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Addressing unmet need for postpartum family planning

# Influence of postpartum behaviors on birth intervals in 17 countries

**Bill Winfrey and Maria Borda**  
**May 2010**

**Jhpiego** in partnership with Save the Children, Futures, The Academy for Educational Development, The American College of Nurse-Midwives and IMA World Health



# Presentation objectives

- **Show the potential opportunity for LAM expansion**
- **Present challenges associated with translating breastfeeding into LAM use**



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# Background

- **Purpose of initial request**
  - Family planning use among postpartum women
  - Country-specific profiles
- **Synthesis of 17 countries**
  - Common themes
  - Re-analysis of past work



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# Data

- **Demographic and Health Surveys**
- **Dates ranged from 2003 to 2007**
- **Sample size**
  - Postpartum women through the first year
  - Number of women varied greatly from country to country

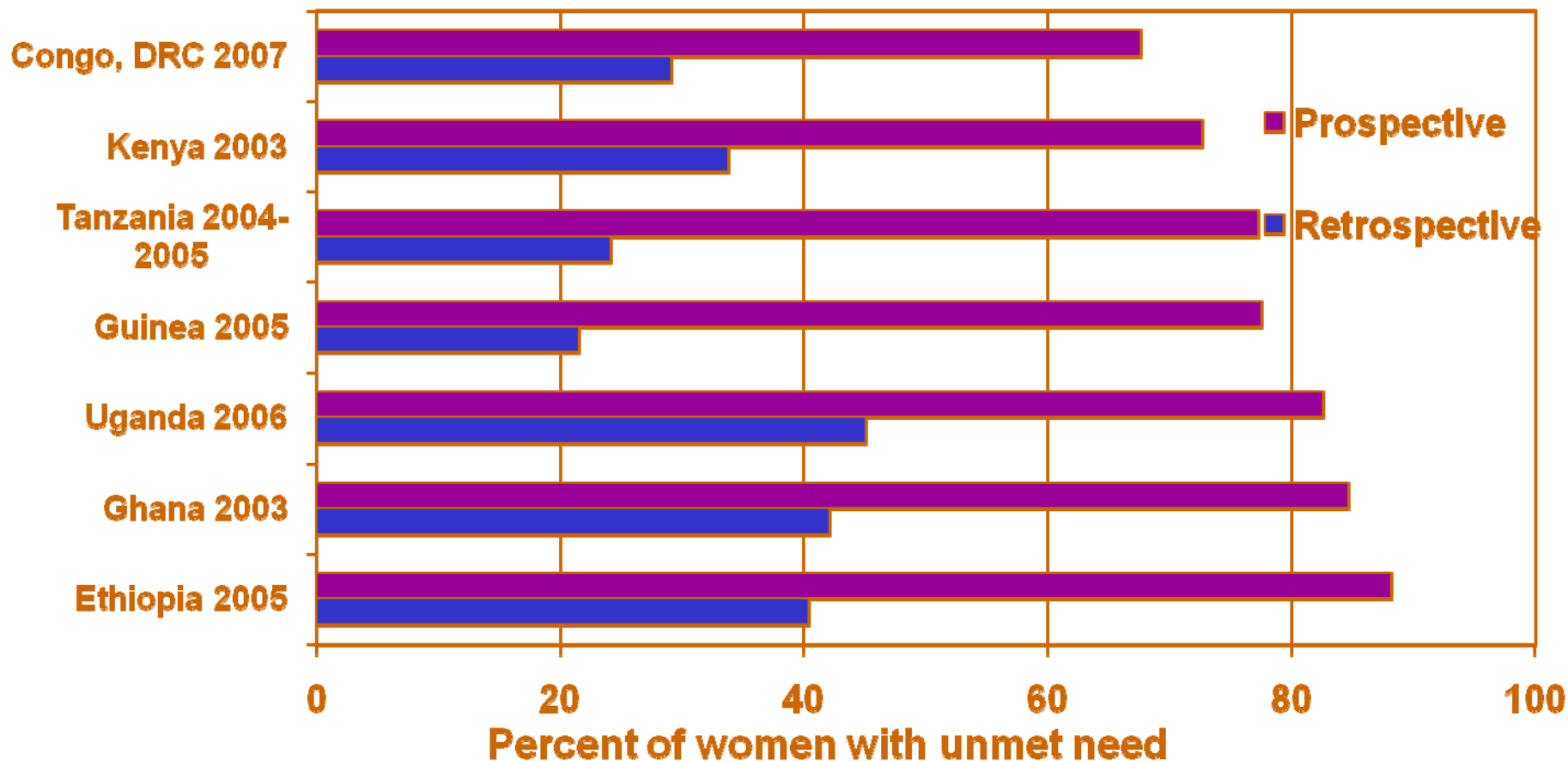


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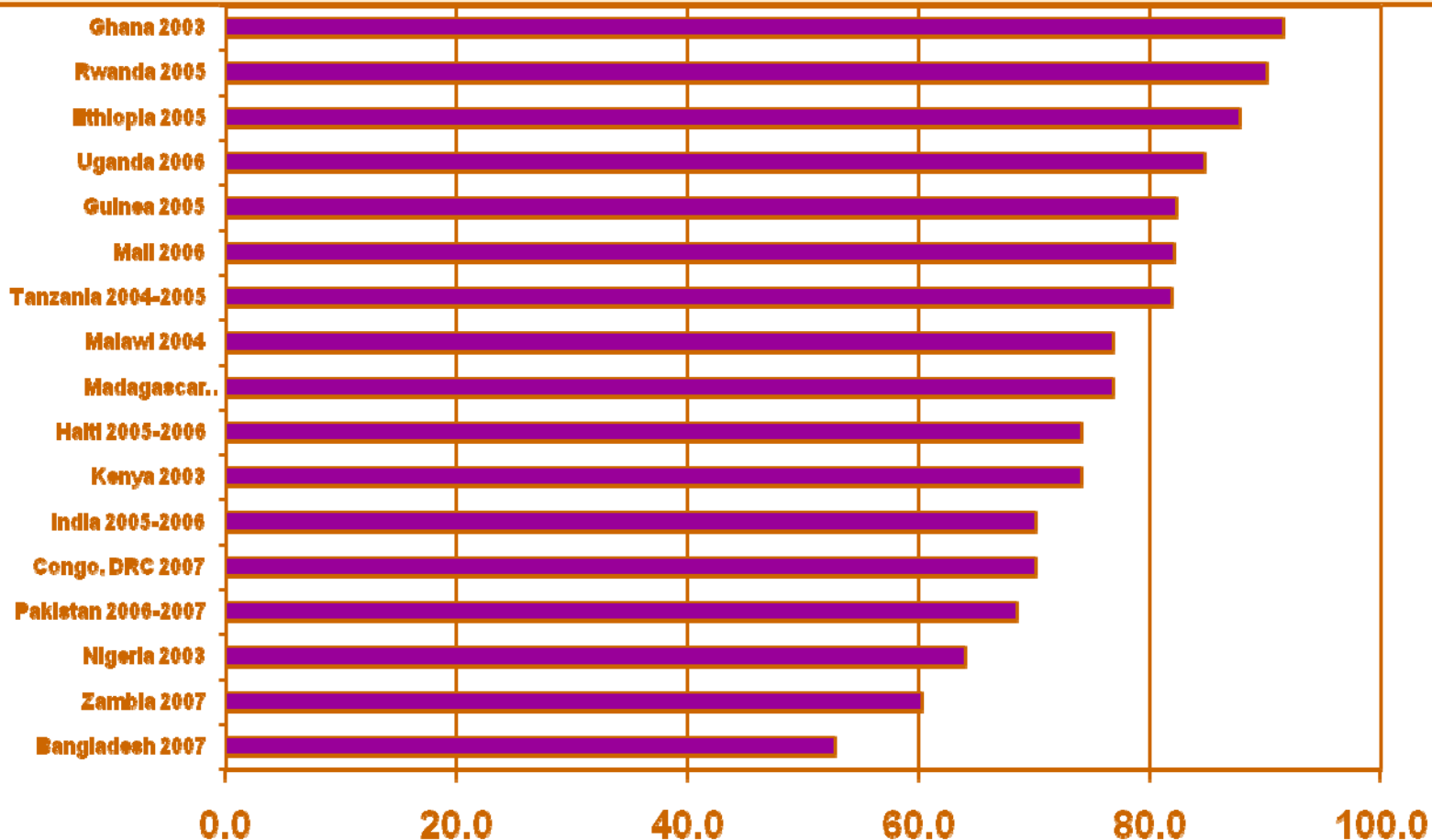
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# Underestimate of unmet need?



