

A photograph of a dirt road in a rural village. Several people are riding bicycles along the road. The scene is set against a backdrop of trees and a clear sky, suggesting a warm, sunny day. The image is slightly faded to allow the text to be read clearly.

EXPANDING YOUTH ACCESS TO
RH SUPPLIES THROUGH INNOVATIONS –
PHARMACY ASSISTANTS MENTORSHIP
PROGRAM IN MALAWI

MATTHEW ZIBA AND ERIN LARSEN-COOPER

FEBRUARY 12, 2018

Outline

- VillageReach Overview
- Supply Chain Challenges in Malawi
- Theory of Change – Pharmacy Mentorship Program
- Objectives
- Timeline of Activities
- Summary of Outcomes
- Youth Friendly Pharmacy Services
- Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Challenges for youth trying to accessing RH supplies in Malawi

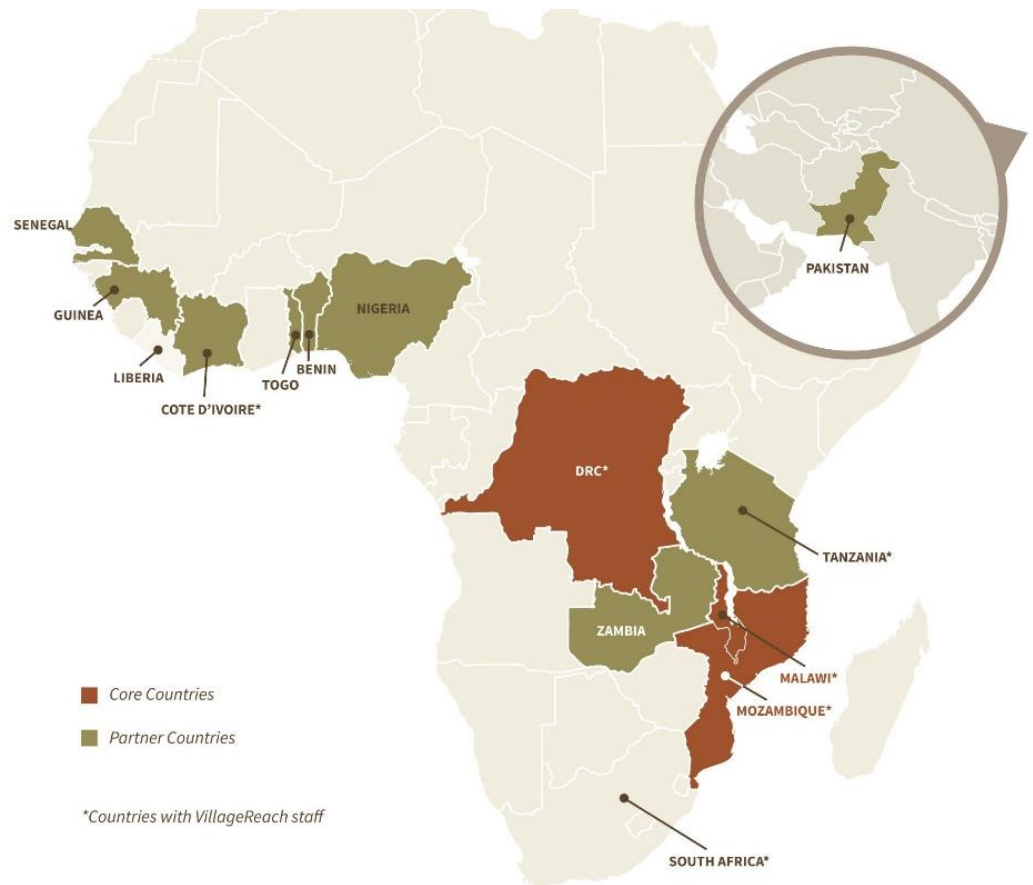
- Acute shortages of trained human resources for health (supply chain)
- Unreliable LMIS reports due to poor data management leading to
 - Stockouts
 - Overstocks
- Poor stock management leading to wastage
- Barriers to provision of youth-friendly services
 - Youth face stigma to access RH services
 - Lack of information on RH services among the youth

