

Leveraging co-design and diverse perspectives for a scalable game to boost communication and shared decision making in family planning

Design Experiences in Uganda & South Sudan

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BACKGROUND

Despite advances in the availability of contraceptive methods, high unmet need for modern contraception persists, especially among postpartum women. Individual preferences, household decision-making dynamics, and social norms around conversation, family size and contraceptive use all influence unmet need. Gamification is a promising approach to influence all three of these levers. In Uganda and South Sudan, our work engages men and women through games to boost support for modern contraceptive use and empower women as active, joint decision-makers.

METHODS

In both settings, a participatory behavioral design approach shaped and strengthened the game design. Community members, health workers, and other stakeholders shared perspectives on choices about child-bearing and contraception, which informed the game's content. Locally-based staff brought an intimate understanding of the communities and robust relationships with key stakeholders at the local and national levels to bring together various perspectives.

We also user tested the game. Offering intended game participants an opportunity to interact with it in "real-world" settings and soliciting feedback allowed us to refine prototypes to match the interests, needs, and priorities of men, women, and communities. The game designs are similar, but stakeholder input led to nuanced distinctions across settings.

BEHAVIORAL DESIGN PROCESS



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SCAN ME for more information about the solutions, including downloadable materials



"Together We Decide" Game

- 1 Players gather in the community and divide into "households" and work to gain points
- 2 Players draw cards presenting choices about child spacing and contraception, resulting in losses or gains for the household
- 3 Facilitators lead a discussion about child spacing and encourage subsequent discussions



Child Spacing Method Cards teach players about different methods, link methods to positive game outcomes, and offer the option to "use" a method within the game



Quiz Cards give players the opportunity to discuss questions together, counteract misconceptions, and build confidence that players know enough to have conversations



Life Event Cards illustrate consequences of choices about childbearing and FP and model positive behaviors such as having conversations



KEY DESIGN DISTINCTIONS

UGANDA	SOUTH SUDAN
Only men play	Men and women play together
Players build wealth for families	Players build "household harmony"
Players learn and discuss through "quiz" and "life event" cards	Discussion cards added to spur conversation between partners
Consistent with MOH-approved materials and local terms	Consistent with MOH-approved materials and local terms
Game design consistent across regions	Game design is modular to allow for local adaptation

