

# Reasons for Low Use of Modern Spacing Methods in a High Fertility State "Bihar" in Northern India and its potentials

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**Background:** Bihar is India's most populous states with highest TFR and low CPR. BBC Media Action is implementing a 5 yr. grant from BMGF to shape demand and practices around 9 family-health behaviours including FP. Present paper is based on analysis of benchmarking survey data on spacing.

**Methodology:** Evaluation adopts a pretest-posttest design. A multi-staged cluster sampling used, sample size of 7646 respondents was spread across 200 PSUs from Bihar. **Findings:** Findings suggest a very low use of modern-spacing-methods (6%) and significant shift from ever-use and current-use of modern spacing methods. Women have shifted from modern to natural methods due to various myths and misconceptions. Not liking the methods and fear of side effects were reported as reasons for non-use and shift. 2/3 women expressed unmet need (limiting 40%; spacing 27%). **Program lessons learned:** Identifying women with unmet need for spacing, promoting spousal communication and IPC around myths-misconceptions could be a potential strategy.

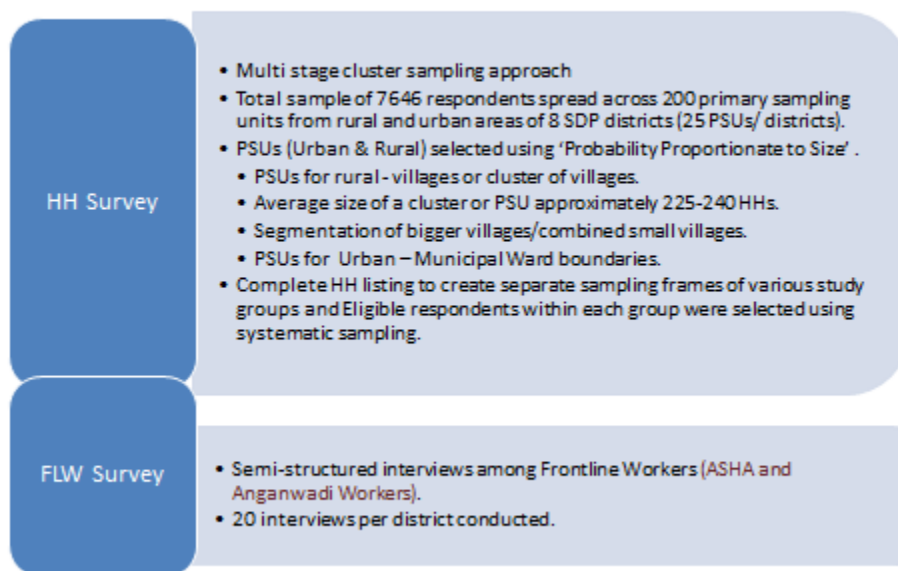
## Background/Significance:

Bihar is one of India's most populous states with the highest (TFR and very low level of modern contraceptive use. It accounts disproportionately for underweight children, neonatal deaths, non-fully immunized children and maternal deaths. Despite progress on certain select health indicators, a lot still remains to be achieved. In this context, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) have awarded a 5-year grant to the BBC World Service Trust for "Shaping Demand and Practices to Improve Family Health in Bihar." SDP uses a 360 degree approach of communication by including mass media, community mobilization formats, inter personal communication (through capacitated front line workers) and cross cutting use of ICT to enhance sustainable behavior change around nine priority behaviors for improving family health outcomes.

SDP's multi-channel communications strategy is designed to provide an opportunity of multiple exposures to messages on promoted behaviors thereby increasing the likelihood of behavior change among the target audience. Present paper is based on the analysis of benchmarking survey data on Family Planning and presents its programmatic implications.

**Methodology:** The evaluation design adopts a “pretest-posttest design with appropriate statistical controls”. The evaluation survey focuses on tracing the trajectory of behavior change around 9 priority family health behaviours including family planning and establishes benchmark levels for Knowledge, Attitude, Practices, Self-Efficacy, Social Norms, and intention to change behaviour etc.

## Research Design & Methodology



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## Target Population Groups & Sample Spread

Target Population Groups		Sample Size - Estimated	Sample Size Achieved
<i>Currently married in the 15-49 yrs age group.</i>	Currently pregnant women (0 parity) who are more than 4 months pregnant	600	453
	Mothers with a child (< 6 months of age; 6-11 months of age; 12-23 months of age; 3-11 years of age)	4000	3893
	Fathers with a child (< 6 months of age; 6-11 months of age; 12-23 months of age)	1100	1137
<i>Upto 70 yrs age.</i>	Mothers-in-Law of women with a child (< 6 months of age; 6-11 months of age; 12-23 months of age)	1100	1085
	Frontline Health Workers (ASHA and Anganwadi Workers)	160	167
	School Teachers	200	207
	School Going Children (12-14 years)	600	704
<b>Total Sample Size</b>		<b>7760</b>	<b>7646</b>

- Design Effect =1.5 ; Minimum significance (practice 5%, Knowledge 10%)
- Targeted sample size takes into account 5% non-response

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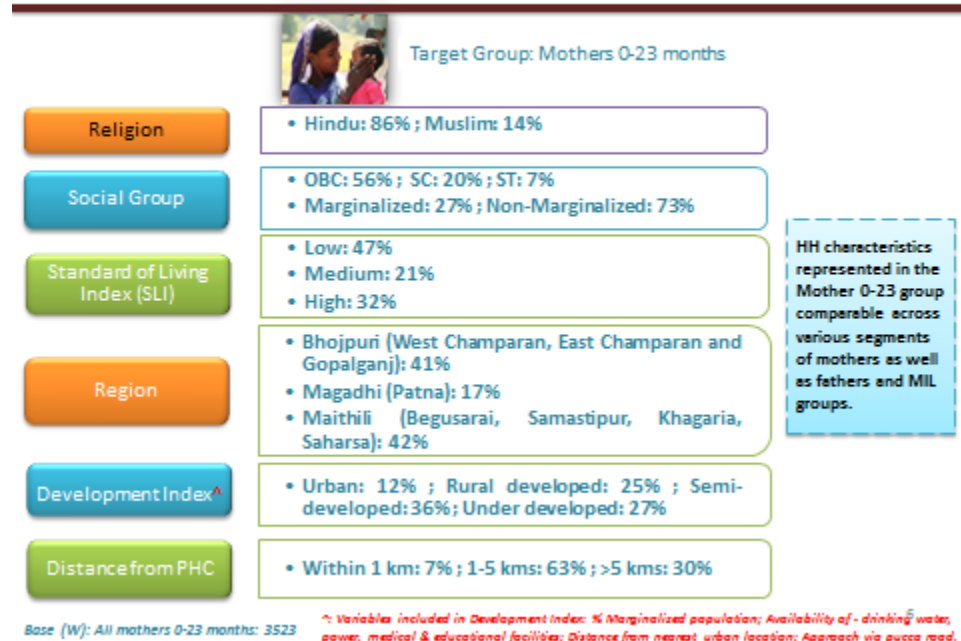
The study focused on capturing information from the following target groups:

