

# Providing FP Information and Services during Postpartum

**Ricardo Vernon**

Strengthening Family Planning  
Services through Operations Research

Washington, DC  
23-24 April 2008



# What is postpartum period?

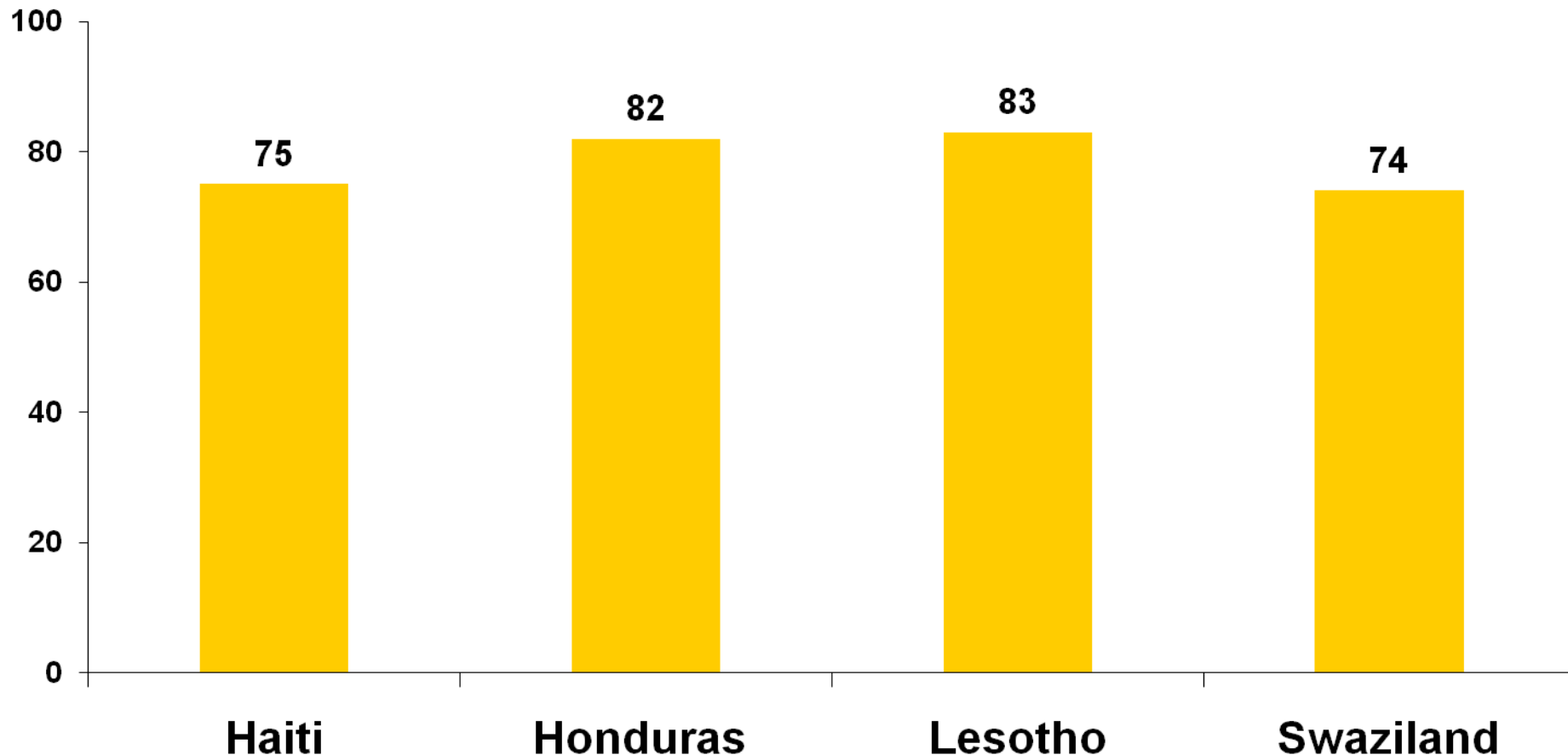
- Post-placenta: first 10-120 minutes
- Immediate postpartum: first 2-6 days
- Postpartum consultation: 40 days / six weeks
- Extended postpartum: first year after delivery

# Why postpartum contraceptive programs?

- Two-thirds of women have unmet need for contraception in the first PP year
- Up to 40% of maternal deaths could be eliminated if unplanned pregnancies were prevented
- 10% of child deaths could be avoided if all pregnancies were spaced more than 2 years
- Full breastfeeding is associated with lower infant mortality and consistent with LAM

