

# Rethinking global family planning measurement

Bringing in a rights, justice and person-centered  
lens

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**guttmacher**

# IUSSP Scientific Panel

## Rethinking Family Planning Measurement with a Reproductive Rights and Justice Lens



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# Other Panel Activities

- A two-part webinar series (to launch the panel)
- Expert group meeting (pictured above)
- Smaller convenings at regional and international population-conferences
- Special issue of Studies in Family Planning

## STUDIES IN FAMILY PLANNING

Sexual and Reproductive Health | Fertility |  
Family Planning | HIV/AIDS | Abortion |  
Adolescents | Maternal and Child Health |  
and related research topics, primarily in  
developing countries

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### Rethinking Family Planning Measurement with a Rights, Justice, and Person-Centered Lens

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*Guest Editors*



# Outline

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Critiques of current global FP indicators

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Frameworks to guide revisions

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Person-centered measurement

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Prioritizing new directions for measurement

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IUSSP Panel moving towards recommendations

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# **Current global family planning indicators and critiques**

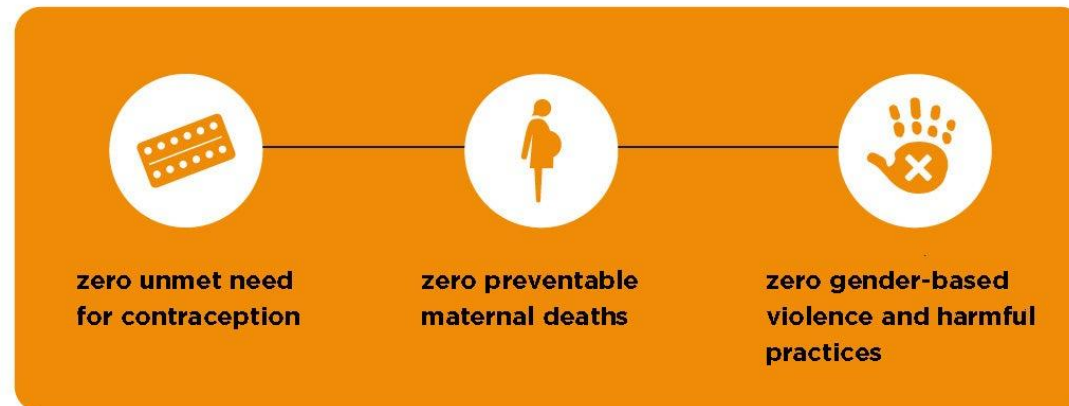
# Standard FP demand indicators

**SDG Target 3.7** Ensure **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

**Target 3.7.1** Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15–49 years) who have **their need for family planning satisfied** with modern methods

$$\text{Demand satisfied for modern methods} = \frac{\text{Contraceptive users}}{\text{Contraceptive users} + \text{unmet need}}$$

## UNFPA's Transformative Results



# Evolution of contraceptive need paradigms

## Focus on fertility goals

Motivation: fertility outcomes

Metrics: KAP-GAP

## Unmet need and access

Motivation: fertility outcomes & ensuring access

Metrics: unmet need (including 2012 revision)

Critiques: sexual activity, fecundity, marital status, pregnancy and post-partum amenorrhea

## Person-centered contraceptive need

Motivation: contraceptive outcomes

Metrics: Under development!