- ❑ Currently married women of reproductive age group (i.e. aged 15-49 years)
- ❑ Husbands of married women of reproductive age group
- ❑ Mothers-in-law of married women in reproductive age group
- ❑ Frontline Health workers (ASHAs & AWWs)

A blend of quantitative as well as qualitative techniques was used to gather the information on different priority behaviours. For the quantitative survey a “multi-staged cluster sampling” approach was used to sample 7646 respondents of various categories spread across 200 PSUs from rural and urban areas of Bihar.

## Findings & Discussion:

### Household profile



## Respondent profile

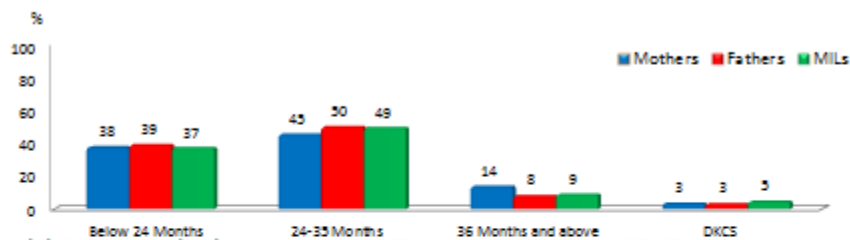
	Mother 0-23 months	Father 0-23months	MIL
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-25 yrs: 56%</li> <li>26-35 yrs: 39%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-25 yrs: 61%</li> <li>26-35 yrs: 35%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>36-45 yrs: 16%</li> <li>&gt;45 yrs: 82.3%</li> </ul>
<b>Age at Marriage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median: 17 yrs</li> <li>Age gap with spouse: 5 yrs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median: 21 yrs</li> <li>Age gap with spouse: 5 yrs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illiterate: 59%</li> <li>Primary + Literate with no formal education: 18.6%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illiterate: 34%</li> <li>Primary + Literate with no formal education: 25%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illiterate: 80%</li> <li>Primary + Literate with no formal education: 11%</li> </ul>
<b>Occupation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housewife: 96%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farmer/Farm labourer: 13%</li> <li>Unskilled workers: 27%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housewife: 86%</li> </ul>
<b>Parity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≤2 children: 52%</li> <li>3 children: 20%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≤2 children: 52%</li> <li>3 children: 20%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>
<b>Living Status</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Husband living away: 31%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Son living away: 22%</li> </ul>
<b>Empowerment Index</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High: 9.2%</li> <li>Moderate: 32.6%</li> <li>Low: 58.5%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>

Base (W): All mothers 0-23 months: 3523; Fathers :1122; MIL : 1093

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More than half of the mothers are below 25 years, illiterate, have low empowerment and around 97% are housewives. Around 50% have 2 or less number of children. More than half of the MILs are illiterate, and around 86% are housewives. A significant proportion (above 80%) of respondents reported that ideal age gap between 2 children should be below 3 years.

## Ideal Age Gap Between Two Children



Base (W): All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months Mothers:3523; Father: 1119; MIL= 1083,

Particulars	Mothers		Fathers		MIL's	
	Hindus	Muslims	Hindus	Muslims	Hindus	Muslims
Base (W)	3021	479	955	163	947	134
Below 24 Months	37	42*	38	49*	37	36
24-35 Months	47	38*	51	41*	50	48
36 Months and above	13	17	8	7	9	10
DKCS	3	3	3	3	4	7

Significant difference was observed between Hindus and Muslims

\* Significance difference using Z test (with 95% confidence interval)

## Number of Additional Children Couples Want...

### Mothers

Parity	Base (Mothers who still want more children)	1 more Child	2 more Children	3+ more Children	Till a Boy is born
1 Parity	861	40	34	11	14
2 Parity	488	60	18	7	16
3+ Parity	351	52	9	6	33

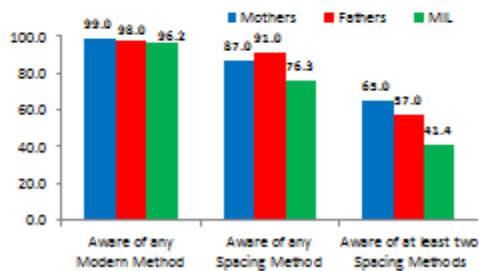
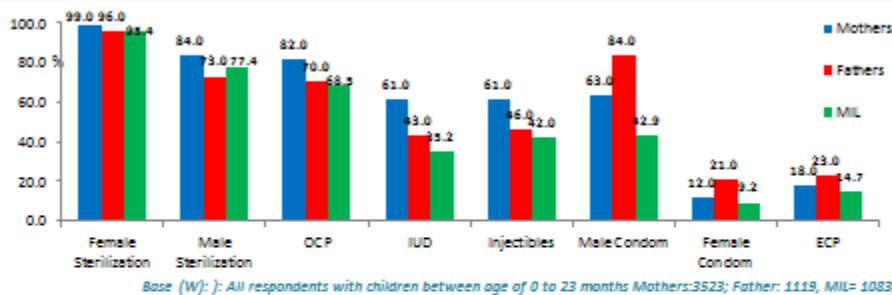
### Fathers

Parity	Base (Fathers who still want more children)	1 more Child	2 more Children	3+ more Children	Till a Boy is born
1 Parity	273	54	37	6.6	2.6
2 Parity	146	65	20	8	7
3+ Parity	137	57	8	15	20

Groups who have planned for 3 children

- Among the mother having 2 children, about 60 percent wanted one more child.
- Similar trend was found among the fathers wherein about 65 percent of those having 2 children wanted one more child.

