

Self-Efficacy and Knowledge (SEEK) Trial

Improving family planning, sexual reproductive health, and wellbeing among Syrian refugee women and girls in Lebanon

This community-based randomized controlled trial (RCT) aims to evaluate a low-resource/low-intensity integrated sexual reproductive health (SRH) and wellbeing intervention package. It will be delivered in Primary Healthcare Centres (PHCs) in a rural area in Lebanon to Syrian refugee women and girls aged 15-24. The trial also includes a process and outcome evaluation.

About the research

- In Phase 1 (i.e. pre-intervention, November and December 2023), a total of 485 Syrian refugee women and girls were recruited from 2 PHCs in Lebanon and data on their baseline characteristics were collected.
- More than two-thirds (71%) of the recruited participants were under 18 years.
- In Phase 2 (i.e. intervention), participants will be randomized into experimental and control groups, after which the intervention will be launched.
- Data will again be collected during the intervention, at endline, and 3 months post intervention.



**Original picture taken at the PHC during the health days showcasing the field research team and data collectors*

Preliminary findings – Baseline characteristics

Family planning

- The majority (81%) reported being pregnant at least once; of whom 60% were under 18 and only 57% indicated that they had wanted to get pregnant then.
- 39% had at least 1 abortion or miscarriage, 8% had at least 1 still birth, and 28% failed to get pregnant despite trying.
- 30% currently use family planning methods, with the most preferred ones being IUD (30%) and pills (27%).
- Most reported discussing family planning with their husbands (71%), 57% reported that decisions were made jointly with their husbands and 28% reported that the husband had the final say in family planning decisions.

Sexual Reproductive Health

- Participants reported experiencing the following symptoms in the prior 3 months: pain during urination (58%), unfamiliar vaginal discharge (60%), itching around reproductive system (51%), foul-smelling discharge (49%) and abdominal pain (50%).
- Despite that, only 50% sought medical care with 67% citing transport challenges as the biggest barrier to seeking care.
- Knowledge of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) was overall low with only 55% reported being aware of them and how to prevent their transmission.

Stakeholder engagement

In response to knowledge gaps on service access, SRH, and FP, results will be shared with critical stakeholders, researchers, and policy makers. To date, one community validation workshop was conducted whereby these findings, among others, were presented to community stakeholders and discussions were held around their implications.

Contact / find out more

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