# Unmet need among postpartum women is high



Percent of women 3.0 to 5.9 months postpartum with unmet need

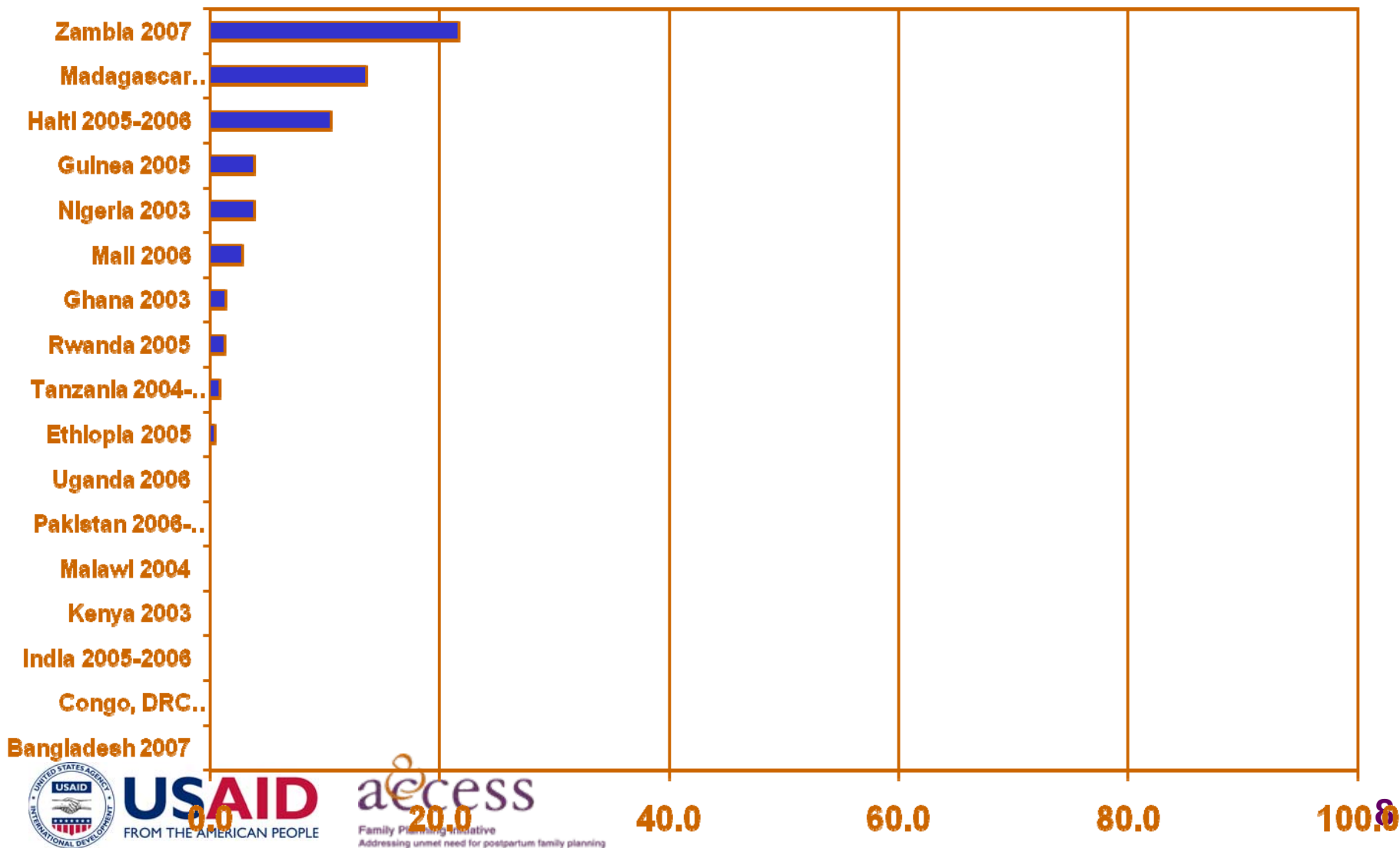