## Knowledge: Family Planning Methods

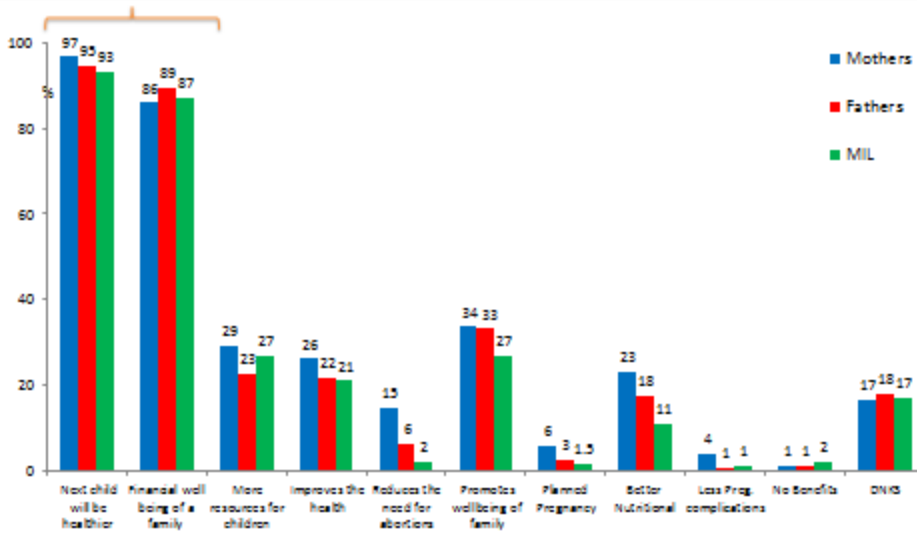


Base (W): All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months Mothers:3523; Father: 1119, MIL= 1083.

- Awareness of Limiting methods of family planning (especially Female Sterilization) almost universal
- Awareness of condoms (both male and female) and Emergency Contraceptive Pills was found to be higher among the men

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- Awareness of condoms (both male and female) and Emergency Contraceptive Pills was found to be higher among the men

## Benefits of Family Planning



Base (W): All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months Mothers:3523; Father: 1119, MIL- 1083

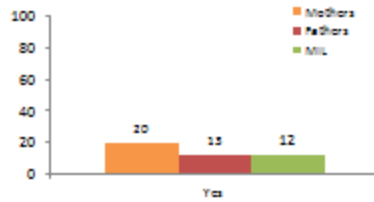
\*No benefits are those respondents who reported to have no knowledge regarding benefits of Family Planning

\* Significance difference using Z test (with 95% confidence interval)

- **Healthier children and financial benefit are two key triggers and these need to be incorporated in the communication outputs. For e.g. in 1-3-2 the financial benefit was highlighted.**
- Mother seems to have better Knowledge about the benefits of Family planning in comparison to husband and MIL.
- Significant difference in awareness about the benefits of family planning among marginalized and non marginalized mothers.
- Knowledge of benefits significantly lower among Muslim husbands than the Hindu husbands.

## Information Received

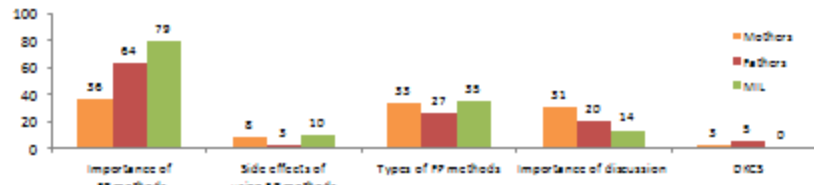
### Received any information on FP immediately after childbirth



- Lower number of MIL and Husbands received information on FP immediately after childbirth as compared to mothers.
- MIL's had the better recall of the topics discussed about family planning.

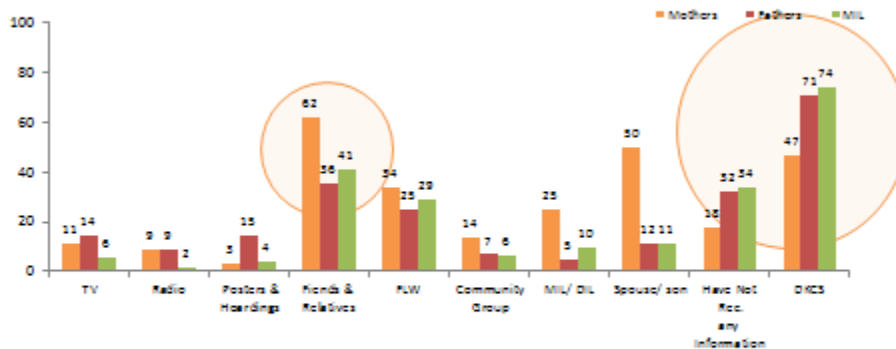
Base (W) : All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months : Mothers : 3523, Fathers : 1122, MIL : 1085

### Topics on which information was given



Base (W) : Those who have rec. information: Mothers 698, Fathers: 141 MIL: 117

## Key Sources of Information (Spont.+ Added)

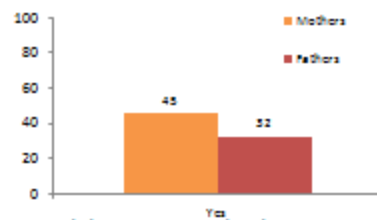


Base (W) : All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months :Mother : 3523, Fathers : 1119, MIL: 1085

- A Major chunk of respondents reported were either not aware of any source of information or have not received any information.
- Friends and relatives is reported to be the major source of information across the categories.

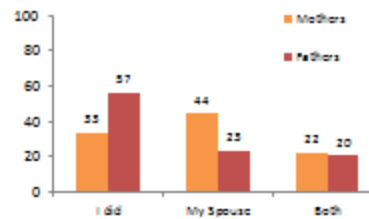
## Discussion about Family Planning

### Discussed FP with Spouse during last 1 year



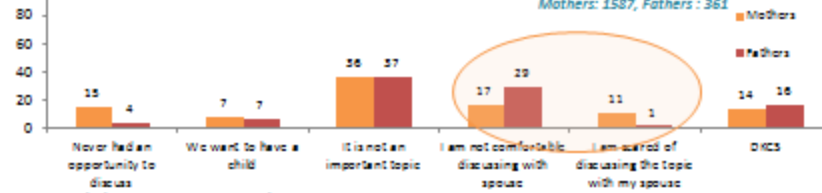
Base (N) : All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months : Mothers : 3523, Father : 1119

### Who initiated the discussion



Base (N) : Those Who have discussed FP Mothers: 1587, Fathers : 361

### Reasons for not discussing

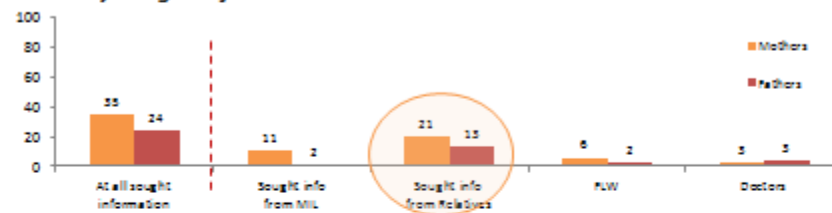


Base (N) : Those Who have not discussed FP Mothers: 1922, Fathers : 758

- About 45% of the mothers reported that they have discussed about family planning with their husbands.
- The discussions were mainly initiated by the male member
- Family planning is not discussed either because it is not considered to be important or the partner is not comfortable discussing the topic.

