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FIRST PERSON

From Personal Gains to Advocate

A family in Compostela Valley turns into a family health advocate



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The happy family of Dan and Analy Casie

“... Because of our decision to space births, we can make ends meet even with the meager resources that we have.”

— Dan and Analy Casie,
Compostela Valley

Many young couples in Maragusan, a municipality in the province of Compostela Valley in the Philippines had limited opportunities to learn about different family planning options available to them. As a response, USAID, through its Health Promotion and Communication project, provided technical assistance to the Compostela Valley local government by training health service providers and volunteers how to communicate and counsel couples effectively in voluntary family planning and to conduct health classes. One of the young couples benefiting from this training was Dan and Analy Casie. The Casie family took advantage of the new family health services offered by the municipality.

Supported by her husband, Analy completed all the required antenatal check-ups, gave birth in a health center to a healthy daughter, and practiced exclusive breastfeeding. The Casie family decided to wait a few more years before their next child. They met with the local midwife and together made the decision to have Analy use injectables – an effective temporary family planning method – to space their next child.

Experiencing firsthand the advantages of caring for the health of his family and spacing their children, Dan has become an advocate and spokesperson of male involvement in family health in his community. He now works closely with the Municipal Health Office to reach more families with family planning and safe motherhood messages. In recognition of his endeavors to share the responsibility of ensuring his wife’s safer pregnancy and planning their family, Dan was awarded *Most Responsible Father* during a municipal-level Safe Motherhood health event.

As Dan and Analy ensure that their daughter gets the care and love she needs, they have become enthusiastic family health advocates, encouraging other couples in their community to prepare a birth plan, complete prenatal and postnatal care, bring their children to the health center for timely immunizations, and use family planning to space births.