



Assessing the Effects of a Storytelling Initiative

Results of the Family Planning Voices Evaluation (Phase I)

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Abbreviations

DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FP2020	Family Planning 2020
FPVoices	Family Planning Voices
ICFP	International Conference on Family Planning
K4Health	Knowledge for Health Project
LARCs	long-acting reversible contraceptives
NGO	nongovernmental organization
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

Executive Summary



“Some community members were saying, “Well, modern methods are foreign. We’ve never used them.” And with this, I was able to say, “You were using this, and these were the principles behind it. It’s like you were using a typewriter before. Now there’s a computer. Which one is more efficient? The modern method is more efficient!”

Moji Odeku, Johns Hopkins Center for
Communication Programs
Nigeria

The Knowledge for Health (K4Health) Project and Family Planning 2020 (FP2020) created Family Planning Voices (FP Voices) to document and share real stories from people around the world who are passionate about family planning. FP Voices aims to document, through photography and interviews, the stories of individuals working to improve access to family planning, and to share their experiences widely. The use of stories and storytelling may provide a powerful approach to sharing tacit knowledge (or knowledge that is gained through experiences) by leveraging traditional means of communication. However, there has yet to be a systematic investigation that documents the impact of a storytelling approach in family planning.

This study therefore sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What effect did FP Voices have on workshop attendees, interviewees, interviewers, and story readers' knowledge, attitudes, practice, and ability to share information with their social networks (i.e., to diffuse information) related to family planning?
2. How can we improve FP Voices with regard to the use of narrative as a tool to share knowledge related to family planning?

Methods

This was a mixed-method study, which includes both qualitative and quantitative methods, using an online survey, in-depth interviews, workshop evaluations, and social media content analyses. Mixed methods are used to elicit different types of information from different audiences. As such, not every method was used to answer each research question. Outcomes of interest included diffusion of information, social networks (i.e. who information was shared with) use of narrative on ideational variables and behaviors, motivations for participation, community-building, and storytelling capacity. Members of the K4Health research team collected survey data, in-depth interview data, and workshop data over a three-month period in 2016. Research staff analyzed quantitative data using Microsoft Excel and STATA and analyzed qualitative data through hand-coding.

Results

Findings from the online survey (n=414), in-depth interviews (n=12), workshop participant evaluations (n=4), and social media content analysis (n=20 messages) were grouped into nine themes as shown in the table below.

Theme	Respondent	Result
Exposure	Survey respondents	The majority of respondents learned about FP Voices from a conference or meeting (61%), social media (43%), colleagues (36%), and friends (15%).
	In-depth interview informants	The majority of interviewees heard about FP Voices from conferences, colleagues, or someone else who had been interviewed.

Theme	Respondent	Result
Diffusion of family planning and storytelling information	Survey respondents	Of the 104 responses, 25% had shared an FPVoices story on social media, and 39% had spoken to someone about an FPVoices story.
	In-depth interview informants	Among in-depth interview informants who reported sharing an FPVoices story with someone else, they reported sharing stories that resonated with them, highlighted regional work, and were compelling.
	Workshop attendees	All of the workshop attendees reported having shared information they learned at the workshop with a co-worker.
Strengthening capacity to use storytelling or conduct interviews	Survey respondents	Of the 209 responses, 61% indicated that they had used storytelling since reading stories on FPVoices.
	In-depth interview informants	Several in-depth interview informants shared quotes on their views about storytelling as a method for knowledge exchange and storytelling capacity.
	Workshop attendees	After the workshop, all attendees reported feeling very confident in their ability to invite a participant for an interview, prepare questions, obtain consent, and make the interviewee feel comfortable.
Effect on knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy	Survey respondents	Exposure to FPVoices significantly ($*p<0.05$) affected family planning knowledge (reinforcing or validating what respondents already knew or providing new information), attitudes (providing information that changed respondent's views, opinions, or beliefs), and self-efficacy (giving respondents confidence in their knowledge, ability to discuss issues related to family planning, and inspiring or motivating them).
	In-depth interview informants	Several in-depth interview informants provided examples as to how FPVoices positively impacted their knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy.
Effect on knowledge application and collaboration	Survey respondents	Respondents applied knowledge gained from FPVoices stories in their work and stories from FPVoices encouraged them to collaborate with other organizations working in family planning.
	In-depth interview informants	Several interviewees indicated that their involvement with FPVoices nudged them to apply their new knowledge and increase their knowledge through learning opportunities.
	Workshop attendees	All of the workshop attendees reported having conducted an interview since participating in the workshop.
Motivation to participate	In-depth interview informants	In-depth interview informants provided both personal and professional reasons for participating in the initiative.
	Workshop attendees	Workshop attendees participated in the workshop to learn how to use storytelling to promote their organization's work and strengthen messaging related to program implementation.

Theme	Respondent	Result
Effect on strengthening the global family planning community	Survey respondents	Of the 68 responses, 37% reported that FPVoices serves as a platform or voice for dialogue and advocacy for global family planning, and 22% noted that it is a space to connect and share knowledge with others working in family planning.
Effect on story contributors and story readers	Survey respondents	Those who shared their story reported feeling more confidence or pride in their work, reinforcement that their work is important, greater commitment to their work, and a stronger connection to the global family planning community.
	In-depth interview informants	The majority of in-depth interview informants who shared their stories received positive feedback from friends, colleagues, and other organizations.
	FP2020 Facebook users	The majority of comments on stories regarding youth, benefits of family planning, and contraceptive methods were positive, provided additional perspective to the issue, and included words of agreement.
Purpose	Survey respondents	The majority of respondents believed that the purpose of FPVoices was to focus on family planning, through stories and narratives, with the hopes of inspiring others working in family planning.

In sum, results from this assessment imply that FPVoices positively impacted knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy related to family planning. It was also associated with knowledge application and increased collaboration among individuals working on family planning initiatives, in addition to helping strengthen the global family planning community. Finally, FPVoices strengthened the storytelling capacity among global family planning practitioners.

