

A global study of men and women's male contraceptive knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors using mixed methods

Current Project Brief

Objectives and Background

While the development and distribution of numerous contraceptive modalities has empowered women to plan and prevent pregnancies, the rate of unintended pregnancy remains high and family planning remains largely a women's issue. While many men believe that preventing an unintended pregnancy is a shared responsibility, the burden of contraception will continue to be borne by their female partners until new male contraceptives (MCs) are developed. Fortunately, new MCs are in human clinical trials, with anticipation of marketing within the next 10 years. However, controversy persists regarding whether men would use new MCs and how these methods might influence the contraceptive behaviors of female partners. In preparation for the introduction of new MCs, the WHO Global Study on Male Contraception (WHO GSMC) examines current male contraceptive behaviors and explores associated socio-demographic, reproductive, and ideologic factors that may predict future willingness to use new MCs. The WHO-GSMC will contrast the characteristics and attitudes of contraceptive seeking versus non-seeking populations across 5 countries, selected for their diversity with respect to country-level income, gender equity, and unmet need for contraception. The WHO GSMC contributes to the attainment of SDG target 5 of achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls by envisioning family planning as a shared responsibility, made possible by use of MCs.

Primary objectives:

- To characterize men's and their partners' current participation in pregnancy prevention, use of existing male-controlled methods of contraception, and attitudes towards new MCs.
- To examine differences in willingness to use new MCs between male and female partners, as well as between individuals actively seeking versus not using contraception.

Secondary objectives:

- To explore the role of (1) sociodemographic factors, (2) reproductive experiences and goals, (3) uptake of preventive health and reproductive health services, and (4) masculine/gender norms on the use of existing male methods and new MC attitudes.
- To identify discordant contraceptive and reproductive attitudes among couples and explore the influence of discordance on willingness to use new MCs.
- To explore institutional capacities and service providers' perceptions around the provision of new MCs in the setting of current male reproductive health services.

Geographic location

- 5 research study sites affiliated with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)
- Family Planning Association of Bangladesh (FPAB) in Bangladesh
 - Asociación Pro-Bienestar de la Familia Colombiana (Profamilia) in Colombia
 - Planned Parenthood Association of Ghana (PPAG) in Ghana
 - Association Marocaine de Planification Familiale (AMPF) in Morocco
 - Association Togolaise pour le Bien Etre Familiale (ATBEF) in Togo

Main deliverables

- Journal articles, family planning conference presentations, and public-facing reports on:
1. Men's current participation in contraception and family planning
 2. Men and women's willingness to use or rely on new male contraceptive methods

Sources of funding

WHO HRP, USAID, IPPF, Male Contraceptive Initiative (MCI)

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