

**Family planning in the Post-2015 agenda –
Meeting demand for family planning within a generation:
Prospects and programmatic implications at the country-level**

Yoonjoung Choi¹, Madeleine Short Fabic¹, Sennen Hounton², Desmond Koroma^{2*}

¹US Agency for International Development

²United Nations Population Fund

*Extended abstract submitted for
the 2015 Annual Meeting of Population Association of America*

BACKGROUND

Expanding access to family planning has been a key objective of health and development programming for decades. Recently, as made evident by support for FP2020, the international community and many countries are aiming to accelerate progress in family planning. In addition, in the post-2015 agenda discussion, the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) has developed a proposal which includes ensuring “universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning, information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programmes” (Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals 2014).

To track progress of the family planning component, a measure (percent demand for family planning met with modern contraceptive methods) and benchmark (at least 75% by 2030 in all countries) have been proposed (Fabic et al. 2014) and have received positive feedback from the international family planning community. The measure reflects the aim of family planning—to support the rights of individuals and couples to choose whether and when to have a child by providing them the means to implement their decisions—and promotes voluntarism, informed choice, rights, and equity (Fabic et al. 2014, World Health Organization 2014). The benchmark reflects current levels in developed countries and selected sub-populations in developing countries as well as historical experiences of formerly low- income countries (Fabic et al. 2014).

The benchmark is both ambitious and achievable; however, it will only be achieved if progress toward meeting demand for family planning is accelerated, especially in low-income countries. To best direct resources and guide strategic planning, it is critical to understand progress required and programmatic implications on a country-by-country basis.

Our study’s objective is to understand prospects of meeting the benchmark by 2030 using data from selected 63 countries. Specific aims are: (1) to estimate the progress needed to meet the benchmark (i.e., at least 75 percent of demand for family planning satisfied with

* Authors in an alphabetic order. Views and opinions expressed in this paper are the authors’. They do not necessarily represent the views and opinions of the US Agency for International Development or United Nations Population Fund.

modern contraceptive methods) in each country, given current projections by United Nations, and (2) to compare the required progress to historic experience. Findings from the study will be used to discuss policy and programmatic implications.

METHODS

Study Countries

We studied 63 countries in this paper. The selected countries are focal countries for international initiatives, including FP2020, or those classified as least developed countries, according to the United Nations. Table 1 presents a complete list of the study countries.

Data

Data on country-specific estimates and projections of family planning indicators come from a recently revised estimates and projection database by the United Nations Population Division (United Nations 2014). For 194 countries, the database includes annual estimates and projections of selected family planning indicators from 1970 to 2030. The indicators include contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR), modern contraceptive prevalence rate (MCPR), and unmet need for family planning.

Measurement and Analysis

First, for each year (1970-2030) and country, we calculated the proposed SDG indicator--percent demand for family planning met with modern contraceptive methods [$100 \times \text{MCPR}/(\text{CPR} + \text{unmet need for family planning})$]. Then, using projection data for the study countries, we calculated annual absolute percent point changes between 2014 and 2030. We also calculated annual absolute percent point changes between 2014 and 2030 that would be needed to meet the proposed benchmark of 75% (hereinafter referred to as a benchmark scenario), using a simple linear assumption. The two annual changes (projected vs. needed) were compared. We will further calculate the absolute number of women who would use modern methods according to the current projections and the benchmark scenario.

Finally, using estimate data from all 194 countries between 1970 and 2010, we calculated annual absolute percent point changes over eight five-year periods (1970-1975, 1975-1980, 1980-1985, 1985-1990, 1990-1995, 1995-2000, 2000-2005, and 2005-2010). The annual changes needed to achieve benchmark from 63 countries between 2014 and 2030 were compared to the observed annual changes from 194 countries between 1970 and 2010.

RESULTS (Preliminary)

Table 2 presents annual changes between 2014 and 2030 according to the current projections and the benchmark scenario in the 63 study countries. There are vastly different prospects of achieving benchmark, and differences between two paths are largest in West/Central African countries. On average, increases by 0.8% point per year was projected, compared to 2.2% point per year needed according to the benchmark scenario. The difference between the two rates of annual change is 1.3% point (additional absolute increase) or 2.5 times (relative difference), on average across the

countries. In a small number of countries the current projection for 2030 is 75% or above (n=9) or near the benchmark (i.e., 70% - 75%) (n=6).