Recommendations for Phase II

As this study is the first of a two-phase evaluation, we have several recommendations for the next phase. These recommendations, which incorporate feedback from K4Health and FP2020 staff, are grouped loosely into three categories:

- **Document** the role of quality photography in the FPVoices storytelling approach.
- **Explore** how FPVoices “inspired” participants to take action related to family planning or policy, the elements of the stories that spurred participants to take action, the credibility of FPVoices, the role FPVoices plays in highlighting youth voices and youth-related issues, and the role of the in-person aspects of the initiative including the interactive photo installation.
- **Assess** the effects FPVoices has had on strengthening, developing, or growing a global family planning community, the potential for the FPVoices approach to reach other fields, and the potential for storytelling to affect advocacy.

Introduction



“Working in family planning—you know, nothing is the same for you. None of your days will be the same. None of these countries, even small communities, are the same in terms of their approach to family planning.”

Saleh Babazadeh, New Orleans, Louisiana, U.S.A.

The Knowledge for Health (K4Health) Project's mission is to improve family planning and reproductive health services in low- and middle-income countries, working to change the way family planning knowledge is accessed, shared, and used. The project serves health care professionals working in low- and middle-income countries through a knowledge management approach. K4Health envisions a world where health care professionals collaborate with and learn from each other and adapt and use family planning knowledge to improve health outcomes.

Within a knowledge management approach, two types of knowledge are critical to affect health outcomes: explicit and tacit knowledge (Kothari et al., 2012). Explicit knowledge, or knowledge that is codified (Smith, 2001), is found in technical guidelines, job aids, and textbooks, for example. While explicit family planning knowledge abounds, understanding how tacit knowledge, or knowledge that is gained through experiences (Sternberg & Horvath, 1999), affects family planning practices is less clear. K4Health and Family Planning 2020 (FP2020) created Family Planning Voices (FPVoices) to document and share real stories from people around the world who are passionate about family planning. This initiative aims to document, through photography and interviews, the stories of individuals working to improve access to family planning around the world and share their experiences widely. The project hopes to use FPVoices as a complementary approach to the widely available explicit knowledge within the realm of family planning to ensure that family planning practitioners, donors, and decision makers have the knowledge they needed to improve family planning around the world.

The use of stories and storytelling may provide a powerful approach to sharing tacit knowledge, and the use of both has been recommended as part of an overall knowledge management strategy by many scholars (see, for example, Boyce, 1995; Brown & Duguid, 2000). Stories and storytelling have the potential to spread knowledge by leveraging a traditional means of communication (Hansen & Kahnweiler, 1993; Kaye & Jacobson, 1999). Storytelling has also been documented as an approach to inspire, guide, and spark action in the business sector (Denning, 2005; Denning, 2006). Other initiatives such as Humans of New York suggest that the power of a simple image and a few carefully chosen words can influence individual knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, among other constructs (Culzac, 2014). Constructs refer to a characteristic or trait that is being evaluated. However, there has yet to be a systematic investigation that documents the impact of a storytelling approach in family planning, whereas evidence related to the use of storytelling on improving HIV/AIDS-related behaviors does exist (see, for example, Zeelen et al., 2010). In this study, we measured elements used in storytelling, such as the use of narrative on factors that affect behavior change and the use of behaviors related to sharing information.

As storytelling is grounded in social interaction and sharing, we rooted this work in our social knowledge management approach (Limaye et al., 2017). Social knowledge management incorporates human and social factors for use within a global health context and includes factors such as social capital, social learning, social software and platforms, and social networks, within a social system, and driven by social benefit.

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What effect did FPVoices have on workshop attendees, interviewees, interviewers, and story readers' knowledge, attitudes, practice, and ability to share information with their social networks (i.e., to diffuse information) related to family planning?
2. How can we improve FPVoices with regard to the use of narrative as a tool to share knowledge related to family planning?

Methods



“The work we are doing is not about dismantling, destroying families and communities. The work we want to see, the achievement we want to see, is communities where everybody understands what we are talking about and how useful it is for the development of these communities.”

Aminatou Sar, SECONAF
Senegal

Design, Participants, Recruitment, and Constructs of Interest

This was a mixed-method study using an online survey, in-depth interviews, workshop evaluations, and social media content analyses. See Table 1 for information related to participants, recruitment, and constructs of interest for each method.

Table 1. Methodology Overview

Method	Participants	Recruitment	Sample Size	Topics (Constructs of Interest)
Online survey	Story readers	Electronic mailing lists and newsletters (e.g., HIPNet and Gates Institute)	414 respondents total; number of responses differed by question	Social networks, diffusion, use of narrative on ideational variables*, and use of narrative on behaviors
In-depth interviews	Interviewees and interviewers	Online survey and purposive sampling**	12 informants	Social networks, diffusion, use of narrative on ideational variables, use of narrative on behaviors, motivation to participate, and community-building
Workshop evaluations***	Storytelling workshop attendees	n/a	1 workshop; 4 participants	Storytelling capacity
Content analyses	n/a; FP2020 Facebook posts	n/a: Examined all posts from Feb. 27, 2016 to Feb. 27, 2017	20 unique message threads	Issues related specifically to youth, benefits of family planning, and contraceptive methods****

*Ideational variables refer to constructs that are in the behavior change pathway.

**Online survey respondents were asked if they would be interested in providing additional information via an interview. Interview respondents and those familiar with FPVoices were asked if they recommended someone for an interview.

***FPVoices staff facilitated a one-day storytelling workshop among 11 participants in Kampala, Uganda, in November 2016. Four participants completed the evaluation, all of whom were from Uganda.

****Survey respondents mentioned these story topics when asked about sharing stories on social media.

Data Collection, Analysis, and Ethical Considerations

Members of the K4Health research team collected survey data, in-depth interview data, and workshop data over a three-month period in 2016. Research staff analyzed quantitative data using Microsoft Excel and STATA, using t-tests for significance. Qualitative data were analyzed through hand-coding. K4Health received ethical approval from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Institutional Review Board.

Results



“Family planning is an area where a lot of my public health work meets my experience as a health care provider, and it’s actually terrifying, some of the things we see in the community, both from providers and from patients who have had an unmet need. A lot of the work we do is to help providers and community women know their rights and how they can exercise them.”