Critiques: demand for fertility outcomes  $\neq$  demand for contraception

# Clarifying demand

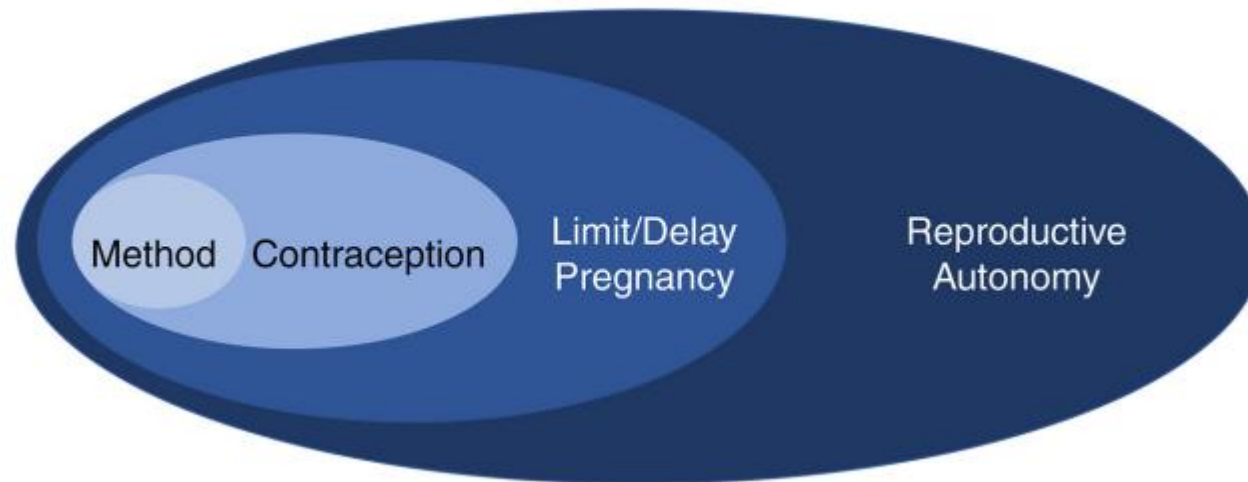
What Do We Demand? Responding to the Call for Precision and Definitional Agreement in Family Planning's "Demand" and "Need" Jargon

Madeleine Short Fabric<sup>a</sup>

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**FIGURE.** Four Types of Interrelated Yet Distinct Family Planning-Related Desires/Demands

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# Frameworks guiding new measurement

# Rights-based

*“All couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have information, education and means to do so”*

*“It also includes the right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence”* (ICPD, Principle 8)



# Reproductive justice

*The human right to maintain personal bodily autonomy, have children, not have children, and parent the children we have in safe and sustainable communities*

- SisterSong



Image credit: Repeal Hyde Art Project

# Person-centeredness

*Care that is respectful of and responsive to individual patient preferences, needs, and values.*

- Institute of Medicine

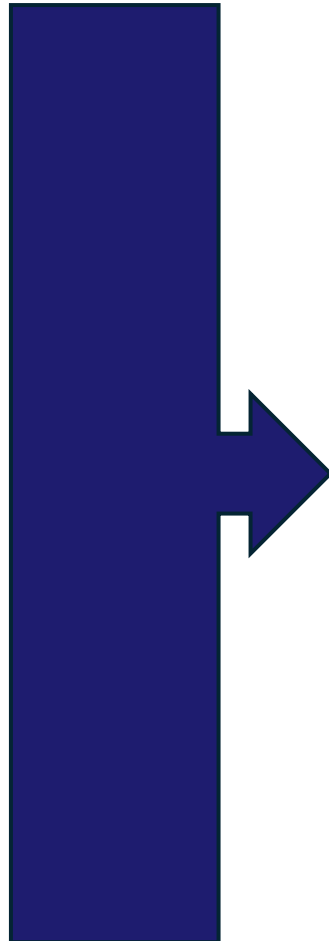


## Grounding Frameworks

Human rights-based

Reproductive Justice

Person-centered



## Bringing these lenses together

- Centering the needs, values and preferences of people in how we design our measures
- Range of equally valid choices and reproductive outcomes
- Need for a larger measurement ecosystem that recognizes the role of socio-cultural, economist, legal and policy influences
- Considering the role of power dynamics at individual, institutional, and systems-levels

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# Person-centered measurement


# What is a person-centered measure?

## Rothschild et al. 2025

- Person-centered *care*  $\neq$  Person-centered *measurement*
- Person-reported measure  $\neq$  Person-centered measure
- Definition of person-centered measure
  1. The measure assesses an individual's self-identified values, needs, or preferences
  2. The measure reflects the individual's own definition of a “good” or a “bad” outcome
    - a) Directly assess if construct aligns with preferences
    - b) Indirectly assess if construct concordant with preferences