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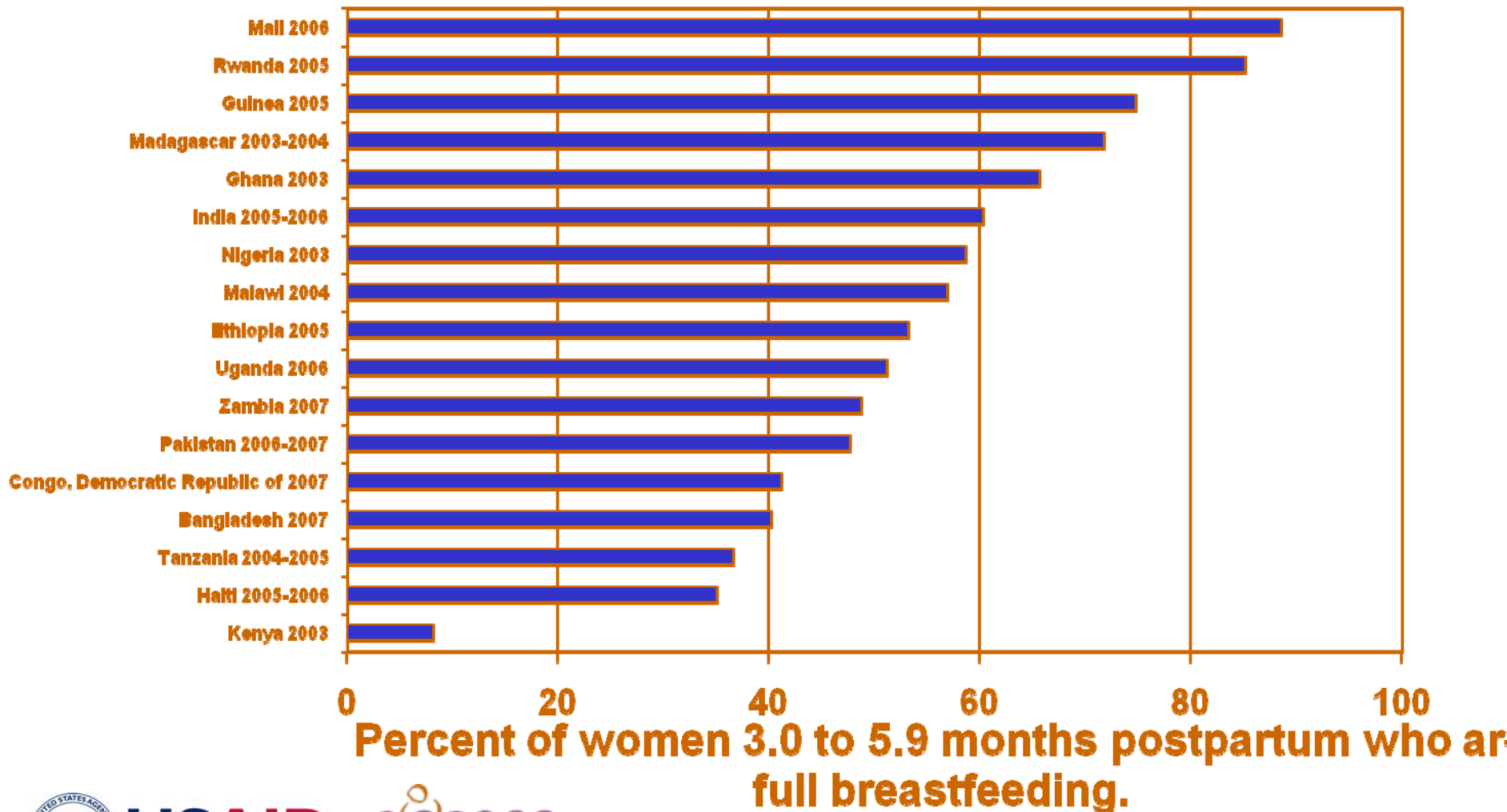
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# LAM use at 3.0 to 5.9 months postpartum