VillageReach Overview

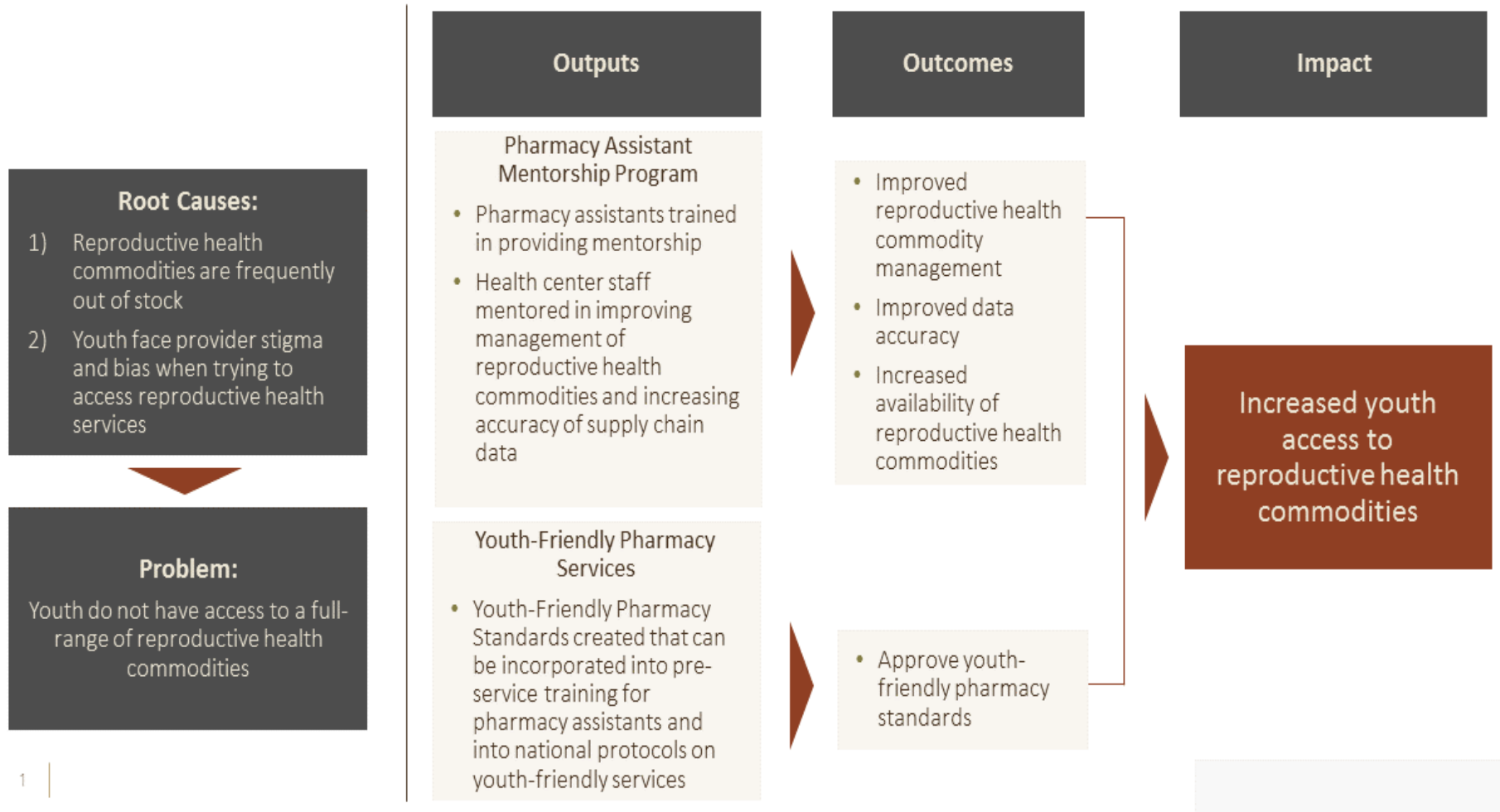
MISSION

Save lives and improve health by increasing access to quality healthcare for the most underserved communities- **Starting at the Last Mile.**