# Scoping review of current person-centered family planning measures

STUDIES IN FAMILY PLANNING

Research Article | [Open Access](#) | 

## The State of Person-Centered Measurement for Family Planning Need and Use: A Scoping Review

Ilene S. Speizer, Elizabeth A. Sully, Youmna M. Hashem, Maame Araba A. Oduro

First published: 11 June 2025 | <https://doi.org/10.1111/sifp.70019>



Measure development stages	Decision making/ agency/ autonomy	Contr. Use – intention and unmet need	Pregnancy/ fertility preferences	Method Preference	Method experience & satisfaction
<b>Conceptual: General</b>	3 commentaries				
<b>Conceptual: Specific</b>	1 commentaries	3		2 commentaries	1 commentaries
<b>Formative</b>	5 qual	1	3 qual	3 qual	
<b>Scale level</b>	2	1		1	
<b>Validation</b>			3		
<b>Applied: Cross sect.</b>	1	6	3	3	1
<b>Applied: Longitudinal</b>		7		1	2

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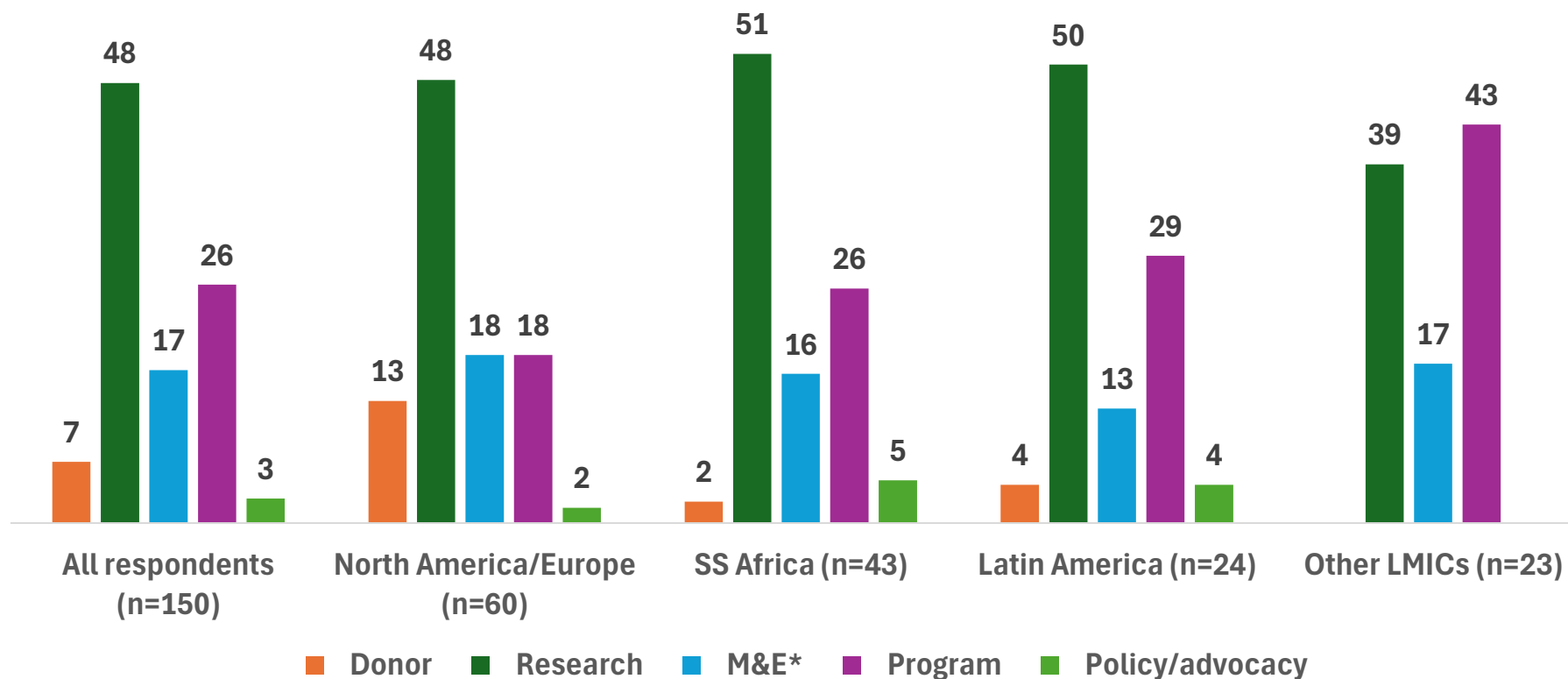
# **Prioritizing new directions for measurement**