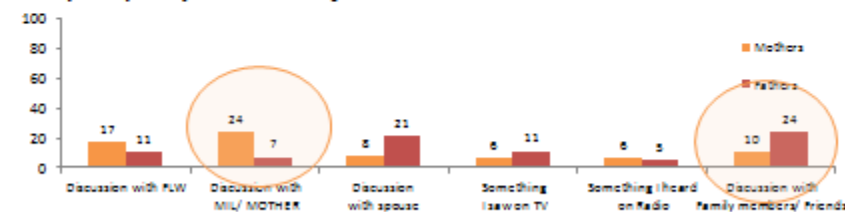
## Information Sought

### Personally sought information or discussed FP



Base (N) : All respondents with children between age of 0 to 23 months :Mother s 3523, Fathers : 1119,

### What prompted you to seek information



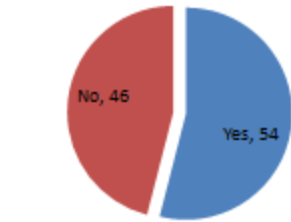
Base (N) : Respondents with child between age 0 to 23 months who have who have sought information, Mothers:1155, Fathers: 271,

- Family and friends are major source of information for all categories.
- Among Mothers discussions with MIL prompted them to seek more information.
- For Husbands discussions with family members and friends prompted a deeper probe into the topic.



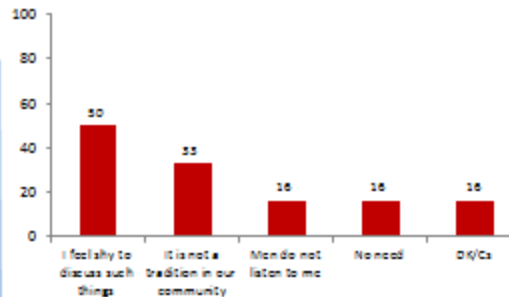
## Discussion with male members by FLW

Whether FLW discuss FP with male members in the community?



Base (UW): FLW: 167

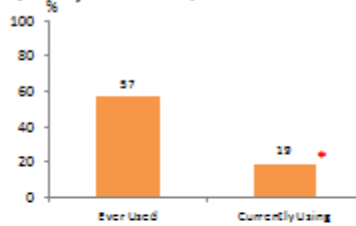
Reasons for not discussing FP with male members



Base (UW): FLW: 77

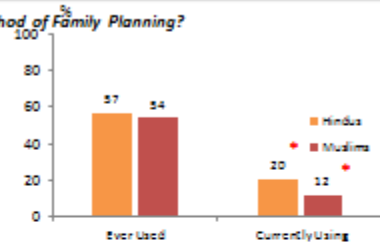
## Use of MODERN Methods

Q. Have you EVER USED/ CURRENTLY USING any Modern Method of Family Planning?



Base (W): Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 and have ever used FP methods : 3519

Base (W): Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 and are currently using FP methods : 2926

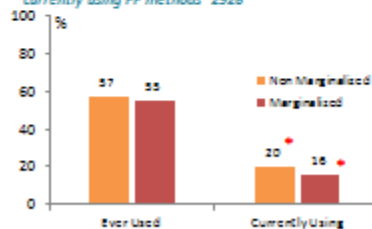


Base (W): Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 and have ever used FP methods: Hindu Mothers :3040

Muslim Mothers : 478

Base (W) Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 and are currently using FP methods: Hindu Mothers:2518;

All Muslim mothers: 408



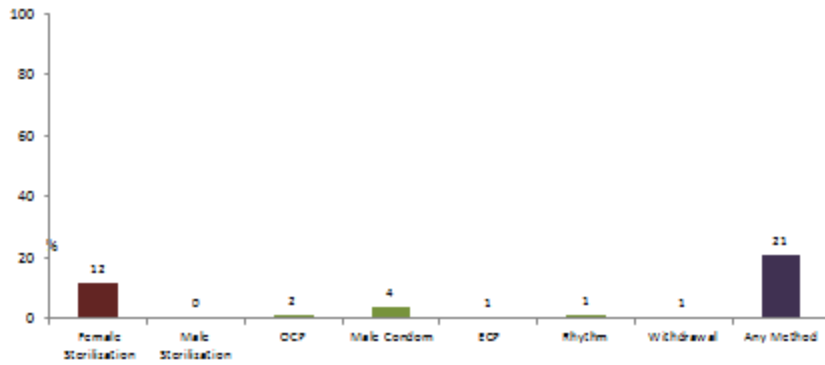
- Significant no. of respondents who have ever used FP methods have dropped out and are currently not using any of the methods.
- This drop was found to be more in the Muslims and the Marginalized families
- The current usage levels of Muslims and Marginalized families was found to be significantly less than the others

Base (W): Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 and have ever used FP methods Marg. Mothers: 929 Non Marg Mothers: 2950

Base (W): Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 and are currently using FP methods : 775, Non Marg mothers :2151

\* Significance difference using Z test (with 95% confidence interval)

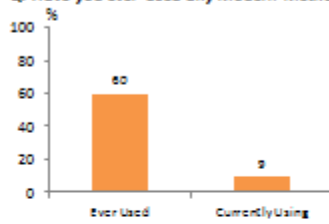
## Methods Mix



Base (W): All Mothers with child age between 0 to 23 months (Except Currently pregnant, those in stage of menopause and those separated, divorced and widowed) :2926