- We collaborate across a global team of employees and partners
- Currently 170+ employees, 70% based in sub-Saharan Africa
- Last mile expertise:
 - Supply chain & logistics
 - Health workforce development
 - Digital health technologies
 - Data analytics



Theory of Change



Pharmacy Assistants Mentorship Program: Objectives



- Address challenges of staff shortage in human resources for health
- Address issues of avoidable stock outs reproductive health commodities
- Minimize wastage of RH commodities
- Provide training to PAs on Youth Friendly Pharmacy Services
- Make recommendation to the Ministry of Health on Youth Friendly Pharmacy Services

Timeline

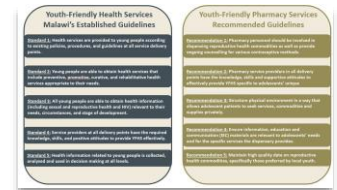
Jan '17 to Jul '17

Trained pharmacy assistants in mentorship program; 12 health centers received supply chain mentoring



Feb '17 to Mar '17

Conducted assessment on barriers to youth access of RH supplies



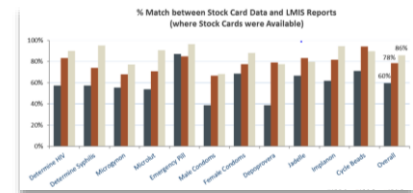
July '17

Conducted youth-friendly training with pharmacy assistants



July '17

Report and recommendations



Pharmacy Assistant Mentorship



Pharmacy Assistant Mentorship

Pharmacy assistants were trained to provide mentorship to health workers at health centers with no trained pharmacy personnel. Mentorship focused on:



Needs assessment and goals setting



Information management and reporting

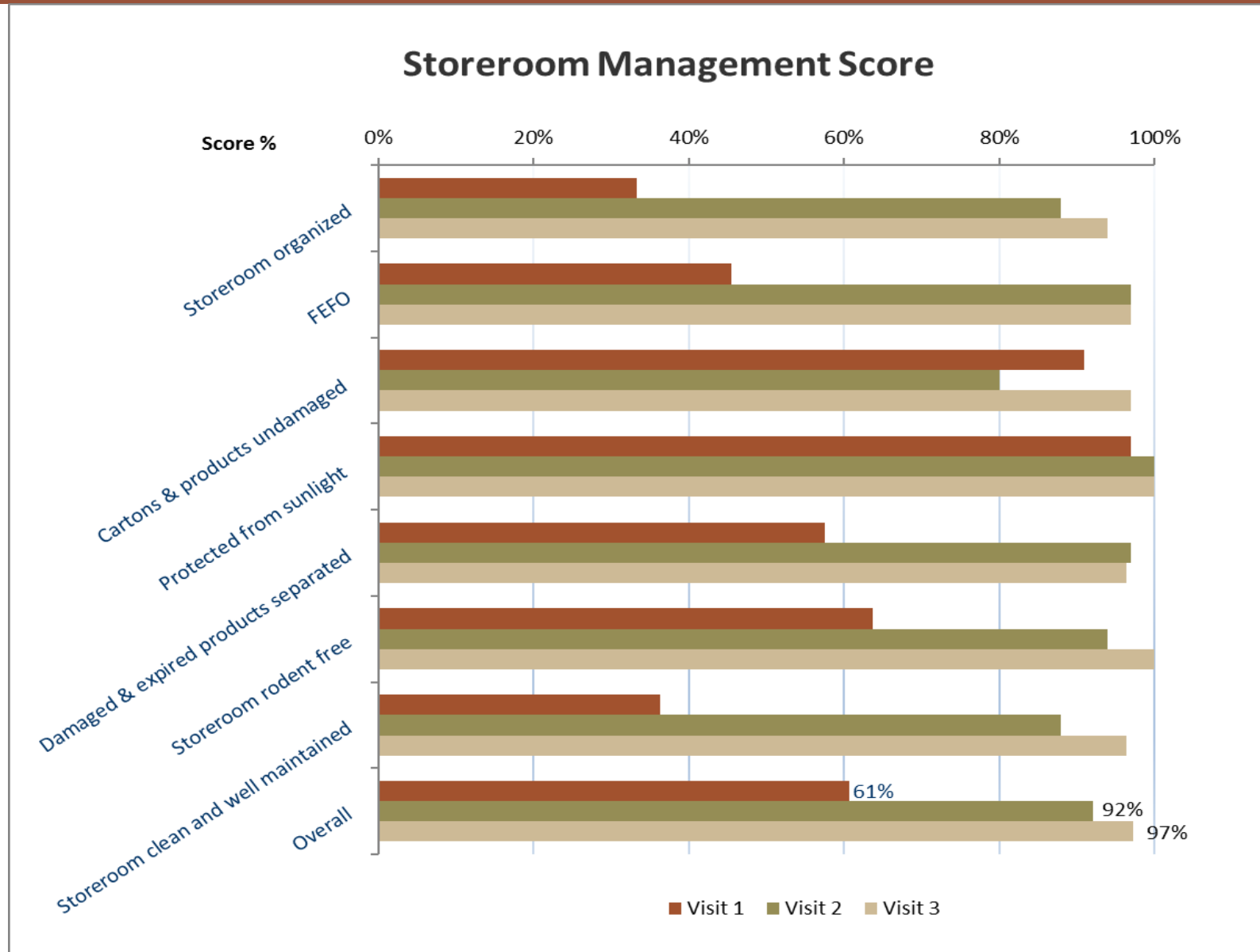


Ordering and receiving commodities



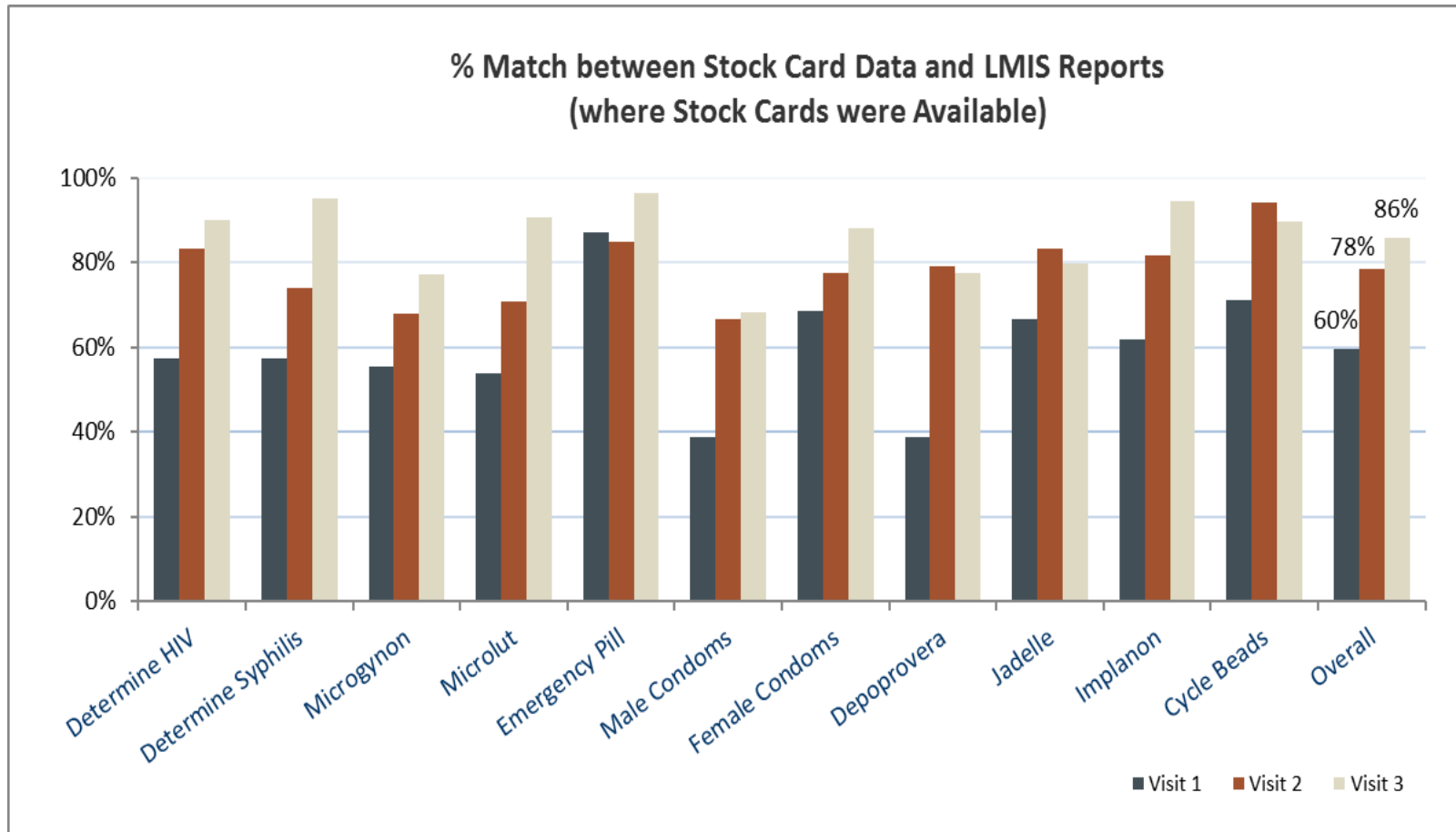