# Consultative process

- Identify priorities for future measurement
  - Concepts
  - Approaches
  - Populations
- Qualtrics survey fielded from November to December 2024
- Administered the survey to roughly 350+ stakeholders
  - Survey was available in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese
- 220 people responded to the survey; 150 respondents completed the entire questionnaire

# Respondents working in programs were concentrated in SSA, Latin America and other LMICs

Distribution of respondents by type of work and region of residence

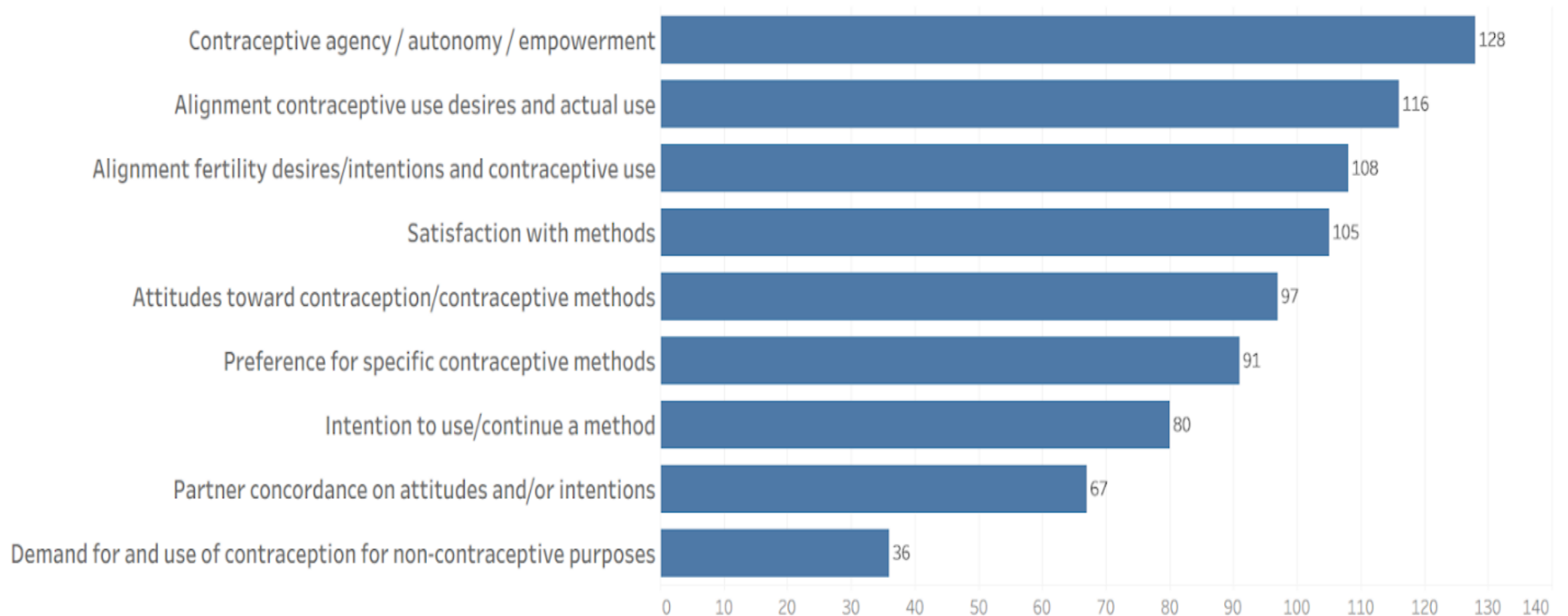


# Survey of family planning measurement experts

**Theme 1: From the list below of measurement factors that could be considered as part of revised FP measurement, please identify the five that you think are most important. Please mark up to five priority responses.**