Neha Mankani, Aahung
Pakistan

The multi-method approach elicited rich information. Results are organized by the following themes:

- Sociodemographic factors
- Exposure
- Diffusion of family planning and storytelling information
- Strengthening capacity to use storytelling
- Effect on knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy
- Effect on knowledge application and collaboration
- Motivation to participate
- Effect on strengthening the global family planning community
- Effect on story contributors
- Effect on story readers
- Purpose of FP Voices
- Feedback to improve FP Voices

Sociodemographic Factors

Survey respondents:

Topic	Description	Percentage
Affiliation	NGO	57%
	Academic or research institution	15%
	Ministry or foreign government	9%
	Other*	19%
Job function	Managers, technical advisors, or program officers	67%
	Researchers	12%
	Other**	21%
Country of origin	United States	28%
	Nigeria	13%
	Kenya	8%
	India	6%
	Indonesia	5%
	Other***	40%
Focus of work	Family planning	60%
	Maternal, newborn, and child health	15%
	HIV/AIDS	10%
Work experience (years)	1-5	35%
	6-10	22%
	11-15	14%
Age (years)	18-24	5%
	25-44	64%
	45+	31%

*The remaining respondents were associated with the private-sector medical or health organization, donor agency, or the media.

**The remaining respondents included service providers, teachers, and students.

***Respondents came from 34 countries.

In-depth interview informants: We conducted in-depth interviews with 12 participants from five countries. Interviewees were from the United States (3), Indonesia (1), Nigeria (3), Senegal (1), and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (1); interviewers were from the United States (2) and Indonesia (1).

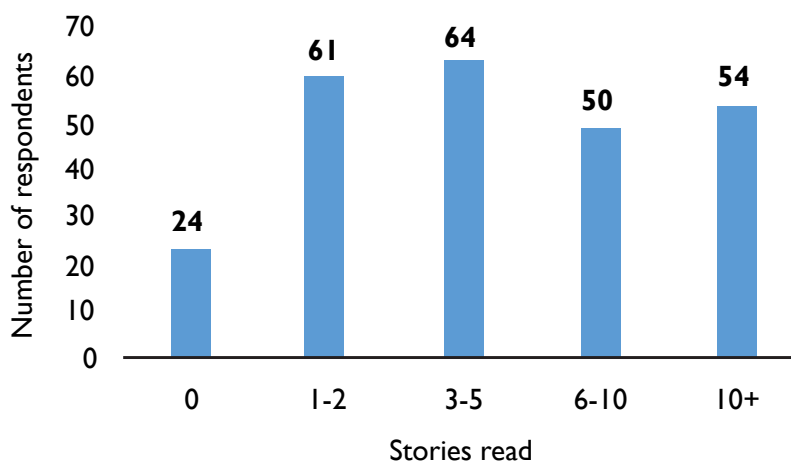
Workshop attendees: We did not ask any questions related to sociodemographic factors.

FP2020 Facebook users: We were unable to identify any sociodemographic information from Facebook users.

Exposure

Survey respondents: Survey respondents had heard about FPVoices in various ways (respondents could choose more than one answer): from a conference/meeting (61%), through social media (43%), through a colleague (36%), and through friends (15%). The majority of survey respondents that were able to recall how many stories they had read had read 3 to 5 stories, with 54 (21%) indicating they had read 10 or more stories, and 24 (9%) who had not read any stories. (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Number of stories read (n=253)



** Note: The survey targeted individuals who had read a story or had been interviewed. If they had not read a story, they were not asked subsequent survey questions.*

In-depth interview informants: The majority of interviewees had heard about FP voices from conferences, colleagues, or someone else who had been interviewed. Specifically, the International Conference on Family Planning (ICFP) and the Women Deliver conference were mentioned. All of the interviewers heard about the initiative internally through their organizations.

International Conference on Family Planning and Women Deliver Conference

Survey respondents: The number of survey respondents who attended ICFP or the Women Deliver conference in 2016 was 226 (55%), and of these, 109 (48%) visited the interactive FPVoices photo installation at ICFP or Women Deliver. Of those who visited the installation, 35 (32%) shared their photo on social media using the #FPVoices hashtag. When asked why they shared it, the majority said they shared their photo to show their commitment to family planning (68%), communicate personal experience related to family planning (26%), and highlight their country's work in family planning (6%).

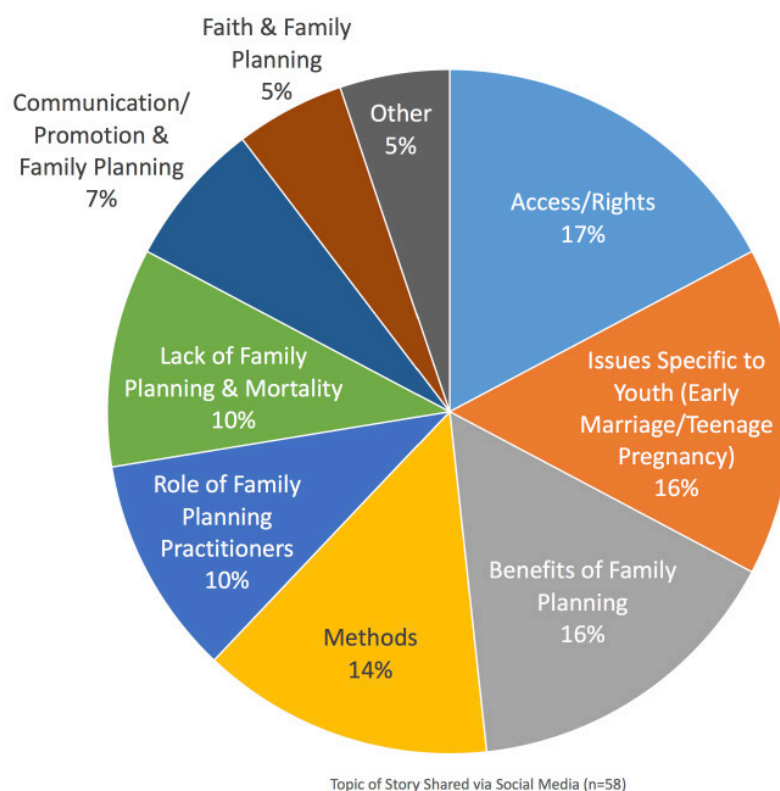
Diffusion of Family Planning and Storytelling Information

A key aspect of social knowledge management is social learning, or how individuals learn from other professionals and more experienced colleagues about how to do their work through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1986). This learning occurs through social networks. Individuals share knowledge among their networks to create organizational knowledge (Chow & Chan, 2008), and health professionals tap into their personal and professional social networks for knowledge generation, sharing, and transfer (Pereira & Soares, 2007). We explored how diffusion of FPVoices stories occurred through social media and interpersonal communication.