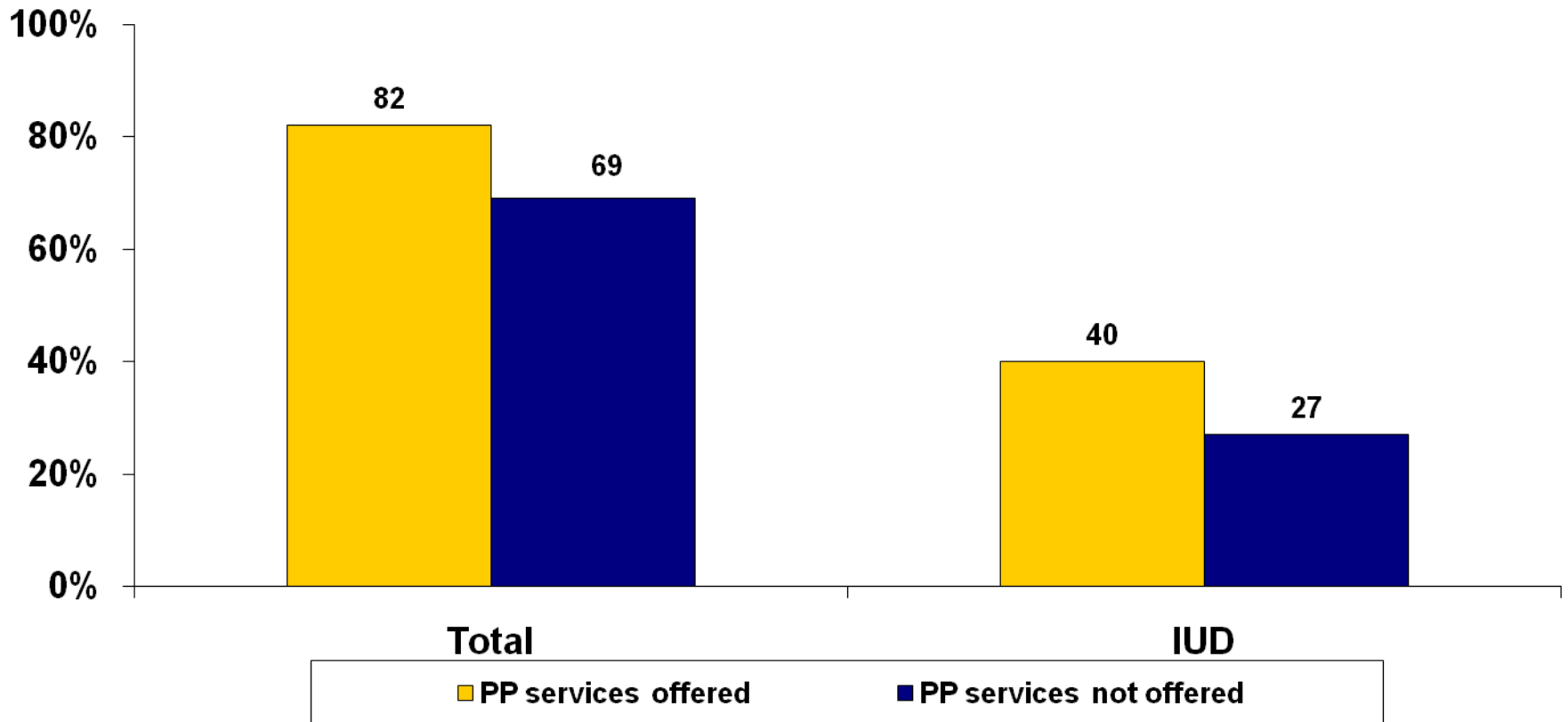
# Most women want to use a method in first year postpartum

**% Women who want to use method within first year postpartum**



# Making methods available in PP period leads to higher contraceptive prevalence

Impact of providing methods in a maternity ward on contraceptive use at 6 months in Lima, Peru



# Objectives of facility-based contraceptive postpartum programs

- To help women achieve their fertility and birth spacing goals
- To help achieve exclusive breastfeeding for up to six months and introduce complementary foods
- To help mothers protect their own and their infants' health

# Postpartum programs are organized around contact points

- Prenatal care
- Hospitals and maternities before discharge after delivery
- Visits to MCH outpatient services in first year after delivery

