

IUSSP Debate



**A pregnancy CANNOT be considered
unwanted just because wife SAID she
wants no more births!**

KG Santhya
Population Council
India

Francis Dodoo
African Institute for
Development Policy, Kenya

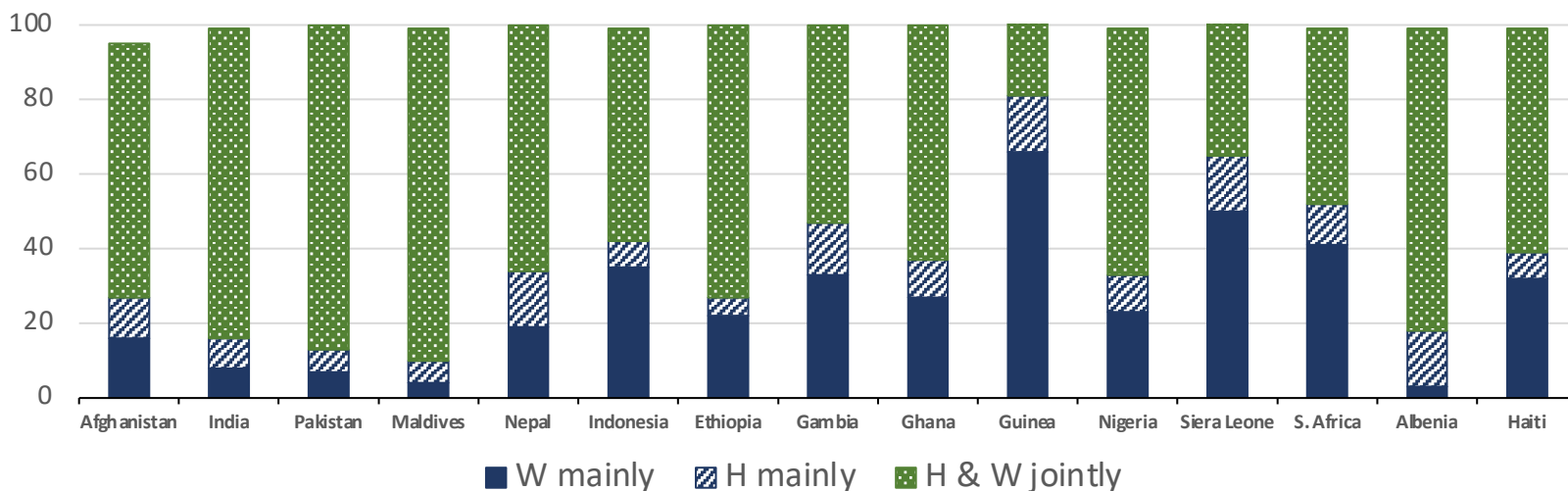
NOVEMBER 8, 2021



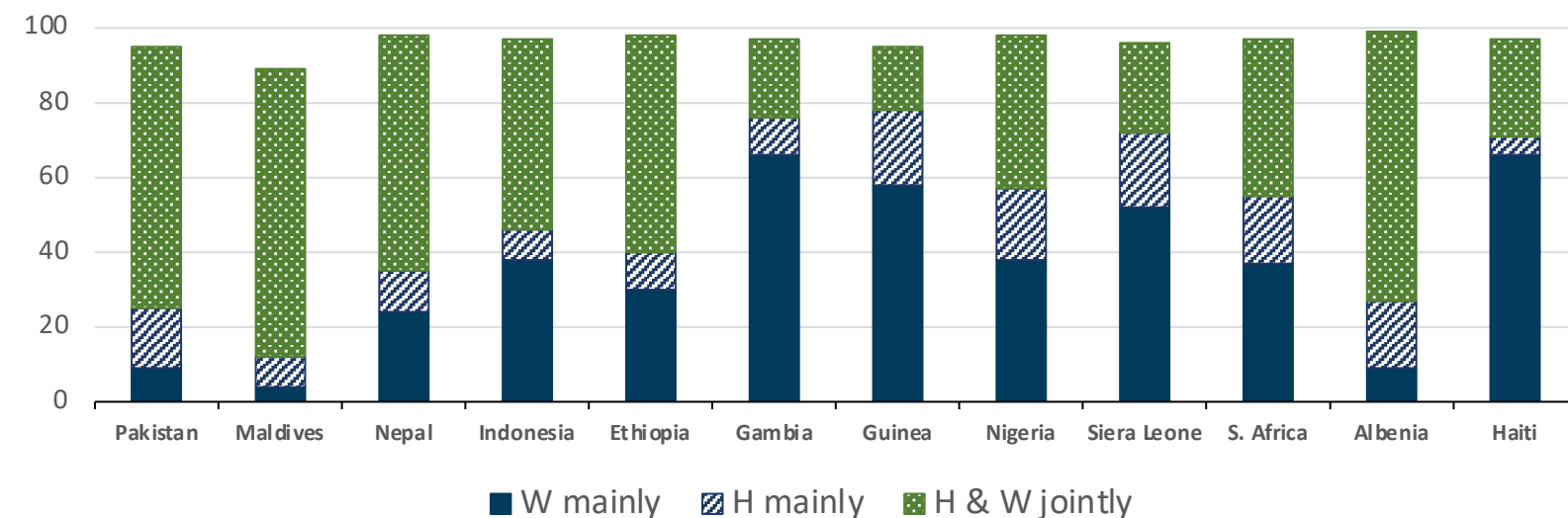
LET'S NOT FORGET

**Reproductive rights are human rights
and
The basic principles of human rights
(universality, inalienability, equality and
non-discrimination)**