- a. Preference for specific contraceptive methods
- b. Satisfaction with method(s)
- c. Attitudes toward contraception and contraceptive methods (e.g. acceptability or hesitancy)
- d. Intention to use/continue a method
- e. Partner concordance on contraceptive attitudes and/or intentions
- f. Alignment between contraceptive use desires and actual use (contraceptive concordance)
- g. Alignment between fertility desires/intentions and contraceptive behaviors
- h. Demand for and use of contraception for non-contraceptive purposes
- i. Contraceptive agency/autonomy/empowerment

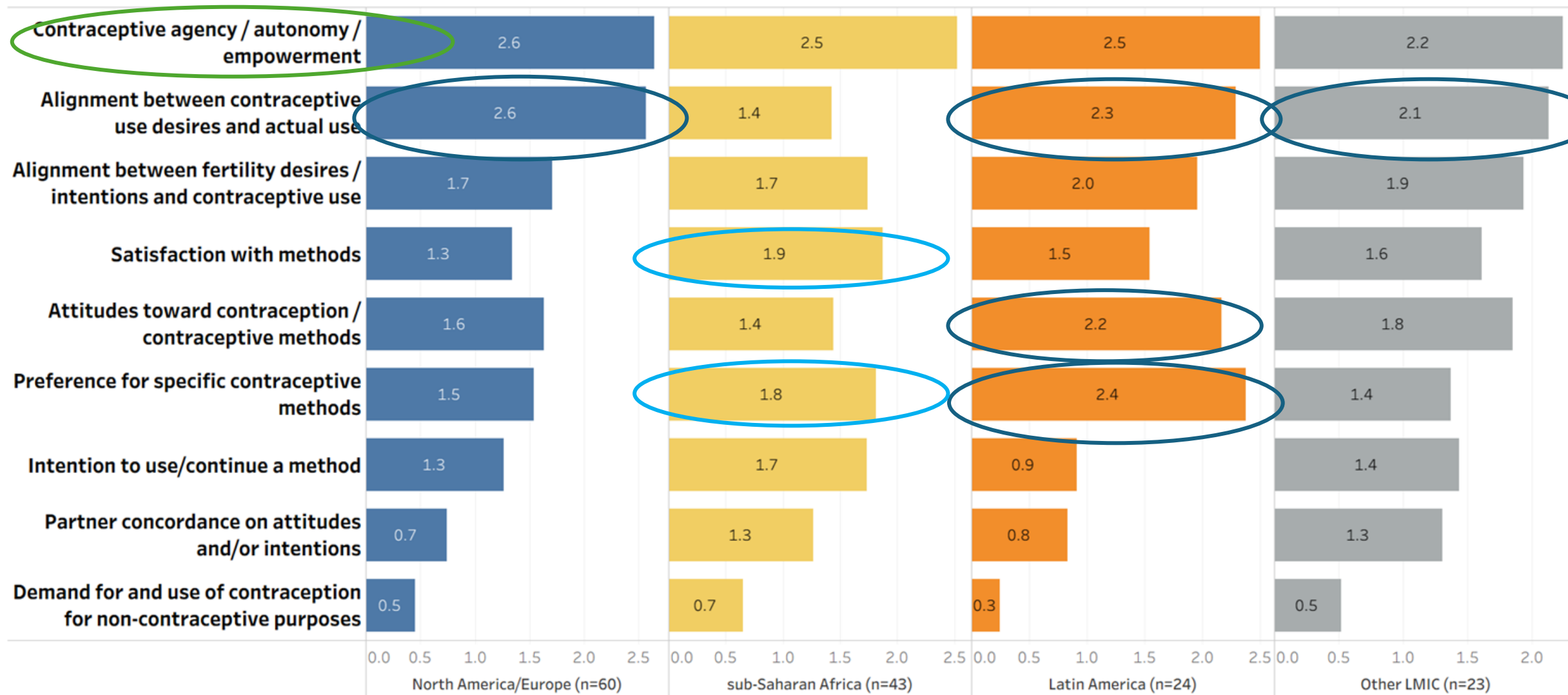
# Frequency of top ranked FP measurement factors



