

Use of the '*FamPlan*' Model for Advocacy with High-level Decision-makers on formulation of Family Planning Strategy of Jharkhand, India

Background:

Jharkhand is one among the States with highest population growth in India. According to 2011 Provisional Census figures, the State has recorded decadal growth of 22.34 percent during 2001-11 period. The State has formulated Health & Population and Reproductive Child Health Policy in 2004 with the objectives of attaining the population goal of achieving a total fertility rate (TFR) of 2.1 children by the year 2020 and contraceptive prevalence rate of 60 percent by 2015. However, the TFR is as high as 3.1 (Annual Health Survey, 2010-11) and modern contraceptive prevalence rate is 38.0% (AHS, 2010-11). The unmet need (30.5%) for family planning remains critically high in Jharkhand especially in rural areas.

The state recognizes that healthier and smaller population will be crucial to ensure overall socio-economic development in the state. To reinforce its commitment towards population goals, Department of Health and Family Welfare has taken a decision to revisit its population goals that are set in 2004 to formulate a new Family Planning Strategy for the State.

USAID|Health Policy Initiative and USAID assisted Innovation in Family Planning Services II Technical Assistance Project (ITAP) provided technical support to this activity for the state.

Research Question: Availability of tools like *FamPlan* provides opportunity to influence policy makers to set realistic targets and thereby formulate appropriate strategies. This assessment can then be used to strengthen advocacy messages and strategies in different settings.

Methodology: The *FamPlan* Model is one of the tools used to project family planning requirements to reach national/ state goals of contraceptive prevalence or desired fertility. *FamPlan* is a component of the SPECTRUM suite of reproductive health policy models. The program uses assumptions about the proximate determinants of fertility and the characteristics of the family planning programmes (e.g., method mix, source mix, discontinuation rates) to calculate numbers of users and acceptors of different methods by source. Various strategies can be simulated as a way to evaluate alternative methods of achieving program goals. The results of the *FamPlan* model application are packaged with information from other sources into a presentation to be used in high-level policy dialogue.

Findings: *FamPlan* is one of the important tools being used to advocate for repositioning family planning strategies in the state of Jharkhand. By using this program 4 alternative scenarios were simulated and results were presented to a high level policy committee at the state to choose an appropriate and feasible goal. Alternative scenarios were marked five-year difference provided information on CPR levels, correct method-mix, and number of users of family planning methods to achieve TFR of 2.1 by 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030. The state policy committee reviewed these four scenarios by taking into account of current trend, availability of various resources (human and financial) decide to go ahead with 2020 as the year of achievable target.

Some of the key messages are

- Yearly expected level of achievements for family planning have been set by taking the current trend in performance of family planning program by the state;
- Variations in method-mix considerably deviate the fertility goals;
- Accuracy of input data is the most important message, otherwise projections provide completely different scenarios;
- Results are found to be quite easy to visualize the future scenarios by the members of policy team and the achievable goals were set without much of intricacy;

Research Knowledge Contribution: This exercise helps to understand the importance of such powerful tools in visualizing future prospects of family planning program and population by those professionals who are working in the areas of policy & strategy formulation, advocacy.