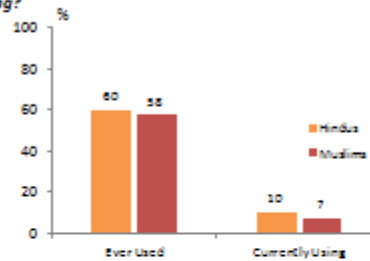
## Use of MODERN Methods (Mothers of children 0-6 months)

Q. Have you ever used any Modern Method of Family Planning?



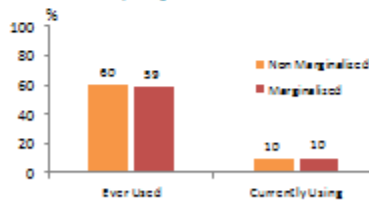
Base (W) Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and have ever used FP methods : 1025

Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and are currently using FP methods 877



Base(W) : Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and have ever used FP methods Hindu Mothers: 1611 Muslim Mothers: 251

Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and are currently using FP methods Hindu Mothers:755; All Muslim mothers: 121



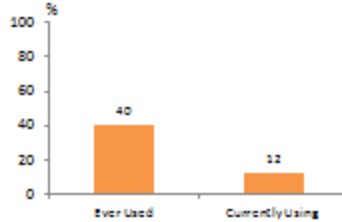
Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and have ever used FP methods : Marg Mothers : 290, Non Marg. Mothers: 735

Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and are currently using FP methods Marg mothers: 248, Non Marg mothers :629

- About 9% of the Mothers in the post-partum phase were found to be using modern Family Planning methods.

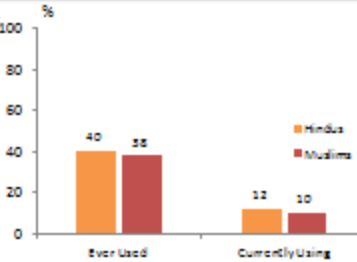
## Use of MODERN Methods (Mothers of children 0-11 months)

Q. Have you ever used any Modern Method of Family Planning?



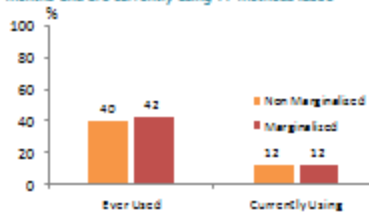
Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 11 months and have ever used FP methods: 1863

Base (W) Mothers with children between age of 0 to 11 months and are currently using FP methods :1596



Base(W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 11 months and have ever used FP methods Hindu Mothers: 1611 Muslim Mothers: 251

Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 11 months and are currently using FP methods Hindu Mothers:1174; All Muslim mothers: 422



Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 11 months and have ever used FP methods Marg mothers : 500, Non Marg. :1363

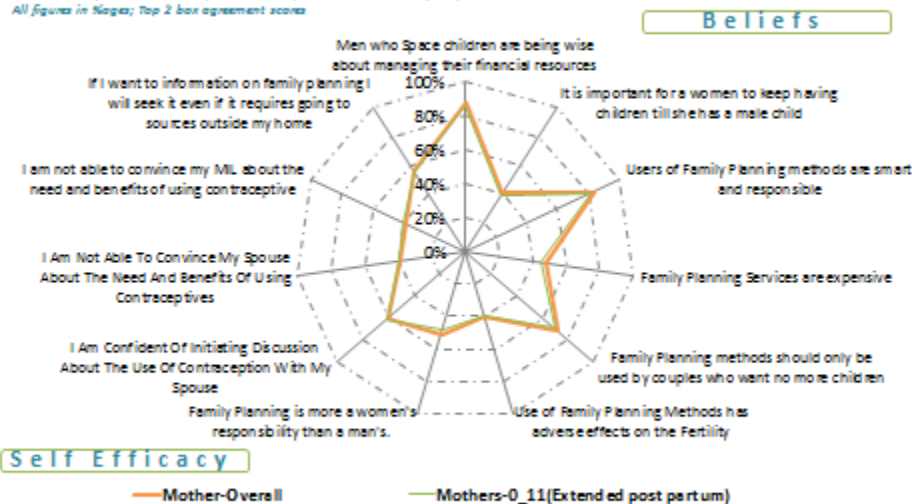
Base (W): Mothers with children between age of 0 to 6 months and are currently using FP methods Marg mothers: 422, Non Marg mothers :1174

- About 12% of the Mothers in the extended post-partum phase were found to be using modern Family Planning methods.

## Drivers of Family Planning

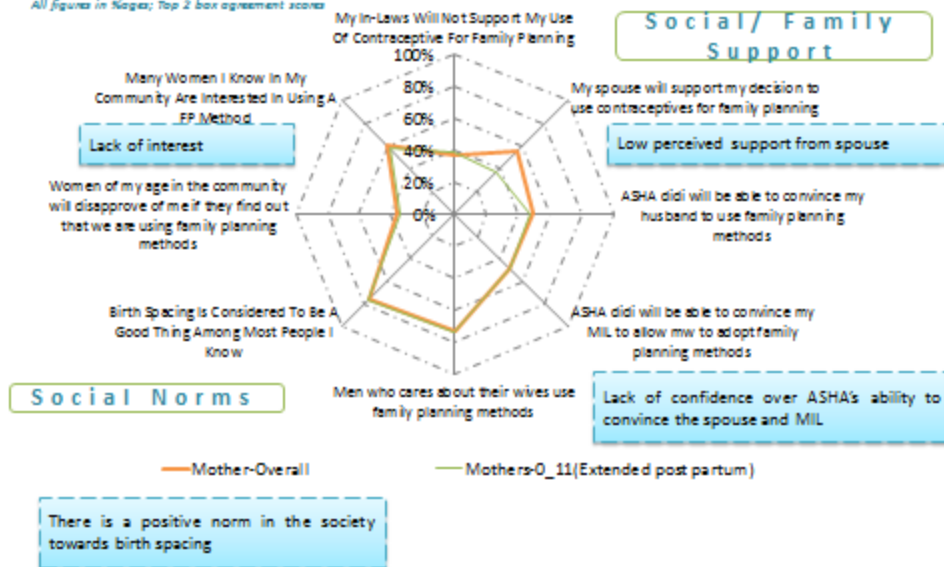
### Perceptions towards Family Planning among Women

Base (W): All respondents with child between age 0 to 23 months (except Separated, divorced, widowed )  
 Mothers:3515, Mothers in Post partum: 1025 ; Mothers in Extended post partum: 1863  
 All figures in %ages; Top 2 box agreement scores