# Regional differences in priority constructs

## Average scores

Measurement Factor Prioritization by Region



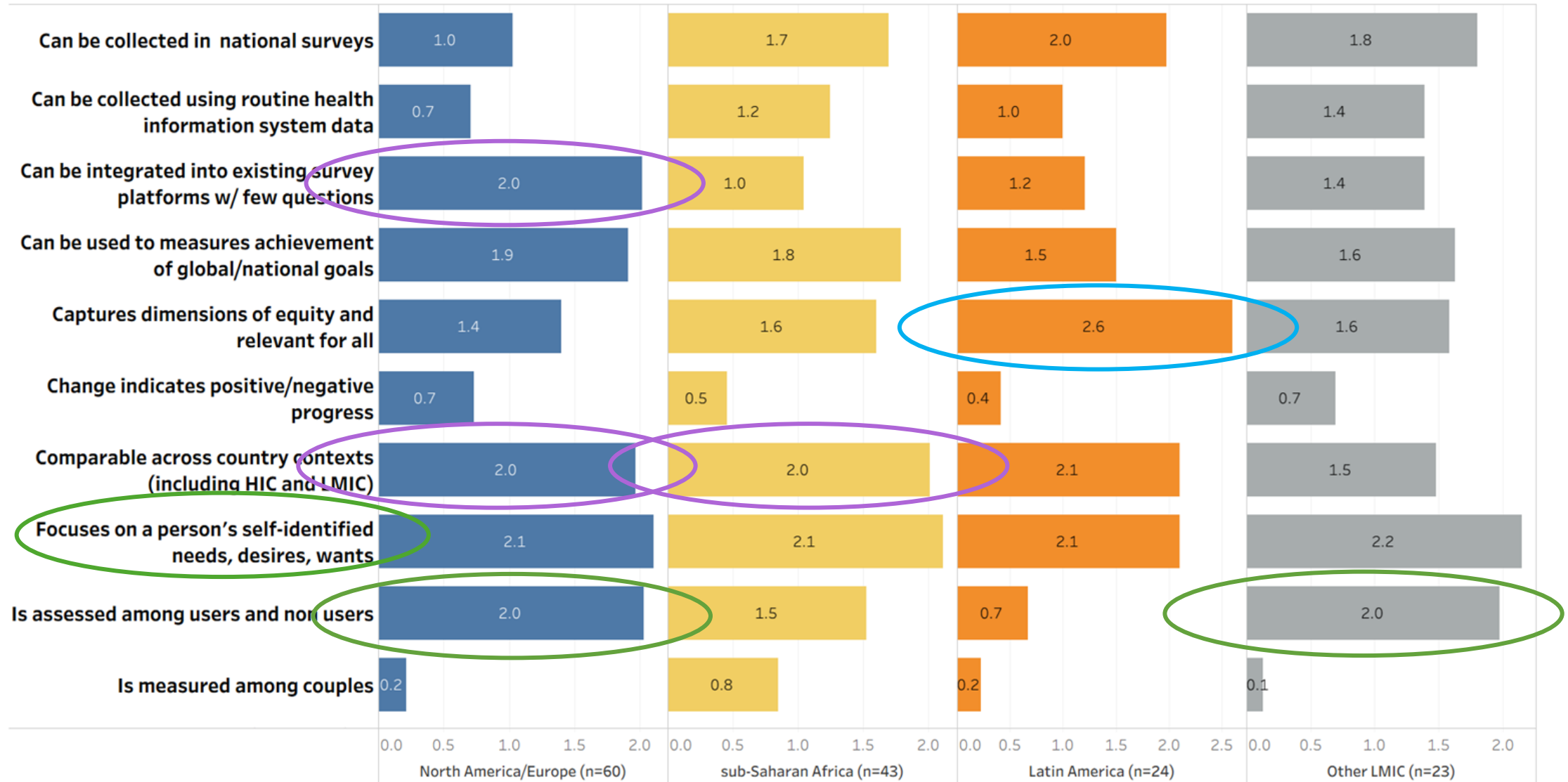
**Theme 2: Thinking now about identifying GLOBAL INDICATOR(S), from the list of QUALITIES below, please identify the five that you think are most important. Please mark up to five priority responses.**