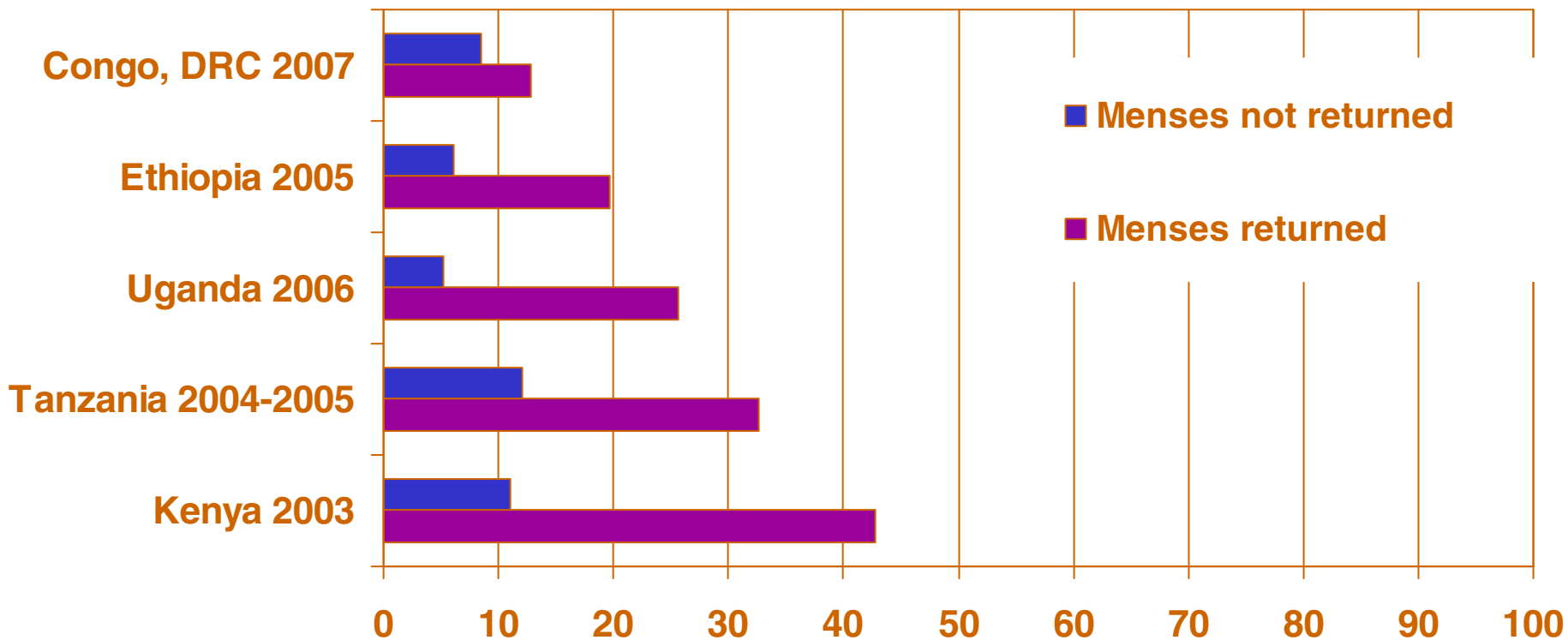
# Full breastfeeding at 3.0 to 5.9 months postpartum



Percent of women 3.0 to 5.9 months postpartum who are full breastfeeding.



# Women whose menses has not returned are less likely to use FP



Percent of women 6.0 to 8.9 months postpartum who are using a modern FP method

# Summary

- **Unmet need to space or limit births is high in every country – LAM can help satisfy the unmet need**
- **Great potential exists in many countries where breastfeeding is widely practiced at 3.0 to 5.9 months**
- **Challenges to implementing LAM include low levels of breastfeeding in some countries and the apparent widespread belief that family planning is not needed until after menses has returned**



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# Programmatic Application

- **Important to analyze unmet need as prospective rather than retrospective**
- **Promote breastfeeding within the context of LAM**
- **Differentiate strategies based upon country setting**
- **Build awareness that return of fecundity often precedes menses and encourage early FP use**



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