Social Media

Survey respondents: Of the 414 survey respondents, 104 (25%) had shared an FPVoices story on social media; most respondents shared the stories on Facebook (more than 60%), followed by Twitter (more than 40%). When asked why they shared an FPVoices story, 75 (72%) thought the content was relevant to their work, 50 (48%) enjoyed the story, and 42 (40%) thought the content was personally relevant (respondents could choose more than one answer). Of the respondents who shared an FPVoices story on social media, 58 (56%) indicated the specific family planning topic of the story they shared. Topics of shared stories varied (Figure 2), with the majority of stories focusing on the importance of access/rights and issues specific to youth, followed by the benefits of family planning, and information about specific methods. When asked why they shared a story, 43 (74%) respondents wanted to share information on family planning, 42 (72%) thought the content was relevant to their work, 28 (48%) enjoyed the story, and 23 (40%) thought it was personally relevant (respondents could choose more than one answer).

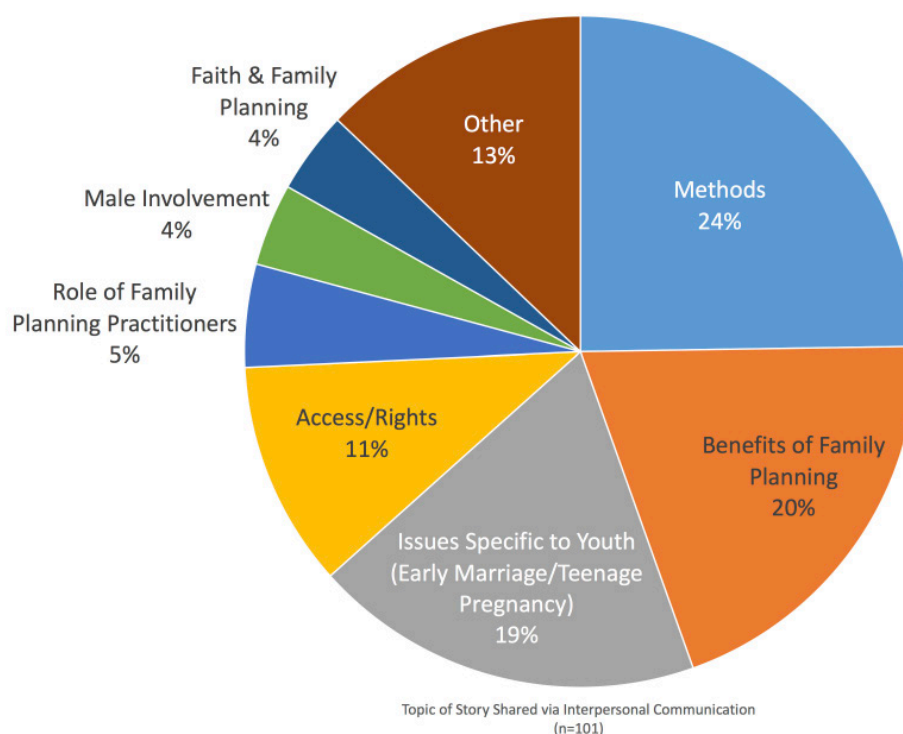
Figure 2. Topics of stories shared via social media channels (n=58)



Interpersonal Communication

Survey respondents: Of the survey respondents, 161 (39%) had spoken to someone about an FPVoices story; 142 (88%) of those had discussed a story with colleagues, 85 (53%) with friends, and 54 (34%) with family members (respondents could choose more than one answer). When asked why they discussed an FPVoices story, 121 (79%) indicated that the content was relevant to their work, while 54 (34%) enjoyed the story, and 34% thought the content was personally relevant (respondents could choose more than one answer). Of the respondents who shared an FPVoices story via interpersonal communication, a relatively large proportion of respondents, 101 (63%), were able to indicate the specific family planning topic of the story they shared, suggesting that the story was salient to them. Topics of shared stories varied (Figure 3), with the majority of stories focusing on the importance of access/rights and issues specific to youth, followed by the benefits of family planning and information about specific contraceptive methods.

Figure 3. Topics of stories shared via interpersonal communication (n=101)



Thirty-six respondents indicated that they contacted an FPVoices story contributor because they saw or heard the contributor's story on FPVoices. Of these, 18 (50%) contacted a contributor to learn more about his or her work, 17 (47%) to let the contributor know that the story impacted them, 13 (36%) to get involved with the contributor's organization, and 13 (36%) to invite the contributor to speak at an event or conference (respondents could choose more than one answer). Of those respondents who contacted a story contributor, 12 (33%) had a subsequent interaction, 8 (22%) had a conversation, and 4 (11%) invited the story contributor to an event.

In-depth interview informants: Several interviewees provided information related to sharing FPVoices stories, and three main themes emerged: the story resonated with the reader, the story highlighted country-specific work, or the story was compelling to share. Table 2 provides an illustrative quote for each of these themes.

Table 2. Reasons for sharing FP Voices stories: FP Voices interviewers and interviewees

Story resonated with the reader	<i>I've shared stories on Facebook, but I don't really tweet. I usually share stories that resonate with me. I like sharing the ones with young leaders. Sometimes they are the coolest because they are younger than me and have accomplished so much and are so well spoken. I share these stories and say, "Look at these awesome people working to make change in their own communities." It's really inspiring. —Interviewer, USA</i>
Story highlighted country-specific work	<i>I am always sharing if it is linked to our region or other members from my forum are interviewed. I am not just interested in my own. I went to the FP Voices website, and I see the other stories and if there is something linked to Francophone, I also share it. —Interviewee, Senegal</i>
Story was compelling	<i>When I was involved in the project, I was very excited about it, so I shared the stories I found compelling and interesting. —Interviewer, USA</i>

Workshop attendees: All attendees reported having shared information they learned at the workshop with others, specifically co-workers. Table 3 provides an illustrative quote.