- a. Is assessed among users and non-users
- b. Is easy to integrate into existing survey platforms with only a few new questions required
- c. Is comparable across country contexts (e.g. including high- and low-income country settings)
- d. Can be used to measure achievement of global and national goals or monitor progress
- e. Change indicates positive/negative progress (e.g. high value always indicates improvement)
- f. Is measured among couples
- g. Can be collected in national surveys
- h. Can be collected using routine health information system data
- i. Captures dimensions of equity and relevant for all, including marginalized groups
- j. Focuses on a person's self-identified needs, desires, wants
- k. Measures perspectives of people of all gender identities

# Prioritization of qualities of global measures by region

## Average scores

Regional Prioritization of Qualities of Global Measures



# Reflections from International Population Conference

Considering attitudes and realistic reasons for hesitancy to use is a person-centered approach that can begin to help programs to understand some of the other key concepts of agency, autonomy, and capacity to make decisions

- 5 discussion groups based on measurement factors
  - Agency/autonomy/empowerment
  - Alignment between contraceptive desires and use
  - Attitudes towards contraception
  - Alignment between fertility desires and contraceptive use
  - Preference for specific methods

Agency ensures that human rights are at the center of the work while also ensuring that empowerment is contextually measured

This type of alignment is the basis for agency and preferences and is indicative of meeting people's needs

Conceptually this measure is similar to unmet need, which will make it easier to socialize with governments and programs

In some contexts, methods that are promoted are not necessarily responsive to individual preferences, indicating the importance of measuring, assessing, and being responsive to preferences

Important to recognize fertility as a dominant rationale for contraceptive use

# Discussion and Key Findings

- Family planning community is ready, willing, and able to consider novel measures
- Focus on agency/autonomy – need to develop measures that capture individual's ability to achieve their desires
- Alignment-based measures (contraceptive desires and use) – interest/focus on these measures that should be easy to socialize
- Global measurement priorities – focuses on individual's self-identified needs; includes users and non-users – i.e., person-centered
- Limitations: not sure who we missed; unsure of response rate; missing donors/advocacy folks

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# **IUSSP Panel moving to recommendations**

# Contraceptive agency

- Priority of the global community
- Complicated by a lack of a simple indicator
- Current indicators come from multi-item scales
- Important to understand:
  - The ability to make decisions
  - The ability to act on decisions
- Need to explore simplified framing for global indicator use

## Alignment-based measures

- Alignment between contraceptive desires and contraceptive behaviors prioritized
- Alignment-based measures reflect individual agency to make and act on contraceptive decisions
- Include information about whether individuals want to use and whether they are using
- Add additional questions on whether current users want to use current method
- Some recent strategies to capture these alignment-based measures

# Conceptual approach to measuring alignment between contraceptive desires and behaviors

Box 2

		Has FP method	
		No	Yes
Wants FP Method	No	A	B
	Yes	C	D

Source: Senderowicz, 2020

# New alignment-based indicators

## Preference-aligned fertility management (PFM)

Holt et al 2023; Rothschild et al. 2024; Holt et al. 2025

- Do you currently want to be using any method?
- Are you currently using any method (which method)?
- Do you want to be using your current method (among users)

**Identifies users and non-users content with their current status (including current method)**

Implemented in Uganda and Nigeria

## Contraceptive concordance

Vincent et al. 2025

- Are you currently using any method (which method)?
- Do you want to be using your current method (among users)