Decisions about FP use

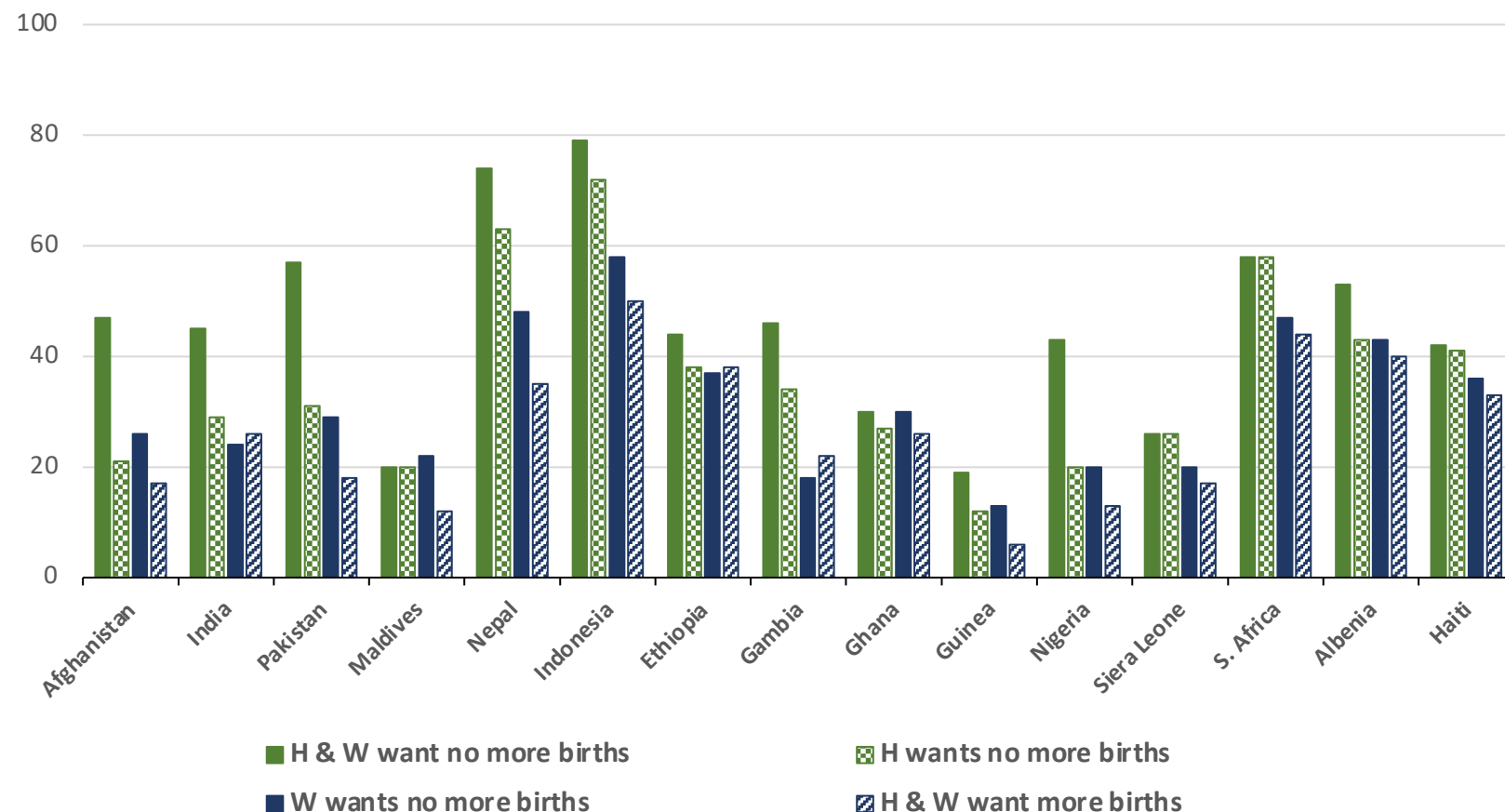


Decisions about FP non-use



When joint decision-making is the norm in decisions to prevent unwanted pregnancy, can we justify labelling a pregnancy unwanted based on wife's preferences only (or husband's preferences only)?