Table 3. Reasons for sharing FP Voices stories: Workshop attendees

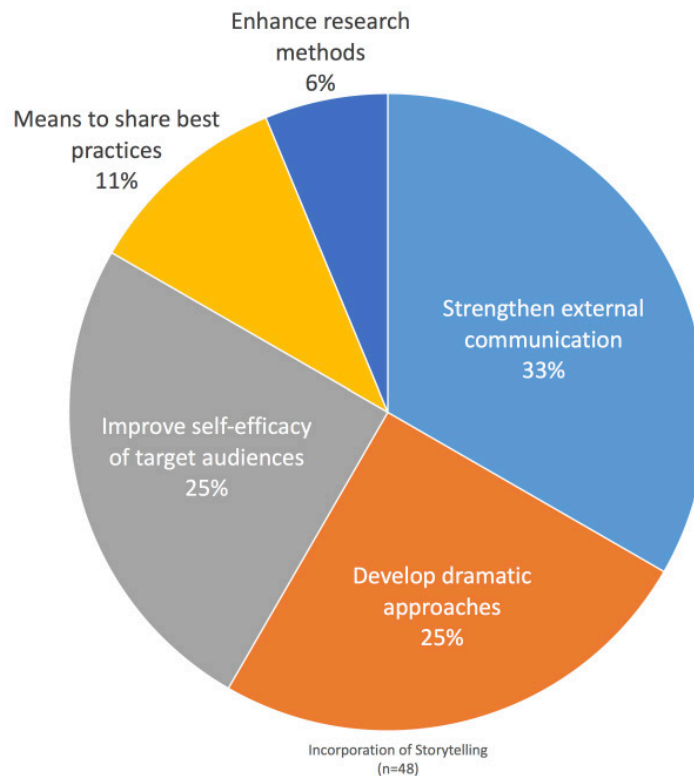
Wanted to increase storytelling capacity among co-workers	<i>I shared with my workmates who did not get an opportunity to attend the workshop, and I mainly shared on how to get a good story through interviews from a client, health worker, or anyone in a community. How to prepare for an interview, for example. Firstly I shared on how to seek permission or consent, making a choice on what is going to be talked about and to whom, making clear, simple questions that one will understand, selecting a good quiet and private environment for interviewing a person where the recording soft or hard recording will not be interrupted with. The main reason why I shared this is because everyone has a story to tell that can help others learn and probably change where need be. —Workshop attendee, Uganda</i>
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Strengthening Capacity to Use Storytelling

Strengthening capacity is a key aspect of social knowledge management work. Knowledge management interventions should use approaches that help create a nurturing environment through the creation of interpretive forums to allow for interpretation of problems and data in order to help strengthen capacity (Austin & Bartunek, 2003). We explored how FPVoices strengthened capacity in storytelling.

Survey respondents: One objective of the FPVoices initiative was to strengthen the capacity of others to use storytelling techniques within their work. The survey therefore included questions about the influence of the initiative on storytelling. Of the 209 responses, 127 (61%) had used storytelling since reading stories on FP Voices; of these, 89 (70%) used storytelling as a means to communicate knowledge and experiences, 70 (55%) shared their own knowledge and experiences through storytelling at work, and 62 (49%) had interviewed someone for work to capture their knowledge and experiences. Forty-eight participants provided details regarding how they used storytelling approaches in their work (Figure 4). The majority of these respondents incorporated storytelling techniques to strengthen external communication with a variety of stakeholders, followed by using storytelling techniques to develop dramatic approaches and improve the self-efficacy of their target audiences.

Figure 4. Incorporation of storytelling (n=48)



In-depth interview informants: Several interviewees provided information related to the initiative's impact on their views about storytelling and their capacity. Table 4 provides illustrative quotes to illuminate these themes.

Table 4: Storytelling as a knowledge management method and storytelling capacity: FP Voices interviewers and interviewees

<p>Impact on recognizing storytelling as a method for knowledge exchange</p>	<p><i>There's a huge difference between storytelling and other routes, because storytelling is more catchy. It seduces you without you being aware you are being taken.... But everyone wants to learn how a story has unfolded. In the beginning, you don't know where a story is heading. So even if you disagree with the conclusion, you would have already made it through to the end. And if you hear a story you may not agree with, it doesn't take away from the fact that you read the story and can help you reflect when you need to make a decision on the subject. It's a more engaging way to share facts. — Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>Storytelling is more interesting. It might take a little more effort to get from storytelling to the guidance since it might not always have a call to action, whereas a toolkit or fact sheet might. The story could be simply for the sake of exchange, but they can be more meaningful and stay with you a lot longer. The stickiness factor. The story stays with you because it's part of our culture. It's how humans communicate, rather than in fact sheets. You don't share fact sheets and toolkits with your friends and children. Stories is how people tend to communicate. —Interviewer, USA</i></p>
<p>Impact on storytelling capacity</p>	<p><i>It improved my interviewing skills because I learned from the interviewer... I used the new interview skills at the 4th Nigerian FP [Family Planning] conference. I was selected as a delegate sponsored by UNFPA. During the conference, I was asked to conduct an interview with government officials. With the knowledge from the FP Voices interview, I used one to two questions that were related to get their perspective on FP. I learned how to get a good narrative from the interviewee. One skill I learned was looking straight at their eyes to engage, so in my own interviews I made eye-to-eye contact. I reframed my questions so the interviewee could easily understand and respond. I made them feel comfortable around me prior and during the interview so they understand it's just a conversation but that it was on record. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>I've strengthened my active listening skills to listen and also think about probing questions. It's challenging when you're nervous. I was nervous for the first few since they were kind of big deal, and you want to make a good impression. It's important to take time to pause and ask people to explain more. "What does that really mean, or how does it really work in practice?" It's good to remember this in any conversation at work or personally. People feel heard and like you're really listening to them. —Interviewer, USA</i></p>

Workshop attendees: After attending the storytelling workshop, attendees reported feeling very confident in several storytelling capacities. All attendees invited a potential participant for an interview, prepared interview questions, obtained consent from the participant, and made the interviewee feel comfortable. Three (75%) attendees also explained how storytelling can be a tool to share information, three (75%) created a quality photo of the interviewee (75%), and two (50%) shared stories through a promotional piece. Additionally, workshop attendees expressed the value of storytelling in their work as shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Storytelling as a knowledge management method and storytelling capacity: Workshop attendees

<p>Impact on recognizing storytelling as a method for knowledge exchange</p>	<p><i>Storytelling appeals to the inner person of the beneficiary, especially if you look at the best TED talks ever done. They were in form of stories. —Workshop attendee, Uganda</i></p> <p><i>Storytelling is a unique approach that provides young people to share the opinions, perspectives, attitudes about key health-related issues affecting them. Furthermore, we use storytelling to showcase the impact of our projects within communities. —Workshop attendee, Uganda</i></p>
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Effect on Knowledge, Attitudes, and Self-Efficacy

In global health, knowledge management supports outcomes in which our primary goal is improving health. In social knowledge management, we suggest that the use of knowledge management is from a public good perspective, one in which it positively affects variables that lead to changes in ideational behaviors as well as behavior itself. We explored how FP Voices affected knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, knowledge application, and collaboration.