Storeroom management

Mentees showed improved commodity management skills and behavior change over time.



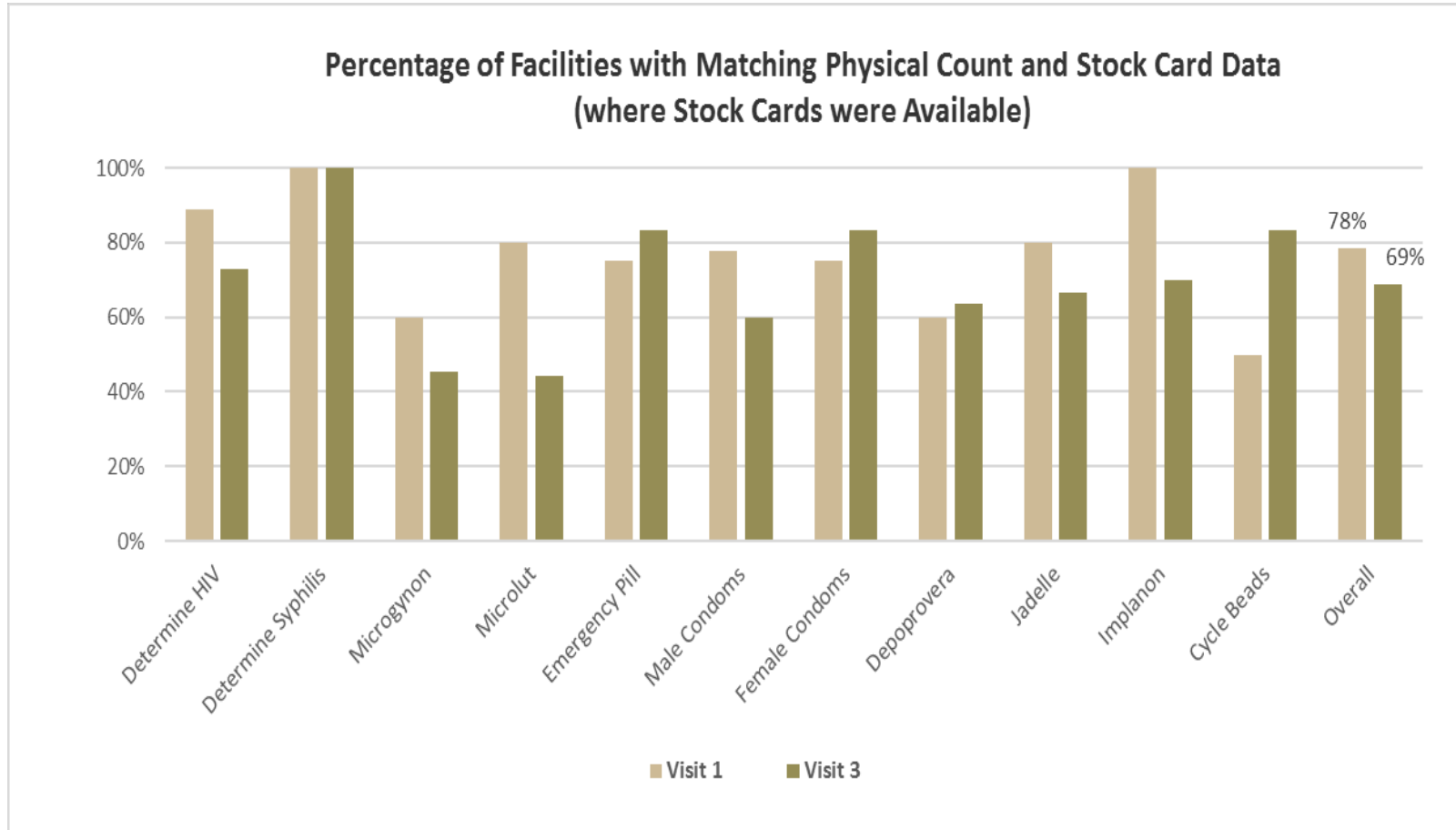
Mentees showed somewhat mixed results in information management.

