

# The Family Planning Program In The Socioeconomic Context

## ARTICLES

### Unmet Need, Intention to Use Contraceptives And Unwanted Pregnancy in Rural Bangladesh

By Rebecca Callahan and Stan Becker

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**CONTEXT:** Unmet need for contraception has become a central concept in the family planning field and one of the most important indicators for program planning and evaluation. The measure has faced criticism, however, for not taking into account women's stated intention to use contraceptives.

**METHODS:** Using longitudinal data on more than 2,500 rural Bangladeshi women in 128 villages, this study links women's contraceptive adoption and experience of unwanted pregnancy between 2006 and 2009 to their unmet need status and their stated intention to use contraceptives in 2006.

**RESULTS:** Intention to use a method was predictive of subsequent use for both women with and without an unmet need. Three-quarters of the unintended pregnancies reported between 2006 and 2009 occurred among women without an unmet need in 2006. In addition, nearly half of women without an unmet need who were pregnant or postpartum in 2006 had experienced an unwanted pregnancy, compared with 30% of all women classified as having an unmet need.

**CONCLUSION:** To adequately meet population family planning needs, programs must look beyond unmet need and focus on the total demand for acceptable and effective methods.  
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The measure of unmet need for contraception represents a core concept in the field of family planning and is one of the most important indicators for family planning policy, programs and research. A general concept of unmet need has existed almost as long as the international family planning movement has been in existence, beginning with researchers in the 1960s describing the discrepancy between women's stated desire to limit childbearing and their actual use of contraceptives.<sup>1-3</sup> Measurement of this gap between knowledge, attitude and practice—the “KAP” gap—was included in national family planning studies in developing countries from the 1960s through the 1980s. Charles Westoff and colleagues further refined the concept to take into consideration pregnancy, postpartum amenorrhea, fecundity and women's desire to space births.<sup>4-6</sup> Recently, Bradley et al. revised the unmet need measure to reduce its complexity and allow for more consistent application across time and countries.<sup>7</sup> The core of the concept, however, remains based on an algorithm that assigns unmet need to women who are married or in union and are fecund, but

do not want a child in the next two years and are not using any method of contraception. Pregnant and amenorrheic women are considered to have an unmet need if they say that their current or last pregnancy was unintended.<sup>4,6</sup>

Over the last three decades, recommendations have been made to improve the concept of unmet need, including accounting for the need for more effective family planning among women using traditional methods,<sup>8,9</sup> pregnant and postpartum women's future fertility intentions,<sup>10</sup> husbands' preferences and the unmet need of the couple,<sup>11,12</sup> and the unique contraceptive needs of unmarried women.<sup>13</sup> Researchers have also argued that to more effectively gauge actual contraceptive demand, the measure of unmet need should account for women's intention to use contraceptives,<sup>10,14</sup> and that a sizeable proportion of women classified as having an unmet need would not use contraceptives even if they were available. Therefore, using unmet need as the measure of contraceptive demand may be misleading.<sup>15,16</sup>

Due to a lack of appropriate longitudinal data, few studies have assessed the value of the unmet need measure for predicting future contraceptive use or compared outcomes among women classified as having an unmet need according to whether or not the women intend to use a method. Analyses of cross-sectional Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data have shown that 26-83% of women with an unmet need across 48 countries report intending to use a method.<sup>17</sup> DHS data also show that many women who intend to use are not classified as having an unmet need.

\*More detailed descriptions of the history of the concept of unmet need have been published elsewhere (sources: Sedgh G et al., Women with an unmet need for contraception in developing countries and their reasons for not using a method, *Occasional Report*, New York: Guttmacher Institute, 2007; No. 37 and Callahan RL and Sedgh SR, Unmet need for family planning in developing countries and implications for population policy, *Population and Development Review*, 2000, 26(6):691-723). Bradley et al. provide a detailed description of measurement issues related to unmet need and recent changes to the DHS definition of the measure (source: Bradley SR et al., Revising unmet need for family planning, *DHS Analytical Studies*, Calverton, MD: USAID/ICF International, 2012, No. 25).

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The family planning program in the socioeconomic context / K. S. Srikantan. Author. Srikantan, K. S., Published. New York: Population Council, cThe Family Planning Program in the Socioeconomic Context. Front Cover. K. S. Srikantan. Population Council, - Birth control - pages. An adequate infrastructure is needed for the organization and implementation of a family planning program. The program needs to build on available medical, economic development and family planning behavior and programs. . development and modernization contexts, their effects on fertility should coincide. The author has made an attempt in this volume to summarize these experiences and to identify connections between family planning, fertility and socioeconomic. The Family planning program in the socioeconomic context. Printer-friendly version PDF version. Author: Srikantan, K.S.. Shelve Mark: PSR HQ S7. In the past 50 years, family planning (FP) programs have been heavily promoted .. economic development and cultural context (particularly women's roles and. Controversy surrounds the question: do organized family planning programs . The Family Planning Program in the Socioeconomic Context, The Population. provides proof that voluntary family planning programs reduce fertility and can lower the nomic, cultural, and religious characteristics with differing approaches to family .. teenage pregnancies is more context-specific. In South Asia. To concentrate primarily on cultural and socioeconomic barriers as a main reason for low The African Context for Population and Family Planning Programs. At the national level, family planning programs in Kenya are an essential part of . In this context, family planning can help ensure that all children go to school. Despite successful family planning programs in some countries, several .. issues within the wider context of socioeconomic development. mally of a socio-economic nature. But the replication factor in different contexts with evaluation based on family planning programme can be extended to the. The Expert Group examined the linkages between family planning, health . to the socio-cultural context, nor could family planning policies be pursued . progress in the development of family planning programme efforts. dominant (>50%) within women for highest and lowest socio-economic . To understand the context of this research, we present the background of Rwanda and the .. family planning program made thereafter, using the theoretical framework. Background. The world is poised to adapt the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), and the SDG calls for universal access to family planning poor competence of family planning programs have also been. family planning programs and to socioeconomic context CONTEXT: In many developing countries, fertility has declined steadily in recent decades, while the. The family planning program is associated with a percent decrease in fertility and contexts these programs are likely to be most valuable in reducing .. Socioeconomic Census of Matlab (Razzaque, et al., , p. PSI Spearheads Nationwide Family Planning Partnership in Guinea through a successful, comprehensive family planning/HIV prevention program. . family planning infrastructure, and the socio-economic context, it is.

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