Survey respondents: FP Voices primarily sought to document the stories of individuals working to improve access to family planning and share their experiences; however, we also hypothesized that exposure to FP Voices stories may affect variables within the behavior change pathway, such as knowledge and attitudes, as well as self-efficacy to discuss family planning-related topics with others. We also hypothesized that exposure to stories would inspire readers. We asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement among several statements related to these variables. Results show that exposure to FP Voices stories affected knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy. Related to self-efficacy, it also inspired respondents (Table 6).

Table 6: Influence on family planning knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy: Survey respondents (n=174)

Theme	Statement	Agree	Disagree
Family planning knowledge	Reinforced/validated what I <u>already knew</u> about family planning*	93%	7%
	Provided me with family planning information that was <u>new</u> to me*	73%	27%
Family planning attitudes	Provided me with family planning information that changed my views, opinions, or beliefs*	61%	39%
Self-efficacy related to family planning	Gave me more confidence to discuss issues related to family planning*	84%	16%
	Gave me more confidence in my knowledge of family planning*	71%	29%
	Inspired and/or motivated me*	94%	6%

*p<0.05

Twenty-four respondents provided information on how FPVoices stories changed their views, opinions, or beliefs: FPVoices caused eight (33%) to self-reflect on their beliefs toward family planning, helped six (25%) view family planning as positive and no longer a sin or evil, aided three (13%) in placing family planning in context by putting a human face to it, helped three (13%) realize that family planning is a human right and that women should have autonomy over their bodies, and helped three (13%) realize that male engagement and support was important for women's health.

In-depth interview informants: Several interviewees provided information related to the initiative's impact on their personal knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy. Table 7 provides quotes to illuminate these themes.

Table 7: Effect on family planning knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy: FP Voices interviewees

Impact on knowledge	<i>After the interview, I had to go back and read about some areas of FP [family planning], because some of the questions were informative issues like LARCs [long-acting reversible contraceptives]. While being interviewed, it was mentioned, so I had to go back and read more. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i>
Impact on attitudes	<p><i>[Participating in FPVoices] was a punctual reminder of why I am committed to this work. For me, and perhaps for others in the field, our work and lives bleed together in the motivation as to why we are invested—so it impacted and refocused my commitment. It reminded me of why I do what I do for work but also where that bleeds into my values. —Interviewee, USA</i></p> <p><i>After being interviewed, I found myself more open to reading other people's interviews and perspectives. Volunteering to be interviewed has also increased my knowledge in a way, because I get to read from other stakeholders all over the FP [family planning] terrain around the world. So my personal knowledge and convictions for being a voice for women's rights in FP has also strengthened. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p>
Impact on self-efficacy	<p><i>It made me feel like my work was being recognized at the global scene. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>I felt like it was an endorsement of my perspective, because if they didn't think what I said was worthy of being shared, it might have meant my perspective is invalid. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>There's no way on earth that that woman's story in the courtroom would be gotten to the world if I didn't tell it. It was amazing that me sharing this story shed light on an issue that many cover up in Nigeria. I felt like I had actually done something. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>... I was part of a discussion panel on what we are doing with young people, so I think it has raised my own profile among FP [family planning] in the region. I'm sure it will increase my visibility more and more, and I will be invited more to talk about my work at meetings and conferences. —Interviewee, Senegal</i></p>

Effect on Knowledge Application and Collaboration

We explored how FPVoices affected knowledge application and collaboration among those exposed to the initiative.

Survey respondents: In addition to behavior change pathway variables, we were interested in understanding if and how respondents used knowledge gained from FPVoices stories and applied this knowledge to their family planning work, and whether the stories encouraged them to collaborate with others working in family planning. We asked respondents to indicate their level of agreement among several statements related to these variables. Results showed that respondents applied knowledge gained from FPVoices stories in their work and encouraged them to collaborate with other organizations working in family planning (Table 8).

Table 8: Influence on family planning knowledge, application, and collaboration: Survey respondents (n=174)

Theme	Statement	Agree	Disagree
Application to family planning work	Provided me with a new idea or way of thinking regarding family planning*	85%	15%
	Led me to focus on a new family planning topic*	68%	32%
	Encouraged me to start a new activity regarding family planning*	65%	35%
	Led me to incorporate new family planning knowledge into my work*	71%	29%
Collaboration with family planning professionals	Prompted me to talk with family planning professionals outside of my organization*	74%	26%
	Prompted me to collaborate with family planning professionals outside of my organization*	74%	26%

* $p < 0.05$

In-depth interview informants: Several interviewees indicated that their involvement with FPVoices nudged them to apply their new knowledge and increase their knowledge through learning opportunities. Table 9 provides illustrative quotes for these themes.

Table 9: Effect on learning: FP Voices interviewees

Impact on knowledge application	<p><i>It is difficult to educate young girls about FP [family planning] because the parents think that silence protects, but the encounter I had with FP Voices emboldened me to do my work.... Right after the Women Deliver conference and FP Voices interview, I got a Women Deliver grant on sexual violence in the community and to mobilize them to advocate against it. We were designing a manual for the education process. The interview prompted me to incorporate things like abusive relationships, marital rape, laws that give women opportunities to decide what happens to their bodies. Before, my focus was going to be on developing a manual on sexual violence, but I encouraged my team to incorporate stuff related to FP so the girls can have holistic knowledge. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p> <p><i>During a conference I recently attended in Chicago, they talked about LARCs [long-acting reversible contraceptives] being combined with HIV prevention drugs, and it made me remember my interview with FP Voices because I had heard about it before. It encouraged me to ask questions and do a story about it. It [the interview] guided me on how to think, or areas to talk about when doing a story or conducting a story...after I did a story about how the vaginal ring can be combined with LARCs to prevent not just HIV but unplanned pregnancy—it was published. It was based on the knowledge from my interview with FP Voices. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p>
Impact on learning	<p><i>This opportunity to share my story made me think there could be other opportunities to showcase my work, and I should be prepared and need to continue my work. It encouraged me to do more. It made me seek additional knowledge and do more so I can give more to the undergraduates I work with. I wanted to take on the challenge and read more on contraceptive services in FP. I took a few courses from the free USAID MEASURE Evaluation online courses on FP and M&E [monitoring and evaluation] for FP. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i></p>

