

## Spousal Discussion on Family Planning and Decision to use Family Planning Services.

### How Involved are Men in our Communities? Findings from omnibus survey in 8 States in Nigeria

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## Introduction

- Over the years, many women of reproductive age have accessed family planning (FP) services with decisions made for them.
- Sociocultural norms and practices in Nigeria allow men to make decisions, with women having little or no input, even in health related discussions.
- This has necessitated the need for spousal discussion in FP decision making

## Objective

The study assessed the role of men in the intention and decision to use FP services by a woman

## Methodology

- A cross-sectional survey among women of reproductive age (WRA), 18-49 years was conducted between November and December 2017 in selected communities in 8 states in Nigeria.
- A total of 6,668 WRA participated in the survey including 3,740 -North, 1,568 -West and 1,360 -South part of Nigeria.
- Trained assessors used structured checklist to collect information on spousal discussion on FP in the last 6 months and decision to use FP: whether the decision was made by the woman alone, man alone or a joint decision
- Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and cross-classification tables.



## Result

- About a third (32%) of WRA reported spousal discussion in the last 6 months and this ranged from 28% in the West to 33% in the North and 35% in the South.
- Less than a tenth of the respondents made the decision to use FP alone (9%), 22% reported partners made the decision on FP alone while 66% of the women reported that it was a joint decision.
- Partner alone (men) who made the decision on FP is highest in the North (26%), 21% in the West and 15% in the South.
- Most women (72.2%) that are intending to use any method to delay pregnancy mentioned that they were part of the decision to use a contraceptive method.
- 13.1% of intended users affirmed that decision to use FP is mainly their spouses decision and 14.7% solely their decision.



## Discussion

- Men played a critical role in the uptake of family planning in Nigeria and are mostly at the centre of the intention and decision to use a contraceptive method.
- Men constituted up to 88% (partner alone and couple) of the decision to use a family planning method
- Programs working to increase access and utilization of FP services in Nigeria require strategic interventions for men to be involved in order for them to willingly and openly support FP uptake.

## Conclusion

As part of male involvement approach to program interventions, there is need to further enlighten men on the importance of joint decision-making on life issues like FP.