

FOREWORD

“Family planning saves lives” does draw attention to the fact that an estimated 252 maternal deaths occur per one lakh live births in Uttar Pradesh due to complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, of which, lack of access to quality family planning services is a major contributing factor. Increasing access to family planning information, services and supplies has dramatic health benefits for women and children. Access to contraceptive choices and ability to act upon those choices are also seen as two most important aspects of a larger ‘reproductive rights’ framework. Therefore, ensuring access to appropriate, safe and quality family planning choices for all its citizen is one of the most important responsibilities of the State.

Uttar Pradesh is the most populated state of the country and with a TFR of 3.1, the State continues to be on a very high fertility trajectory. Despite all efforts made by the state, nearly 37 percent of 3.39 crore married eligible couples use any modern family planning in the state. That leaves the state with nearly 80 lac eligible couples in UP having unmet need for family planning of which 38 lac (48%) have desired to adopt sterilization to limit their family size and rest have unmet need for spacing. Besides, the state government has set a vision of adding 12 million new users under FP2020 strategy. In such a scenario, there is need to review and revise the current population policy for which deliberations are on.

In an attempt to understand the reasons for such high unmet need and low use of family planning and help gain evidence for revising the current population policy, SIFPSA has carried out a research study, examining the barriers faced in adoption of family planning services, particularly sterilization and IUCD, in rural Uttar Pradesh.

This document contains the detailed findings of the study. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have put in a dedicated effort to collate this vast amount of information and prepare the document, with a hope that it will foster a stimulating and fruitful advancement in formulation of the new population policy for the State.



Amit Kumar Ghosh,
Executive Director

PREFACE

Lack of access to modern contraception is an issue for countless women and couples in Uttar Pradesh. The recent unmet need projection shows nearly one in four eligible married couples either want to space between pregnancies or do not want more children yet they are not using any modern family planning method. Nearly half of these eligible couples would require long acting reversible method or sterilization services to limit their family size. Understanding the possible barriers to adoption of family planning, both from the perspective of the clients as well as the providers, is a critical first step in evolving a comprehensive strategy to address seemingly large unmet need for modern family planning in the state.

SIFPSA on behalf of the Government of Uttar Pradesh attempted to undertake a comprehensive study on the barriers to adoption of family planning. The study had two pronged objectives- to identify factors associated with family planning use and barriers to adoption of terminal and semi terminal methods of FP and to understand the stakeholders' perspective of these barriers and opportunities to overcome them. The study drew a fairly large sample size covering 10 districts randomly selected across the state making the findings representative. The findings from this study will inform the Uttar Pradesh State Population Policy which was formulated in 2000 and is currently under review and revision by a high level committee constituted by GoUP.

The study revealed several important strategic areas requiring focus, including addressing prevailing myths and misconceptions amongst the potential clients on adoption of higher order family planning methods. To cite an example, in spite of achieving the ideal family size, nearly 31 percent couples had not thought of adopting permanent method, major reasons being fear of sterilization, loss of stamina after sterilization, illness/weakness, husband/family members opposed and against religion etc. In rural settings, the mothers in law seem to be exerting considerable authority and administering decision making by the couples in adoption of family planning methods and forming a positive opinion. The myths and misconception on the providers' side also need to be addressed. The quality of care also played a key role in word of mouth publicity that created an environment positive enough for couples to come forward and accept family planning. There are many more important findings and strategic leads the study has to offer.

I take this opportunity to recognise the contributions made by SIFPSA team in carrying out this important study under the able leadership of Mr B. K. Jain, GM R&E. I congratulate the entire R&E team including Mr S.P. Khare- Consultant, Ms. Seema L. George-Project Coordinator, Mr. Devesh Tripathi and Mr. K. S. Bisht-Project Managers and Mamta Verma-Secretary who have put in dedicated efforts in preparing this document.



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