# FRONTIERS clinic-based postpartum services projects (15)

- **Diagnostic studies:** Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guatemala, Nicaragua
- **Home visits and referral to outpatient services:** Guatemala, Egypt and West Bank/Gaza
- **Male involvement:** India and South Africa
- **Contraception in the immediate postpartum:** Honduras
- **Integrated package (including HIV) in extended postpartum:** Lesotho, Kenya, Swaziland
- **Informed consent:** Mexico, Peru
- **LAM:** Kazakhstan

**What approaches work?**

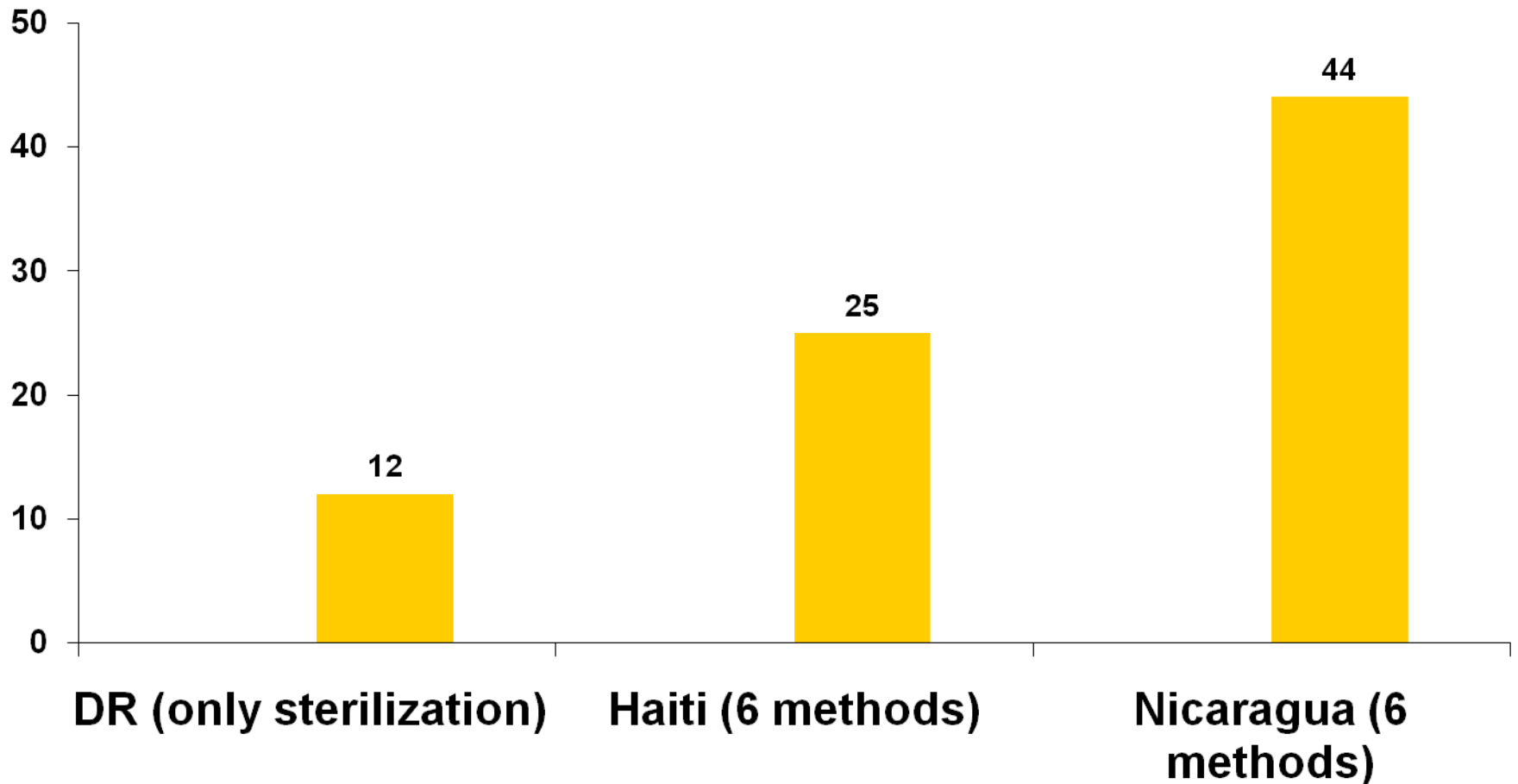
# Provide key information during pregnancy and extended postpartum

## Percentage of women receiving FP information in 5 LAC countries

- During prenatal care: ~ 50
- At the hospital: 12–70
- At outpatient clinics in first 6 months postpartum: 25–44