## Social Norms & Social/Family Support

Base (N): All respondents with child between age 0 to 23 months (except Separated, divorced, widowed)  
 Mothers: 3515; Mothers in Post partum: 1025; Mothers in Extended post partum: 1863  
 All figures in Nages; Top 2 box agreement scores



### Barriers:

- **Low Self Efficacy among women** – a sizeable proportion of women have low self efficacy in terms of convincing their spouse or MIL on issues related to FP
- **Lack of spousal communication** - above three-fifth (61.1%) of the women are not confident of initiating discussion about the use of contraction with their spouse
- **Low perceived support from spouse**
- **Lack of confidence over ASHA's ability** to convince the spouse and MIL
- **Lack of interest** in adopting FP method

### Triggers:

- **Strong positive beliefs**
  - Users of Family Planning methods are smart and responsible
  - Family Planning Services are not expensive
  - Use of Family Planning Methods has no adverse effects on the Fertility
- **Positive social norms**
  - Birth Spacing Is Considered To Be A Good Thing Among Most People I Know
  - Men who cares about their wives use family planning methods

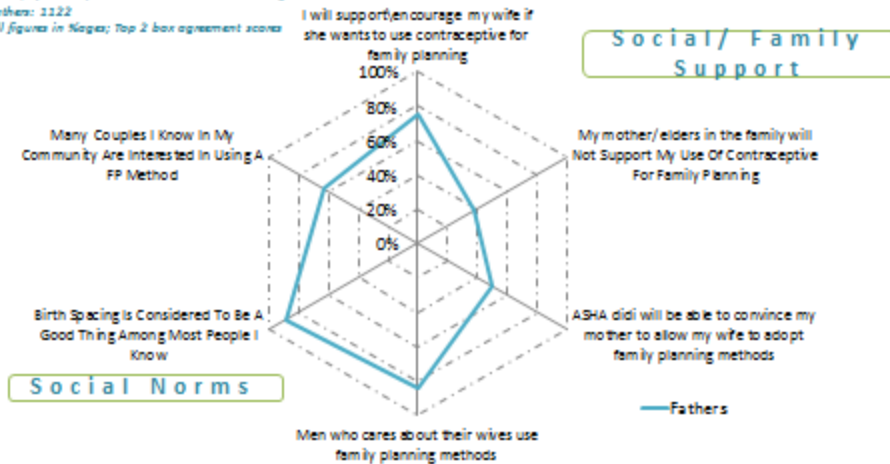
Low Self Efficacy, Lack of spousal communication, Low perceived support from spouse, Lack of interest in adopting FP and Lack of confidence over FLW's ability to convince spouse and MIL have been identified as barriers.

## Perceptions towards Family Planning: Fathers

Base (N): All respondents with child between age 0 to 23 months

Fathers: 1122

All figures in Neges; Top 2 box agreement scores



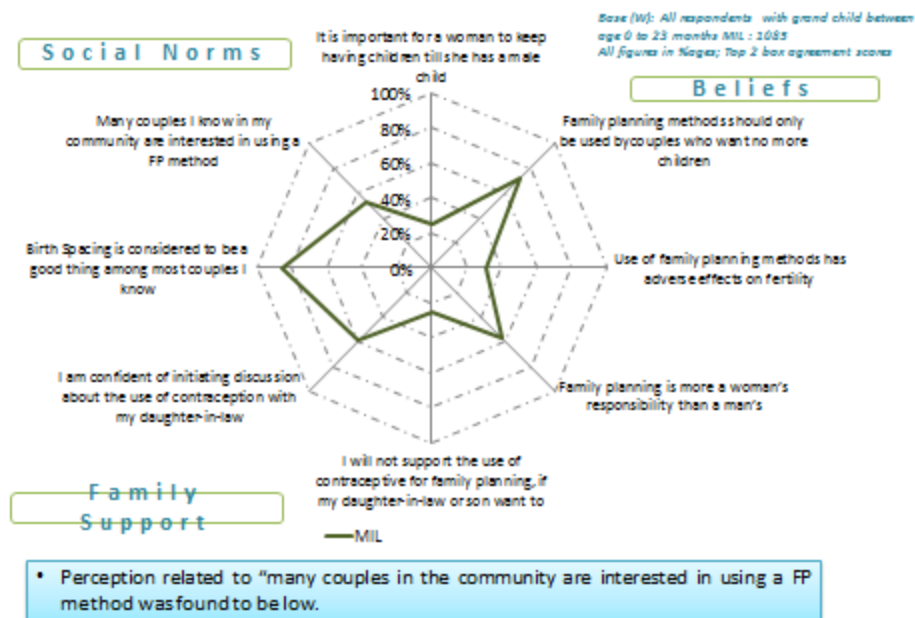
### Barriers:

- Low perceived support from mother/elders in the family (38%)
- Lack of confidence over ASHA's ability to convince mother/elders in family (51%)

### Drivers:

- Positive social norms
  - Birth Spacing Is Considered To Be A Good Thing Among Most People I Know
  - Men who cares about their wives use family planning methods
  - Many couples I know in the community are interested in using a FP method.

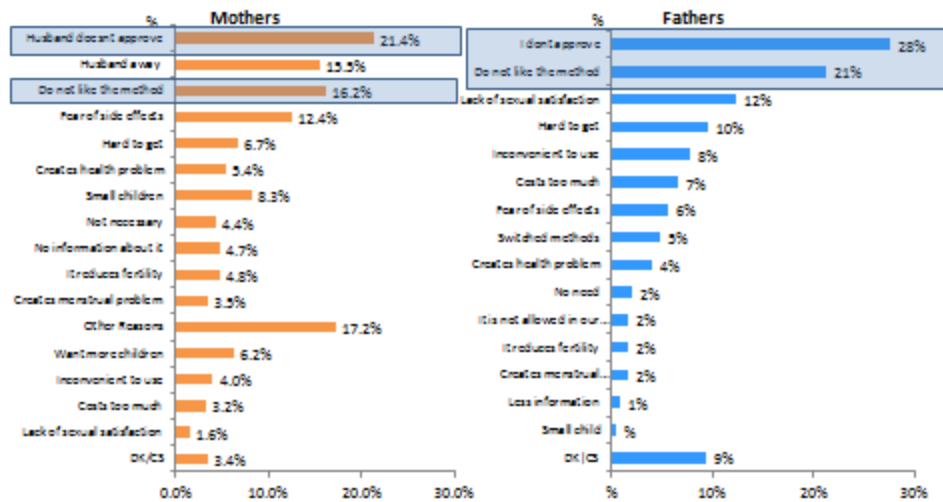
## Perceptions towards Family Planning: MIL