Data accuracy on LMIS report increased.



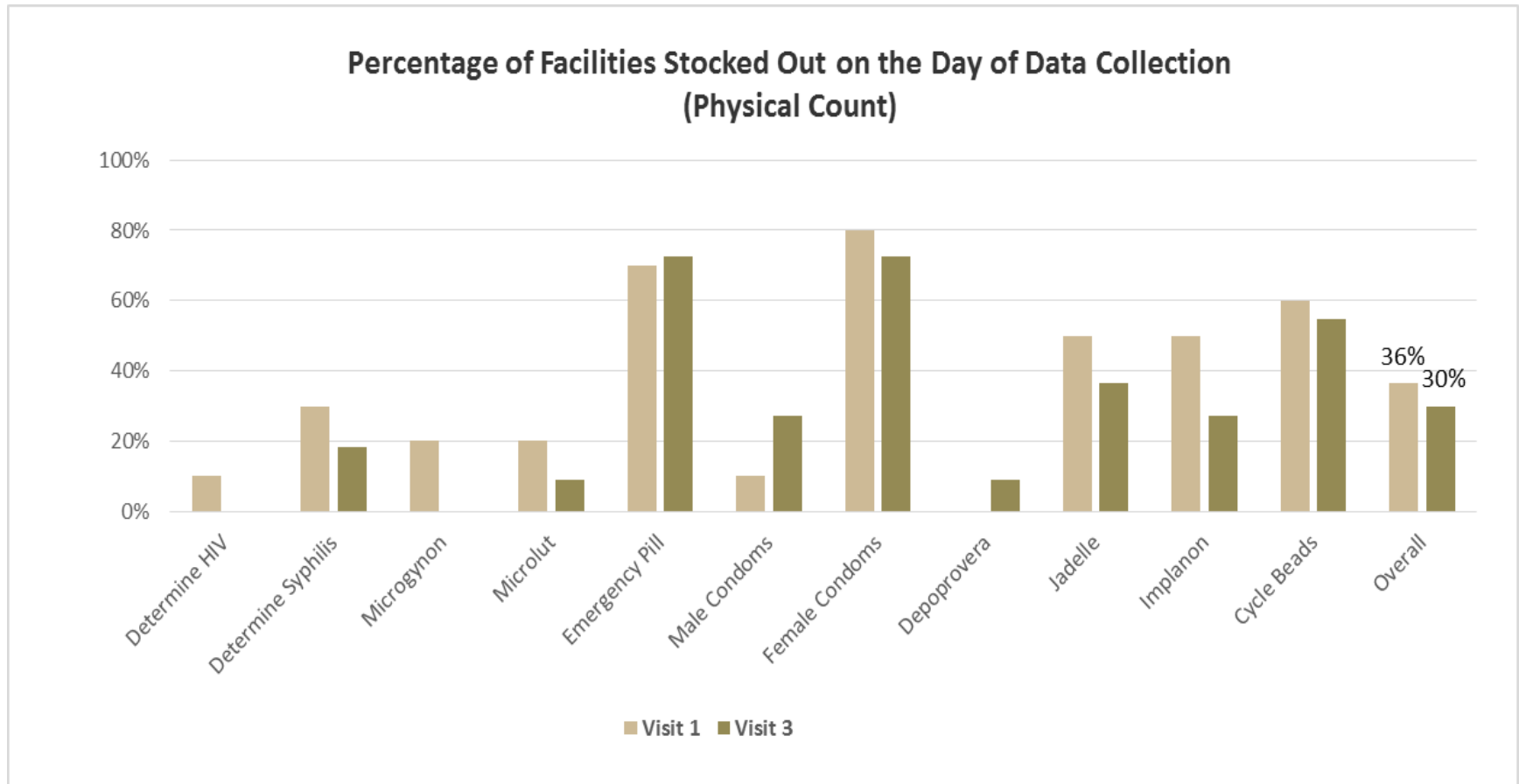
Mentees showed somewhat mixed results in information management.