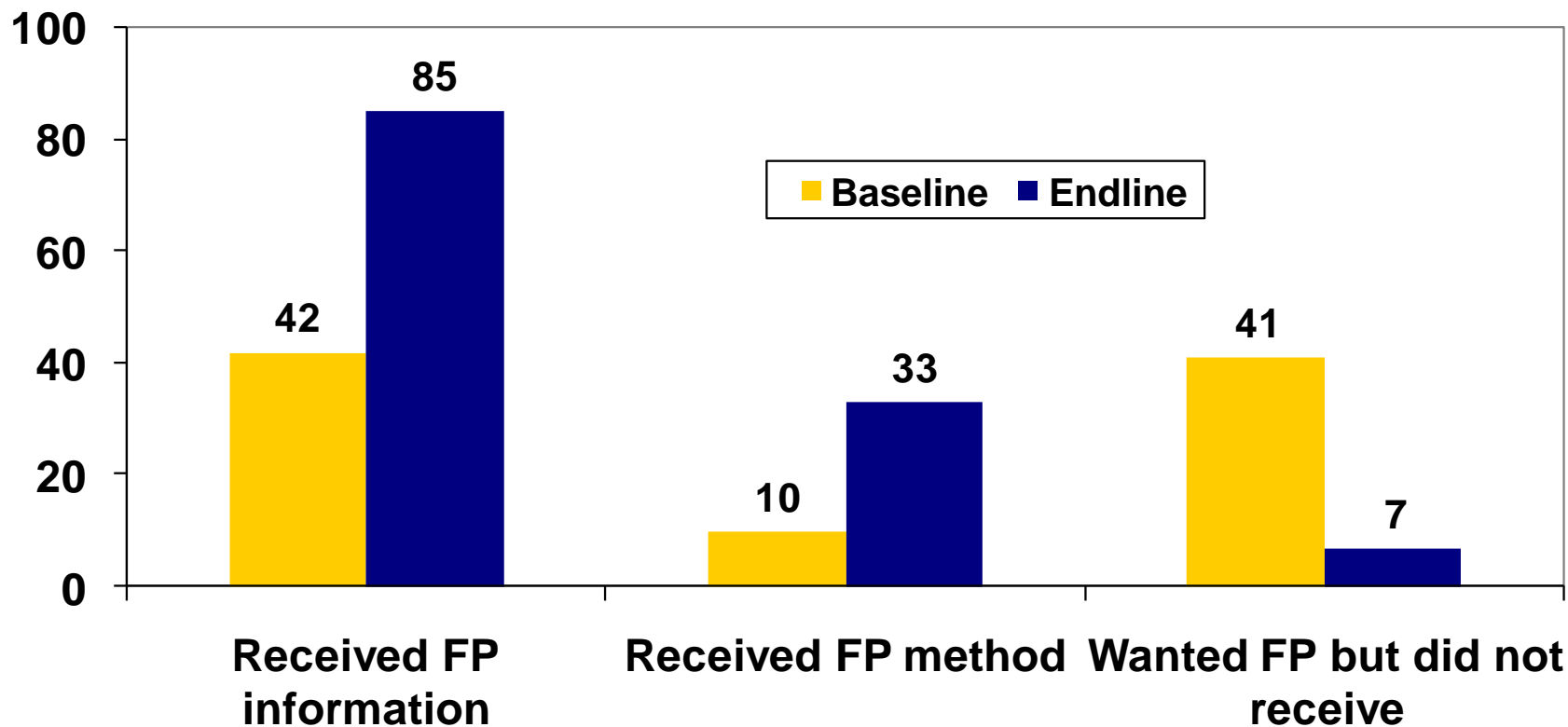
# Offer full range of contraceptive methods immediately after delivery

Percent of women adopting a method before discharge



# Monitor process and outcome indicators

Percentage of women in Honduras receiving FP information and methods, pre-and post-intervention