### Drivers:

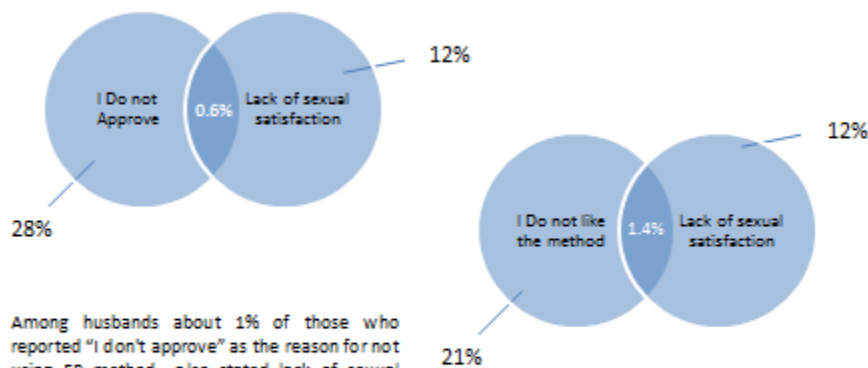
- **Positive beliefs**
  - Very few MIL agreed that use of FP method has any adverse effect. (only 31 % agree)
  - Family planning is more a woman's responsibility than man. (44% disagree)
- **Family Support**
  - MIL told that she will support the use of FP if her son or DIL want to. (74% agree)
  - Social Norms
  - Birth Spacing Is Considered To Be A Good Thing Among Most couple I Know (86% Agree)
  - Many couples I know in the community are interested in using a FP method. (53% Agree)

## Reasons for not using ....



Base (W) : Respondents with children between age of 0 to 11 months who have not used the Family Planning Methods and whose wife is not currently pregnant, are not menopause and are divorced/ separated

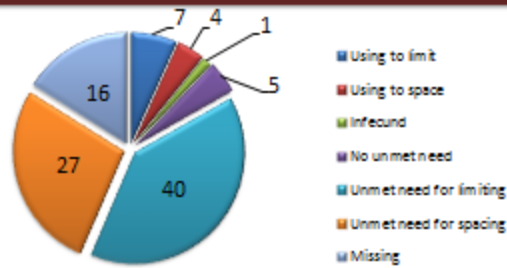
## Reasons for not using ....



- Among husbands about 1% of those who reported "I don't approve" as the reason for not using FP method also stated lack of sexual satisfaction.
- Among those who stated "I don't like the methods" about 1.4% of the respondents also stated lack of sexual satisfaction as one of the reason for not using FP methods.

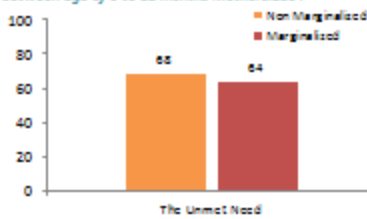
Base (W) : Respondents with children between age of 0 to 11 months who have not used the Family Planning Methods and whose wife is not currently pregnant, are not menopause and are divorced/ separated : Husbands: 953

## Unmet Need of Family Planning during Extended Postpartum Period (mothers 0 to 11)

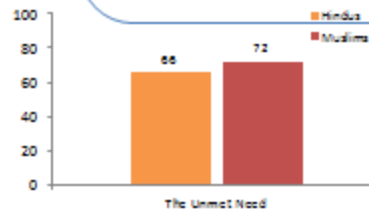


- Two out of every three extended postpartum women in focus districts expressed an unmet need for family planning.
- A very high level of unmet need for limiting (40%) and significantly higher need for spacing (27%).
- Unmet need was found to be significantly high among Muslims.

Base (W): All respondents with children between age of 0 to 11 months Mothers:1864



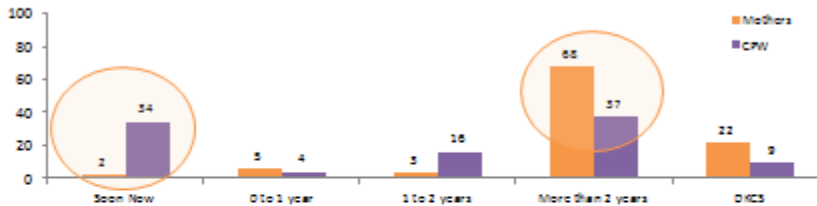
Base (W): All respondents with children between age of 0 to 11 months Marg mothers: 499, Non Marg mothers :1365



Base (W): All respondents with children between age of 0 to 11 months Hindu Mothers:1612, Muslim Mothers: 252

## Intention: Birth Spacing

Q. How long would you like to wait for another child after the birth of youngest child a child?



Base (W) : Those who are not using FP: mothers : 2978 Base (UW) CPW with zero parity 448

Particulars	Mothers		CPW	
	Hindus	Muslims	Hindus	Muslims
Base (W)	241	49	367	54
Soon Now	5	6	32	44
0 to 1 year	4	2	4	2
1 to 2 years	65	82*	16	17
More than 2 year	2	2	39	26
Don't Know Cant Say	24	10*	9	9

\* Significance difference using Z test (with 95% confidence interval)



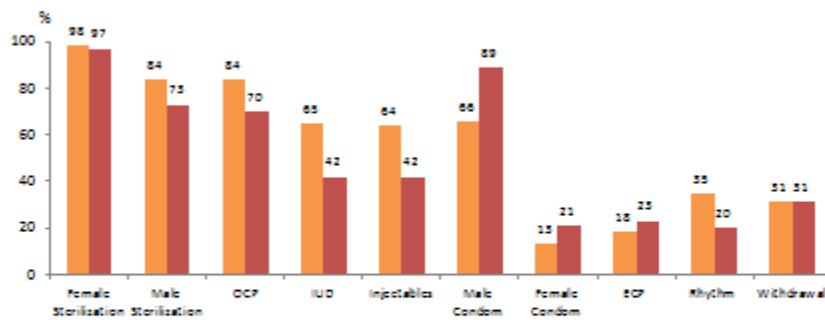
## Profile of the group requiring spacing