However, accuracy of data reported on stockcards did not.



The pharmacy mentorship program did not have an impact on commodity availability.

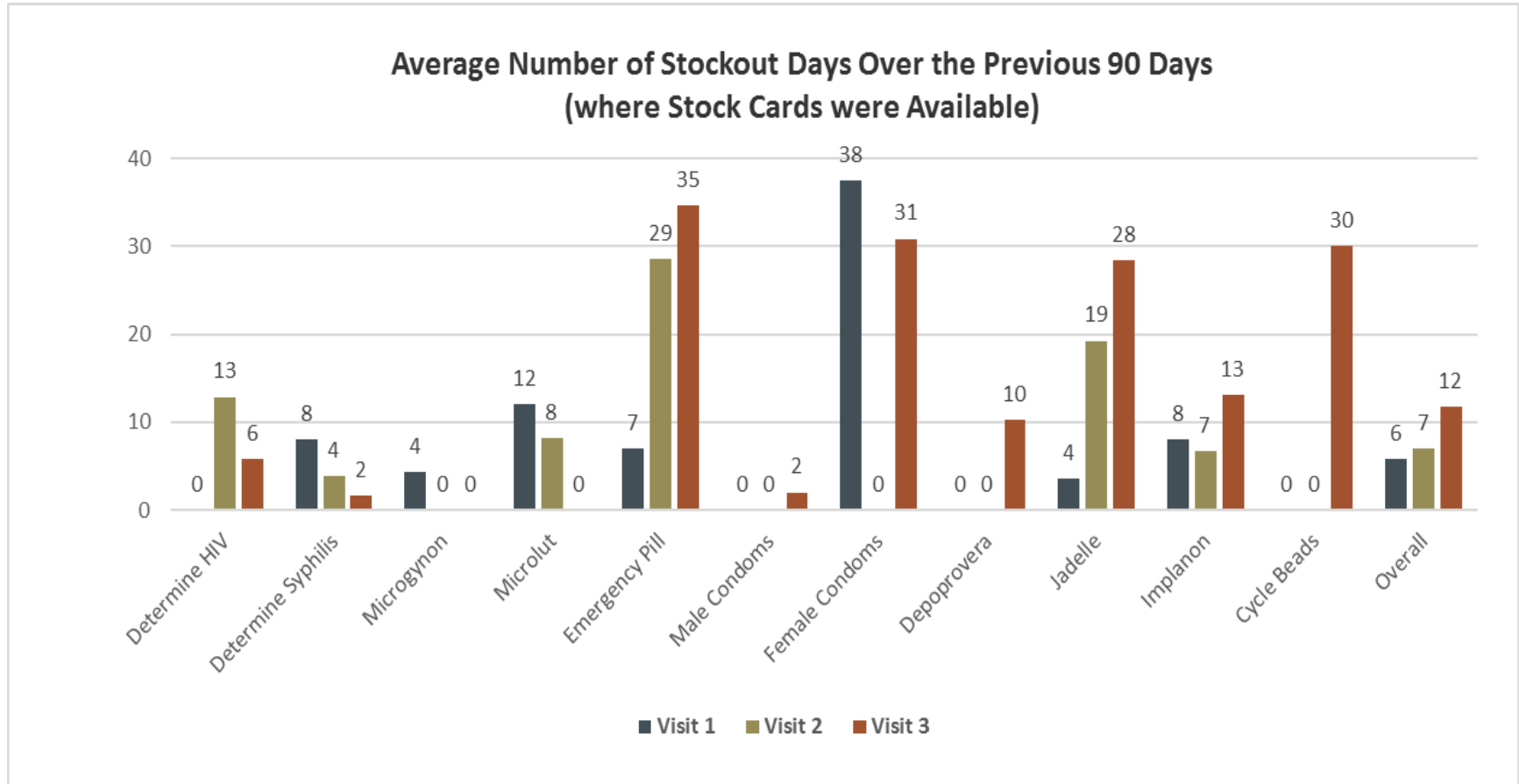
While health workers cannot fully control the availability of commodities, they can help minimize avoidable stockouts through better commodity and information management.