Current contraceptive use



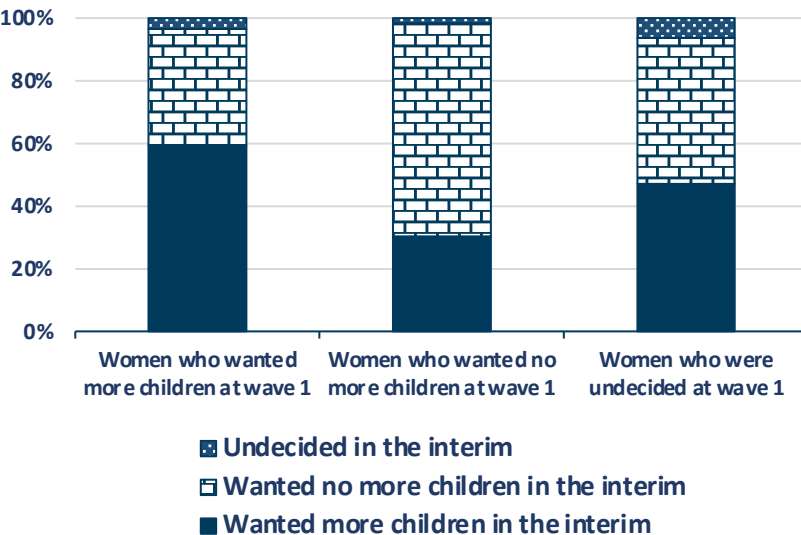
What do we want women and men in a marital relationship to aspire for?

Individual autonomy

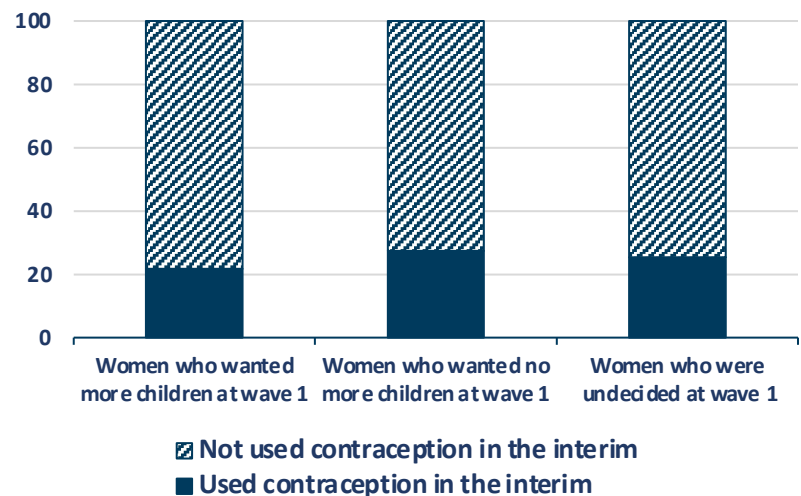
OR

Cooperative action in which their relationship is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed?

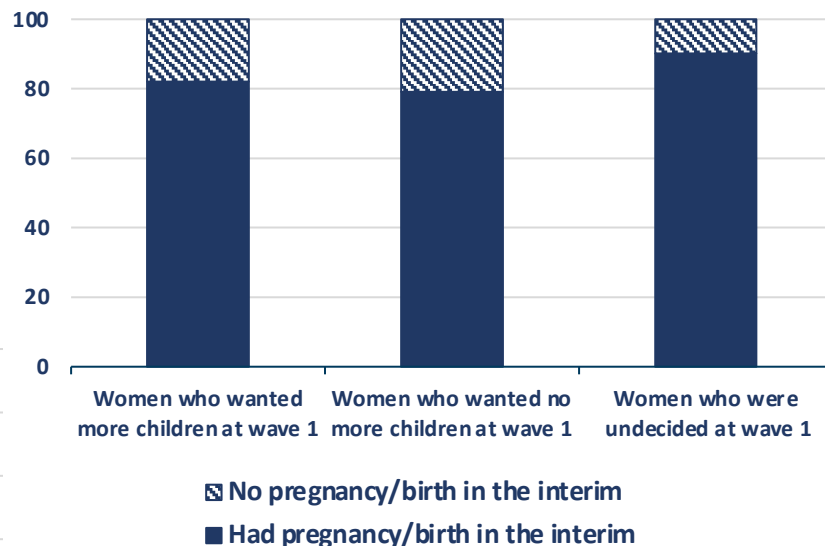
Fertility intentions three years later



Interim contraceptive use



Interim childbearing



Source: UDAYA Study, Population Council 2017 & 2020

If women's fertility intentions are fluid and don't strongly predict their subsequent contraceptive behaviour or childbearing and if this measure is not designed to be used at an individual level, should it be considered as an indicator of women's reproductive autonomy?



“Neither I nor he can do it alone. And it is not good to be satisfied alone . . .”



Summarizing our “No” argument

- Women’s rights are FUNDAMENTAL
- That said, we have to ask questions about:
 - Quality of these measured preferences
 - Validity: robustness/stability
 - Timing: preference/conception
 - Women’s own inclination for *union* goals
 - Do men have any rights here too?
 - Can look at case of SSA (bridewealth)
 - What about children’s welfare?
- Ultimately, we land on the point that women acting contrary to their stated preferences does not mean their rights have been usurped