	Mothers	Fathers
Age	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-25 yrs: 84.1%; 26-35 yrs: 15%, more than 35: 0.1%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18-25 yrs: 45%; 26-35 yrs: 51%, more than 35: 4%</li> </ul>
Age at Marriage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median age at marriage: 18 yrs</li> <li>Avg age gap with spouse: 4 yrs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Median age at marriage: 21 yrs</li> <li>Avg age gap with spouse: 4 yrs</li> </ul>
Religion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hindus: 91% Muslims: 9%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hindus: 90%, Muslims: 10%</li> </ul>
Educational Qualification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illiterate: 48%; Primary or Literate with no formal education: 19%; Middle or higher secondary: 25%; higher secondary and above: 8%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Illiterate: 27%; Primary or Literate with no formal education: 24%; Middle or higher secondary: 32%; higher secondary and above: 16%</li> </ul>
Occupation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Housewife: 99; Agriculture: 0.5%; Unskilled labour: 0.1%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agriculture: 34%; Skilled Labour: 19%, Unskilled labour: 26%; Self employed: 13% ; Service: 3%</li> </ul>
Parity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≤2 children : 100%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>≤2 children : 100%</li> </ul>
Living Status	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Husband living away: 29%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently Married Living with wife: 100%</li> </ul>
Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowerment index: Low: 60%, Medium:29%, High:12%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NA</li> </ul>

Base (W): Mothers: 933, Fathers :342

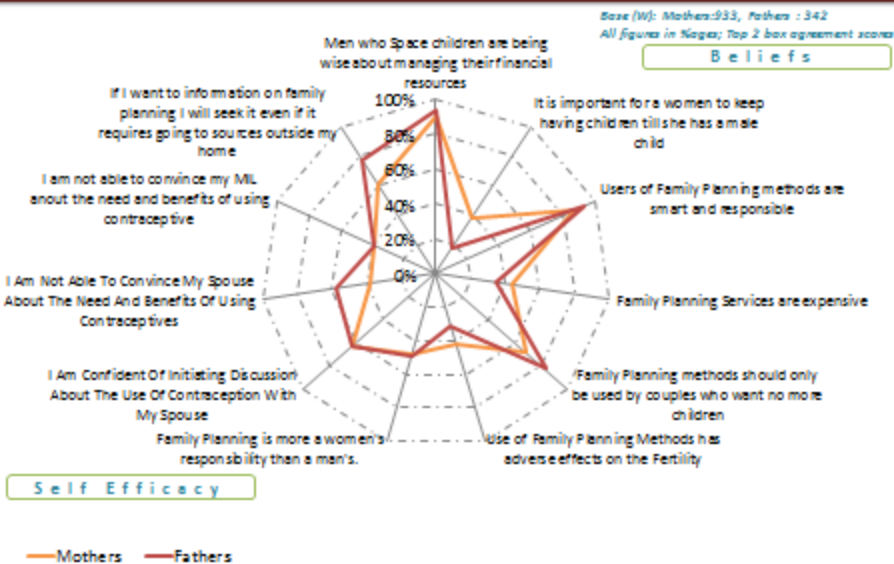
## Knowledge of the Group Requiring Spacing

Awareness about Family Planning Methods among the group?

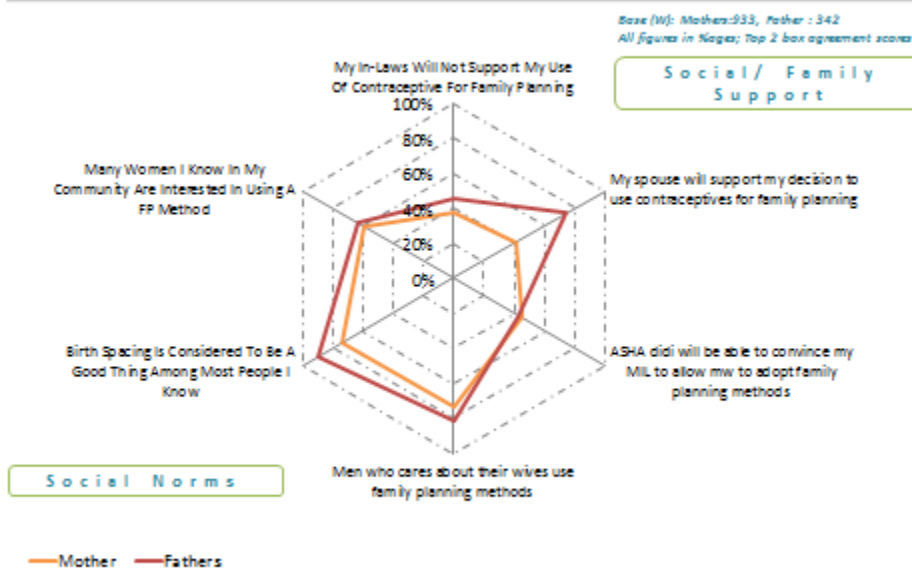


Base (W): Mothers: 933, Fathers :342

## Perceptions towards Family Planning: Group Requiring Spacing



## Perceptions towards Family Planning: Group Requiring Spacing



## **Conclusion & Program lessons learned:**

A Significant drop could be seen from the ever used FP methods to currently using FP methods. About 38% of the respondents reported that they have never used any FP method, and 79% were currently not using any FP method. About 12% of the respondents were using FP methods in Extended post-Partum period and 9% were using even during post-partum period. Unmet need for spacing method was found to be very high (27%) during first year post birth. A Trend towards having 3 children in total as the group that require spacing is identified.

Self-efficacy of the mothers was found to be lower in terms of convincing their spouse or MIL on issues related to FP. Perceived support from the spouse was found to be lower among the Mothers. Perception about ASHA's ability to convince the spouse and MIL about issues related to FP. Among the husbands self-efficacy and positive beliefs were found to be high. About 45% of the mothers reported that they have discussed about family planning with their husbands majority of which had lower education levels or were illiterate.

Role of Husbands in using Family planning methods :

- 28% of them reported that they do not approve the use of FP Methods
- 21% reported that they Didn't like the method
- 12% reported the reason for not using as lack of sexual satisfaction.

The major barriers identified for not discussing are :

- It is not an Important Topic (37% of Mothers)
- Afraid of discussing with husband/Not comfortable in discussing (28% Mothers)

Identifying women with unmet need for spacing methods and proper counseling around myths and misconceptions of modern spacing methods could be a potential strategy to promote spacing. To promote modern spacing methods it is important to identify those with unmet need for spacing and communication should focus on myths and misconception around various modern spacing methods. Due to very high unmet need during extended postpartum period it has lots of potential where women may adopt modern spacing method especially IUD and delay their next pregnancy.