Figure 1 shows scatter plot of observed annual percent point changes between over each of the five-year periods by the initial level at the start of each period. Data suggest an annual change by 2 percentage points or higher has been observed historically in both developed and developing countries. However, in the majority of cases, the annual change was below 2 percentage points. Historic data also suggest that some countries experienced negative changes as well.

DISCUSSION (Preliminary)

In order to achieve the proposed family planning component of the SDGs, on average among the 63 countries, progress needs to be almost doubled compared to the current projections. Accelerated progress by almost three times is needed in West African countries. Compared to historic experience (Figure 1), countries and donor communities need to develop strategies to realize such ambitious accelerated progress. However, a small number of countries are expected to meet the benchmark, if assumptions in the current projections (e.g., continuous and universal increase in MCPR) can be realized in those countries.

The paper will further include methodologic discussion and questions for policy and program development discussion such as:

- What immediate and long-term planning is needed in groups of countries at different stages to meet the benchmark?
- How international and bilateral development organizations mobilize both financial and technical resources to assist countries? What research and information is needed to assist?
- How global-level discussion should balance the absolute number of potential beneficiaries across countries and the level of need in each country?

References

Madeleine S Fabic, Yoonjoung Choi, John Bongaarts, Jacqueline E Darroch, John A Ross, John Stover, Amy O Tsui, Jagdish Upadhyay, Ellen Starbird (2014). Meeting demand for family planning within a generation: the post-2015 agenda. *The Lancet* - 1 July 2014 DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736(14)61055-2

Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (2014). Thirteenth session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. Outcome document – Introduction to the Proposal of the Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals. http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/4518SDGs_FINAL_Proposal%20of%20OWG_19%20July%20at%201320hrsver3.pdf 19 July 2014.

United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2014). *Model-based Estimates and Projections of Family Planning Indicators 2014*. New York: United Nations.

WHO (2014). Ensuring human rights in the provision of contraceptive information and services: guidance and recommendations. Geneva: World Health Organization.

Table 1. List of selected 63 study countries.

Country	Least developed (UN)	Ouagadougou partnership	FP2020 Pledging	USAID priority	UNFPA priority
Afghanistan	Yes			Yes	
Angola	Yes				
Bangladesh	Yes		Yes	Yes	
Benin	Yes	Yes			Yes
Bhutan	Yes				
Bolivia (Plurinational State of)					Yes
Burkina Faso	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Burundi	Yes				Yes
Cambodia	Yes				
Cameroon					Yes
Central African Republic	Yes				Yes
Chad	Yes				Yes
Comoros	Yes				
Cote d'Ivoire		Yes	Yes		Yes
Democratic Republic of the Congo	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Djibouti	Yes				Yes
Equatorial Guinea	Yes				
Eritrea	Yes				Yes
Ethiopia	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Gambia	Yes				Yes
Ghana			Yes	Yes	Yes
Guinea	Yes	Yes			Yes
Guinea-Bissau	Yes				Yes
Haiti	Yes			Yes	Yes
Honduras					Yes
India			Yes	Yes	
Indonesia			Yes		
Kenya			Yes	Yes	Yes
Kiribati	Yes				
Lao People's Democratic Republic	Yes				Yes
Lesotho	Yes				Yes
Liberia	Yes			Yes	Yes
Madagascar	Yes			Yes	Yes
Malawi	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Mali	Yes	Yes		Yes	Yes
Mauritania	Yes	Yes			Yes
Mozambique	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Myanmar	Yes				Yes
Nepal	Yes			Yes	Yes
Niger	Yes	Yes	Yes		Yes
Nigeria			Yes	Yes	Yes
Pakistan			Yes	Yes	
Papua New Guinea					Yes
Philippines			Yes	Yes	
Rwanda	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Samoa	Yes				
Sao Tome and Principe	Yes				Yes
Senegal	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sierra Leone	Yes		Yes		Yes
Solomon Islands	Yes		Yes		
Somalia	Yes				
South Africa			Yes		
South Sudan	Yes			Yes	Yes
Sudan	Yes				Yes
Timor-Leste	Yes				Yes
Togo	Yes	Yes			Yes
Tuvalu	Yes				
Uganda	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
United Republic of Tanzania	Yes			Yes	Yes
Vanuatu	Yes				
Yemen	Yes			Yes	Yes
Zambia	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes
Zimbabwe			Yes		Yes