Workshop attendees: All of the workshop attendees reported having conducted an interview since participating in the workshop, and two attendees had their stories published. Table 10 provides illustrative quotes for this theme

Table 10: Effect on learning: Workshop attendees

Impact on knowledge application	<p><i>I have conducted some interviews, and they have been with some satisfied users of family planning at [organization name]. This was to work as a marketing strategy since people believe more stories of fellow clients who look like their peers. —Workshop attendee, Uganda</i></p> <p><i>I conducted an interview with a young mother aged 16 with 4 children. She thought family planning caused cervical cancer relating to a friend who died of cervical cancer, and they thought the cause was using an IUD [intrauterine device] as a family planning method. —Workshop attendee, Uganda</i></p>
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Motivation to Participate

Because many people have chosen to participate in FPVoices in various forms, we were curious about their motivation to participate.

In-depth interview informants: Two themes emerged from the in-depth interviews: professional and personal motivations. Table 11 provides an illustrative quote for each of these themes.

Table 11: Motivation to participate: FPVoices interviewees

Professional motivations	<i>I wanted the world, those who are not from Nigeria, to hear about the challenges of girls and women when it comes to accessing modern methods. And also giving them a voice by telling their story.... I saw FPVoices as an opportunity to get stories to a wider audience and also to learn. The questions are very technical, so it's an opportunity to learn and share my stories and my work. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i> <i>We are really very happy when we know people recognize the job we are doing. That's a wonderful way to motivate staff and colleagues. —Interviewee, DRC</i> <i>When we share our experience it makes us proud. —Interviewee, Indonesia</i>
Personal motivations	<i>I think it's a wonderful tool to talk about reproductive health and our personal lives related to our work. —Interviewee, Senegal</i> <i>I had to share, because maybe it could inspire others. Others could be influenced by my story. My story is not too important, but I have to share so others can benefit. —Interviewee, Indonesia</i>

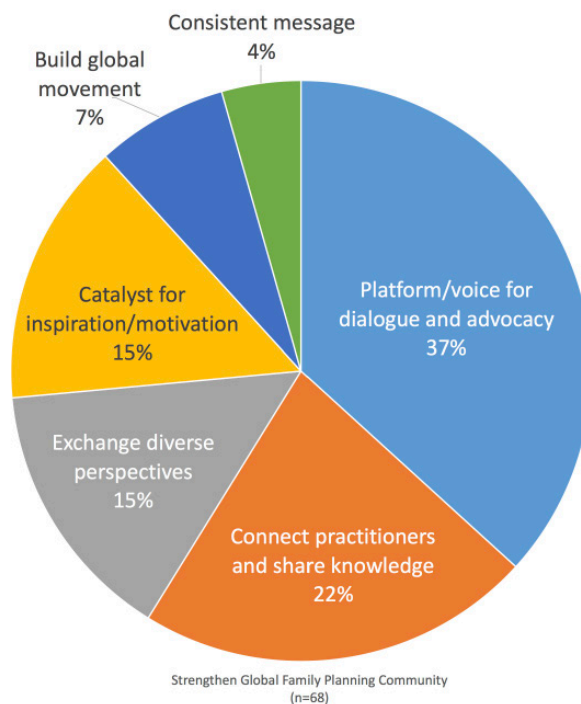
Workshop attendees: All of the workshop attendees noted that they attended the workshop to learn how to use storytelling to promote their organization's work and to strengthen messaging related to program implementation.

Effect on Strengthening the Global Family Planning Community

From a collaboration perspective, we were interested in understanding how FPVoices fostered collaboration between organizations. Although not an explicit goal, our hope was that the initiative would also strengthen the global family planning community as a whole. We examined this theme by asking respondents about the ways in which FPVoices contributed to the larger body of knowledge and exchange at the macro level.

Survey respondents: We asked respondents through an open-ended question if the initiative strengthened the global family planning community, and, if so, how. A total of 68 respondents shared details on how the initiative serves as (1) a platform or voice for dialogue and advocacy for global family planning, (2) a space to connect and share knowledge with others working in family planning, (3) an avenue where diverse perspectives on family planning are welcomed and exchanged, (4) a catalyst to inspire and motivate those working in global family planning, (5) a spark to ignite a global movement in global family planning, and (6) a channel to promote a consistent message related to global family planning (Figure 5).

Figure 5. How FP Voices strengthens the global family planning community (n=68)



Effect on Story Contributors

We were specifically interested in understanding how FPVoices affected those who contributed their story.

Survey respondents: Forty-three people reported being interviewed by FPVoices staff. Of these story contributors, 38 (88)% shared their own stories with others. Those who shared their stories reported feeling more confidence or pride in their work, reinforcement that their work is important, greater commitment to their work, and a stronger connection to the global family planning community (Table 12).

Of the 38 who shared their story with others, 31 (82%) shared it with colleagues, 27 (71%) shared it with friends, and 27 (70%) shared it with family members (respondents could choose more than one answer). The most common channel for sharing stories was Facebook (more than 55%), followed by Twitter (more than 48%). Of the 12 story contributors who provided details about the feedback they received, 11 (92%) received feedback that was positive, supportive, or encouraging, and 1 (8%) reported that a contact shared their story further.

Table 12. Influence on story contributors (n=43)

Statement	Agree	Disagree
Gave me more confidence in my work*	93%	7%
Gave me more pride in my work*	93%	7%
Reinforced that my work is important*	95%	5%
Reinforced my commitment to my work*	90%	10%
Strengthened connection to the global family planning community*	89%	11%

* $p < 0.05$

In-depth interview informants: Several interviewees provided information related to feedback they received about their stories. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive (Table 13).

