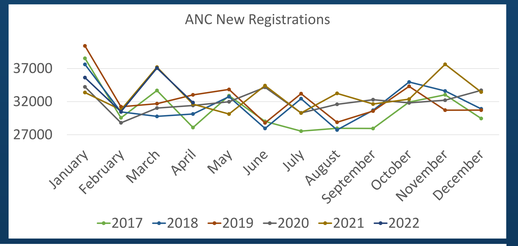

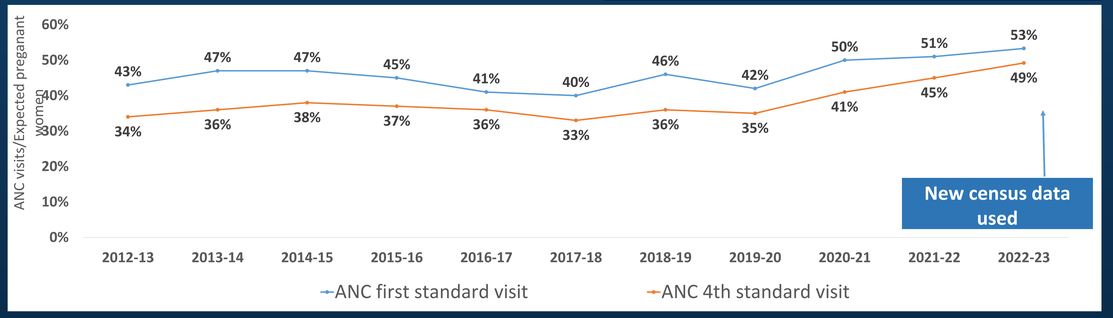

Conclusions :

The findings have implications in diverse areas;

- **Trainings and annual leave of health professionals in maternity and neonatal units should be tailored to the seasonal workload.**
- **Routine orders for medical commodities should be adjusted for periods of high and low use to avoid stockouts.**
- **The use of an outlier detection tool in the Health Management Information System should be adapted for seasonal fluctuations in caseloads for some services.**
- **Messages for ANC first visit should be given in September to November for maximum impact**

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