# Offer FP services to women attending MCH services

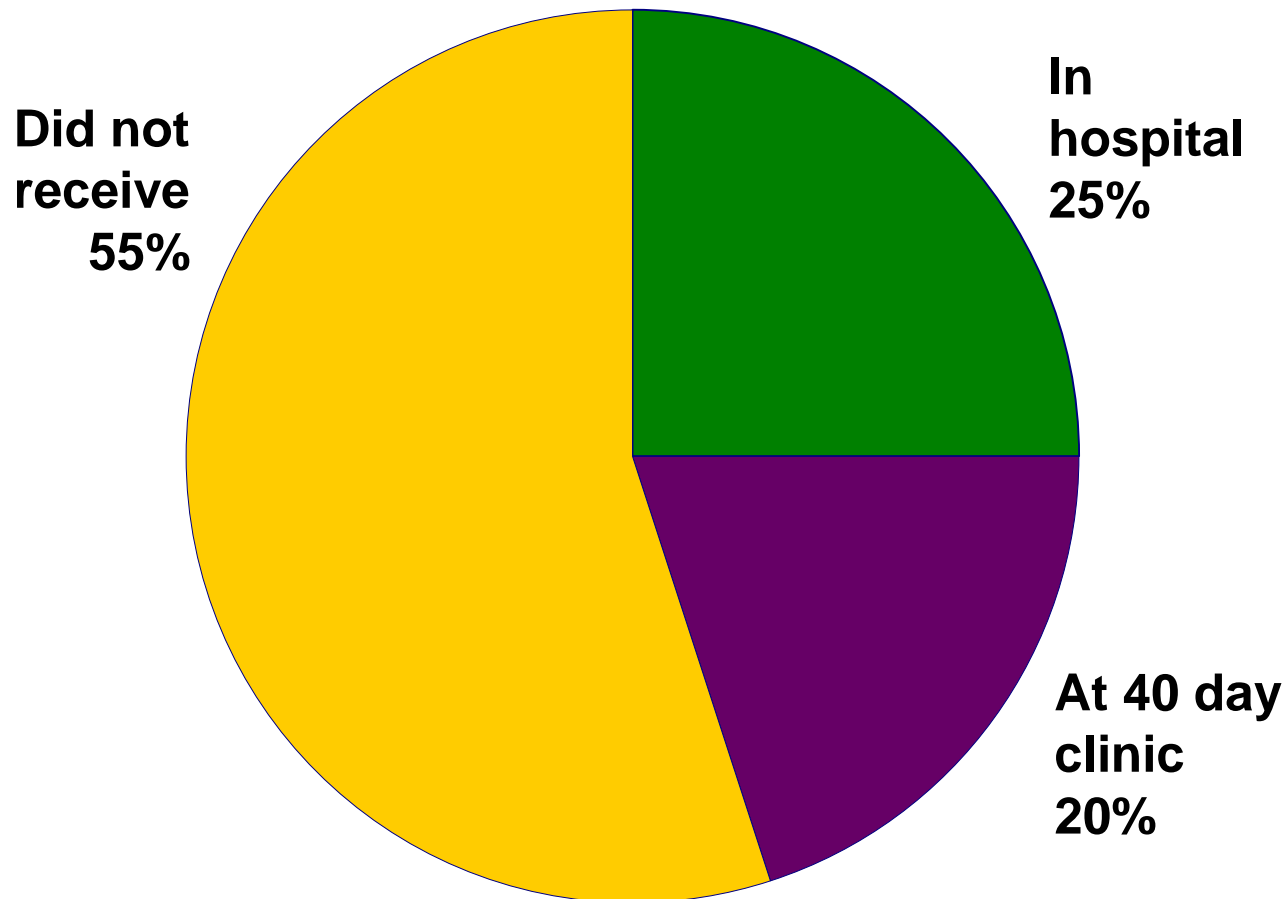
Togo: Brief FP message plus referral of mothers bringing children to immunization services

## **Results:**

- 18% increase in awareness of FP services
- 58% increase in mean number of monthly clients

# Offer services in hospital and at 40-day postpartum visit

**Honduras: percent of women who accepted a method after delivery**



# Other important considerations

# Need for more programmatic research on providing LAM

- No difference in LAM use at 6 months between women receiving or not receiving counseling (Kazakhstan)
- Few women who rely on breastfeeding to avoid pregnancy know the conditions for LAM (Jordan)
- Few providers understand links between breastfeeding, return of menses and fertility (LAC, Swaziland, Lesotho)

# Providers do not always comply with informed consent for IUD and sterilization

- Informed consent sometimes seen as a document to be signed, not read
- Process of informed consent not well understood
- Clients may not recall giving consent or signed without understanding implications

# Conclusions

- Postpartum FP has positive public health outcomes
- Women want contraception in the PP
- Postpartum FP can be given at different contacts
- Service elements that work:
  - Providing contraceptive options
  - Offering services throughout pregnancy and postpartum
  - Integrating mother and child care
  - Focusing on the best timing of visits