Table 13: Story feedback: Comments received by FP Voices interviewees

Positive feedback	<i>121 people liked it, and 15 made comments: “We admire your work.” “You have the support of young people from DRC.” —Interviewee, Senegal</i>
Positive feedback from friends	<i>I received a lot of comments from friends. And friends who don’t live in my country and friends I haven’t spoken with for years. They were very happy with what I was doing. They said they were impressed, and I should keep it up. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i>
Positive feedback from colleagues	<i>I got some feedback from some colleagues and former colleagues. They were happy to listen to the story —Interviewee, DRC</i>
Positive feedback from organizations	<i>Someone at [organization name] contacted me and asked me if I’d be interested in applying for a grant in Nigeria to promote a drama to promote LARCs [long-acting reversible contraceptives] among adolescents. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i> <i>[Organization name] reached out to me to ask me to recommend a youth-led organization that they could work with. It was an honor to recommend. —Interviewee, Nigeria</i>

Effect on Story Readers

FP2020 Facebook users: We analyzed public Facebook comments in response to FPVoices stories on the FP2020 Facebook page regarding youth, benefits of family planning, and contraceptive methods over a one-year period (February 2016 to February 2017). It is important to note that FP2020 hides Facebook comments that are not in compliance with its community guidelines. We did not analyze these hidden comments. Overall, the majority of public comments were positive, provided additional perspectives, and included words of agreement. Table 14 provides illustrative comments regarding youth and contraceptive methods, grouped by common theme. Comments about the benefits of family planning were insufficient to identify common themes; of the few comments provided, all showed agreement with the sentiments shared in the story.

Table 14: Story feedback: Comments from FP2020 Facebook users

	Story Description	FP2020 Facebook User Comment
Comments regarding youth	A youth leader discusses the role young people play as leaders and calls for their involvement in decision-making.	<i>Exactly! Young people are the power and energy of every society and they have a crucial and vital role in changing and making better the society. —FP2020 Facebook user</i>
	A participant discusses how they approach young men in their rural community to discuss the importance of family planning with them.	<i>For these young men, sex is a means of recreation for them and their wives. They need to see family planning as a major strategy in breaking the cycle of poverty especially in Nigeria and Sub Sahara Africa. —FP2020 Facebook user</i>
Comments regarding contraceptive methods	A participant describes the importance of vasectomy and how they approach men to promote the method.	<i>Vasectomy is very easy to operate, in this operation there is no cut, no stitch, and no need of rest except few precautions. —FP2020 Facebook user</i>
	A participant explains the importance of counseling new users on their preferred method and encouraging male involvement to decrease discontinued use.	<i>U are right we family planning providers should give sufficient counseling to new acceptors before given them any FP methods. —FP2020 Facebook user</i>

Purpose of FP Voices

We sought to elicit feedback from survey respondents about the purpose of FP Voices.

Survey respondents: The majority of respondents believed that the purpose of FP Voices was to focus on family planning, through stories and narratives, with the hope of inspiring others working in family planning. We developed a word cloud from the qualitative responses we received, to illustrate the diversity of responses (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Purpose of FP Voices: Word Cloud



Feedback to Improve FP Voices

We are always interested in understanding how FP Voices can improve. Approximately 114 survey respondents provided ideas on how to improve FP Voices, suggesting preferred formats, ideas for story contributors, ways to increase interaction, ideas for dissemination and diffusion of stories, and evaluation of how stories affect family planning outcomes. Several interviewees also provided ideas for improvement (Table 15).

Table 15: Feedback to improve FP Voices

Preferred formats	<p>Adapt stories into short videos or other multimedia.</p> <p>Adapt stories into materials for use in low- or no-connectivity settings.</p> <p>Translate stories into local language.</p> <p>Add an anonymous “sharing” option for storytellers who do not want their name associated with their story.</p>
Story contributors	<p>Profile clients impacted by family planning (including more profiles from individuals from Francophone countries).</p> <p>Profile community members affected by family planning.</p> <p>Profile youth and their unique family planning needs.</p> <p>Profile local grassroots organizations.</p> <p>Profile more high-level individuals.</p>
Social interaction	<p>Increase interaction between stories posted and comments.</p> <p>Increase interaction between story contributor and readers.</p>
Dissemination and diffusion	<p>Link stories to high-impact practices (HIPs).</p> <p>Link stories to Springboard.</p> <p>Promote stories to those outside of the global health community.</p> <p>Compile a book of stories.</p>
Evaluation	<p>Evaluate how stories and storytelling affect family planning outcomes.</p>

Recommendations



“I call upon all the rest of the people—donors, people in different areas, the media—to spread the message that there are young people, there are women somewhere, there are men somewhere who would like to get a family planning method, but because of one reason or another, they are unable to get their need met.”

George Barigye, PATH
Uganda

As this study was conducted as the first phase of a multiphase assessment, we have identified several topics we would like to explore in the next phase. These topics, which incorporate feedback from K4Health and FP2020 staff, are grouped loosely into three categories:

Document:

- The role and importance of quality photography in storytelling (e.g., creating a directory of the global family planning community, giving youth a professional footing)

Explore:

- How FP Voices inspired participants to take action (e.g., related to their work in family planning or policy)
- Specific story elements that spur action
- The role of credibility of FP Voices stories in affecting behavior change pathway variables
- The role of FP Voices in highlighting youth voices and youth-related issues
- The role of in-person aspects of the initiative (e.g., participating in the photo installation)

Assess:

- The effect, if any, that FP Voices had on strengthening, developing, or growing a global family planning community and how such a community was strengthened, developed, or built
- What specific element or elements of FP Voices spurred individuals to make connections with other professionals
- The potential reach of FP Voices to other fields, such as population, health, and environment, for example
- The potential for FP Voices and other storytelling initiatives to affect country-level advocacy, advocacy more broadly, and subsequent policy

Limitations

Social desirability bias and recall bias are likely, as is response bias. We had a low response rate from workshop attendees specifically, as only 4 of 11 attendees responded.

Conclusions

FP Voices positively affected knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy, knowledge application, and collaboration. In addition to this impressive list of constructs, study participants indicated that FP Voices helped strengthen the global family planning community and inspired or motivated many people to take action.

The use of narratives in affecting behavior change has been widely studied within the disciplines of communication; however, previous studies have focused on likeability and resonance measures. Our study is one of the first to measure the effect of a narrative on ideational variables such as knowledge, attitudes, and self-efficacy, as well as behaviors, and we are inspired by the results. FP Voices has clearly filled a gap in the global family planning community, and we hope to continue assessing its influence in future phases.

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