



**Engaging Young Men and Couples in Family Planning Programs through a  
Gender Transformative Approach  
IUSSP Presentation – 10th November 2020**

# Introduction

Sexual and reproductive health considered a “**woman’s domain**” with men engaged as primary decision makers

**Focus of the review:** programs on sexual and reproductive health with men/women or male and couples’ engagement with a focus on SRH, especially family planning

## **Objective:**

- ✓ identify gender integrated approaches that engage men and young couples in FP
- ✓ channels or combination of channels employed for engaging men and couples
- ✓ Considerations while engaging with men and couples in FP programs

# Overview of Programs



# How have men been engaged?

**Multiple levels of engagement:** Engaging men in their varying capacities within programs have emerged as promising. These are:

Project Name	Men as Clients	Men as Partners	Men as Influencers
SASA!		✓	✓
PRACHAR	✓	✓	✓
CHAMPION		✓	
Smart Couple		✓	
A360	✓	✓	
Ujjwal	✓		
Malawi Male Motivators	✓	✓	
Transform/PHARE	✓	✓	✓
Cyber Rwanda		✓	✓

# How have men been engaged?

**Multiple levels of engagement:** Engaging men through a combination of channels and platforms

# What are the gaps in engaging men?

**Couple Interventions to Promote Mutuality:** Engaging men alone is a good starting point. However, providing couples with tools to discuss reproductive health, keeping in mind both partners' comfort in terms of using contraception and mutuality in decision making is important

**Reflective Process for Men to Address Masculine Pressures:** Programs have focused on engaging men without helping men unlearn gendered power dynamics and forgo harmful masculine behavior for both their own and partners well being. Programs must enable men to unpack their struggles and pressure of various masculine roles of:

# How can programs better engage men and

**couples?**

- **Reimagining Couple Space as Equitable-** Enabling men to see sole decision making as burdensome and shared accountability of family planning as steps to forging emotional intimacy through **couple games, events for newly weds**
- **Bridging the Knowledge Gap** – Addressing the digital divide between men and women and providing couples easy tools to access information together through **gamification, videos and other digital media.**
- **Improving Spousal Communication and Couple Dynamics** – **Inducting young couples** who are able to communicate better and negotiate with norms for advocacy to positively influence other couples in the community

# How can programs better engage men and couples?

- **Promoting Collaborative Decision Making** – Enabling couples to re-imagine family planning as a medium to fulfil their aspirations through more collaborative decision making on finances, reproduction and contraception through **financial tools, baby calculators** etc.
- **Strong Peer Networks to Support Men and Couples** – Even after programs end, peer support network groups must exist to ensure sustained positive change towards gender equitable behavior through **refresher workshops**
- **Contextually Sensitive Messaging** – Providing messaging which are sensitive to low literacy settings. Tailormade content using examples of **local culture characters** to layer in messaging on sex, contraception and family planning for different contexts.



# **Thank you!**

Presented by : **Aishwarya Sahay**  
Co- Authors: **Kuhika Seth, Kapil  
Vachchar, Sharmishtha Nanda, Jocelyn  
Joseph, Pranita Achyut, Divya Datta**

**For more info, please reach out on:**  
**[asahay@icrw.org](mailto:asahay@icrw.org), [couple\\_engage@icrw.org](mailto:couple_engage@icrw.org)**