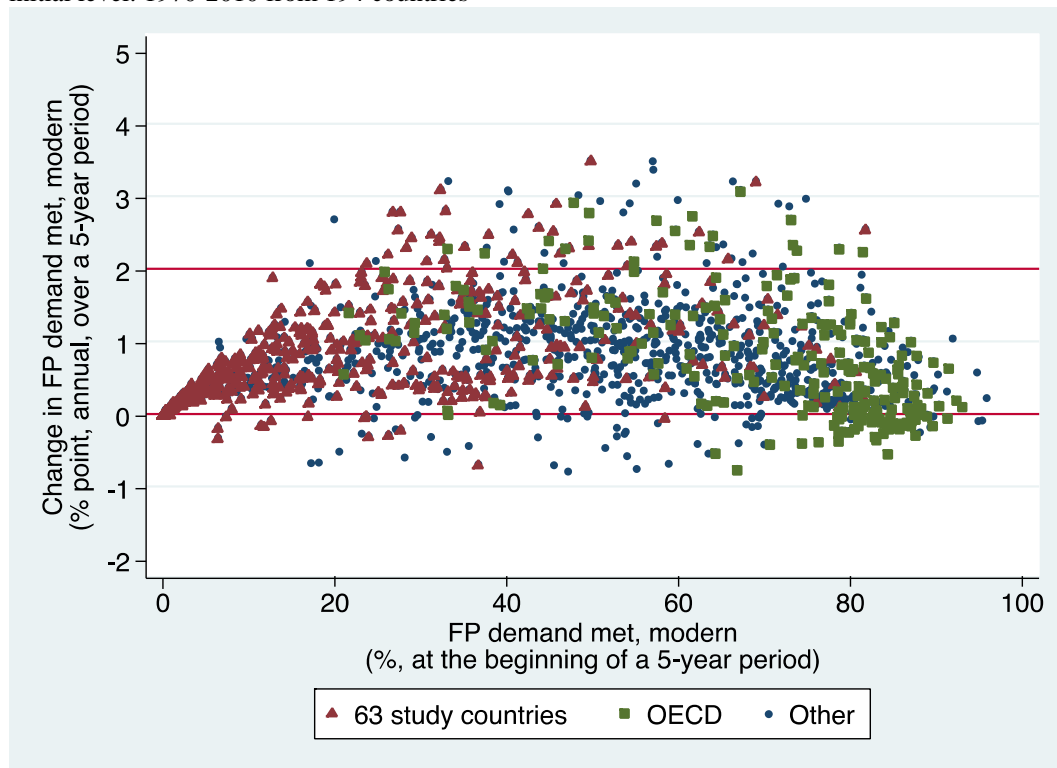
Note: There is no data for Congo Brazzaville in the UN database, and thus the country was excluded from the study. There are 69 countries under FP2020, but the study only includes countries where the government made pledge officially.

Table 2. Percent demand for family planning met with modern methods (2014 & 2030) and annual rate of changes (2014-2030) according to the current projection and the benchmark scenario in the 63 countries

	All study countries (n=63) Mean	West/Central Africa (n=22) Mean	East/South Africa (n=19) Mean	non-Africa (n=22) Mean
FP demand satisfied with modern methods (%)				
2014	43.3	27.7	46.7	56.1
2030	56.4	42.4	63.0	64.7
Annual rate of change (% point)				
Projected: 2014-2030	0.8	0.9	1.0	0.5
Needed: 2014-2030	2.2	3.0	2.0	1.4
<i>Difference (absolute)</i>	1.3	2.0	0.9	0.8
<i>Difference (ratio)</i>	2.5	3.2	1.7	2.3

Mean values are un-weighted average across countries.

Figure 1. Scatter plot of annual rate of change in demand for family planning met with modern methods by initial level: 1970-2010 from 194 countries



Note: Each data point represents an annual percent point change over a five-year period by the level at the beginning of the five-year period. A total of 1552 observations are specific to a five-year period and a country. Only observations between 1st and 99th percentile of the annual percent point changes are shown.