We did observe a slight reduction of stockouts on the day of visit.

The pharmacy mentorship program did not have an impact on commodity availability.

While health workers cannot fully control the availability of commodities, they can help minimize avoidable stockouts through better commodity and information management.



We did not, however, see improved availability of commodities when considering the last 90 days of supply.

Youth Friendly Pharmacy Services



Barriers to Youth Friendly Pharmacy Services

– Health Provider Attitudes

- Some health workers are hesitant to share sexual and reproductive health information with patients who are unmarried or under 18.
- Some health workers adjust their choice of commodity based on age (e.g. give pills to married women but condoms to younger women)

– Infrastructure & Program Scheduling

- Very few facilities had youth-specific service areas or private areas to receive counseling and commodities
- Most contraceptives are dispensed by nurses or community health workers during family planning days; youth are hesitant to attend for confidentiality reasons

– Informational Resources

- Facilities lack information, education and communication (IEC) materials that youth can view discreetly without talking directly to a provider

– Commodity Availability

- Youth's preferred method is not always available

Recommendations

Youth-Friendly Pharmacy Services Recommended Guidelines

Recommendation 1: Pharmacy personnel should be involved in dispensing reproductive health commodities as well as provide ongoing counselling for various contraceptive methods.

Recommendation 2: Pharmacy service providers in all delivery points have the knowledge, skills and supportive attitudes to effectively provide YFHS specific to adolescents' unique developmental needs.

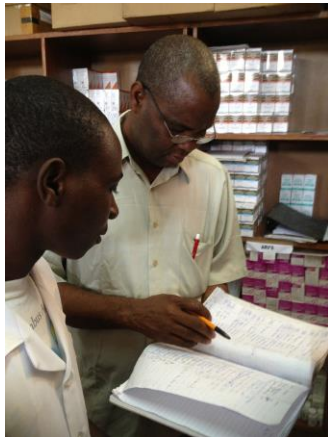
Recommendation 3: Structure physical environment in a way that allows adolescent patients to seek services, commodities and supplies privately.

Recommendation 4: Ensure information, education and communication (IEC) materials are relevant to adolescents' needs and for the specific services the dispensary provides.

Recommendation 5: Maintain high quality data on reproductive health commodities, specifically those preferred by local youth.

RHSC funds served as catalyst for future work:

- Since the RHSC grant ended, the pharmacy assistant mentorship program has been scaled up to 5 districts. We expect the program to be rolled out to 16 districts by the end of next year.
- We anticipate that a component on youth-friendly pharmacy services will be added to the pharmacy assistant curriculum when it is reviewed next year.
- Similarly, we hope the youth-friendly pharmacy services recommendations will be adopted into the national youth-friendly guidelines next time the recommendations are formally reviewed.





Zikomo!

MATHEW ZIBA

MATTHEW.ZIBA@VILLAGEREACH.ORG

PROGRAM MANAGER, SUPPLY CHAIN

WWW.VILLAGEREACH.ORG