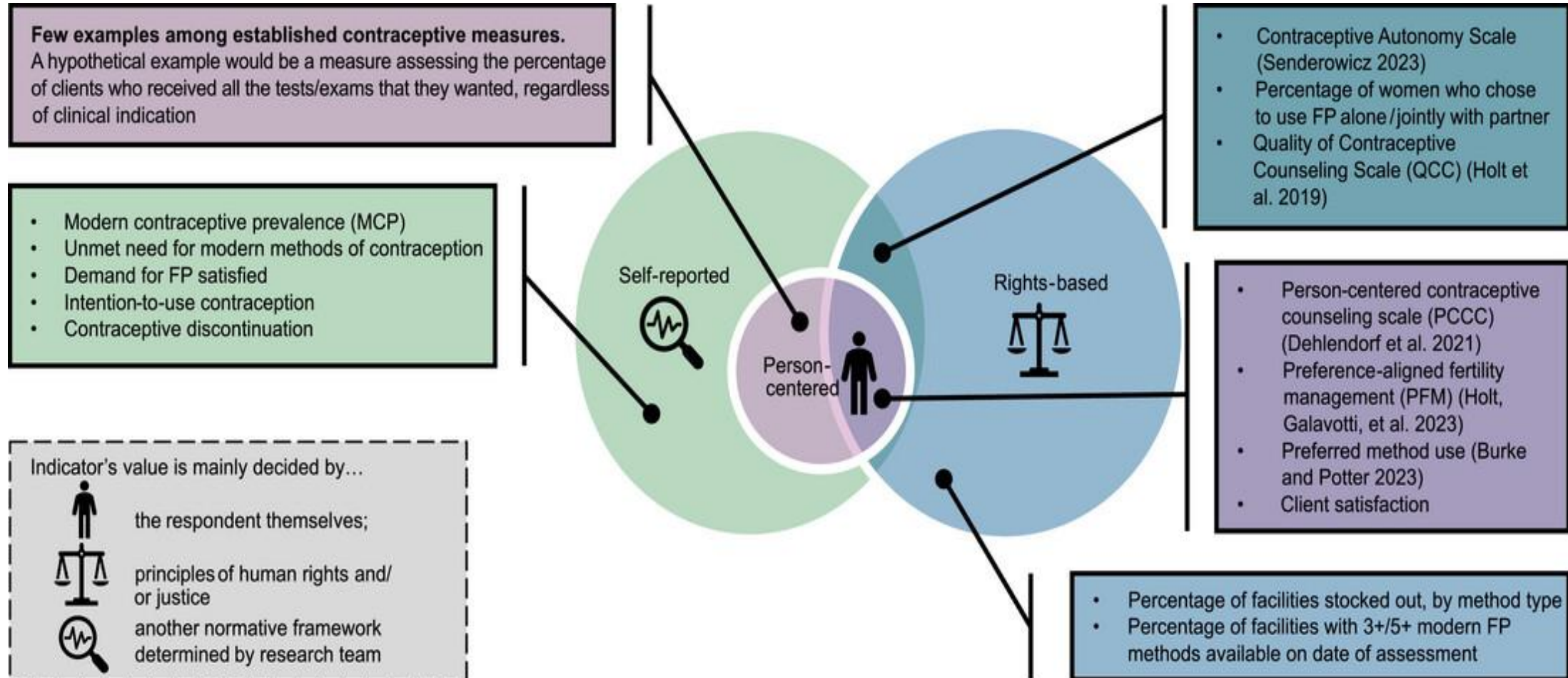
**Identifies users/non-users content with their current status and those users/non-users not content with current status**

Implemented in rural India

# Moving towards implementation of novel measures of contraceptive demand

- Refine and finalize novel measures (alignment-based measures)
  - Identify appropriate question order
  - Determine importance of hypothetical versus current status measures
  - Examine inclusion of method-specific preferences and/or satisfaction
- Determine how to interpret progress with novel indicators
- Identify appropriate audience and level of implementation for novel measures
- Ensure that novel measures are appropriately used (indicator reference sheets)
- Assess applicability of measures for diverse populations, including marginalized groups
- Socialize change for new measures
  - Share findings through webinar(s)
  - Develop recommendations briefs for varying audiences

# Future directions for measurement



## Person-Centered Measurement: Ensuring Prioritization of Individuals' Values, Needs, and Preferences Within the Global Contraceptive Measurement Ecosystem

Claire W. Rothschild, Kelsey Holt, Funmilola M. OlaOlorun, Julius Njogu, Abednego Musau, Christine Dehlendorf

**Thank you.**

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