

IUSSP PANEL ON RETHINKING FAMILY PLANNING MEASUREMENT
WITH A REPRODUCTIVE JUSTICE AND RIGHTS LENS

Three Years and a Lifetime Later

Recommendations for rights- and justice-informed
family planning measures

WEDNESDAY • 30 SEPTEMBER 2026

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OPENING REMARKS



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MODERATOR



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PRESENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE PANEL WORK



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EXPERT REFLECTIONS



Evelyne Opondo

International Center for
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Yohannes Wado

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Welcome

- Feel free to use the chat to introduce yourselves and tell us from where you are joining!
- During the webinar, please use the Q&A feature to ask questions (not the chat)

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Three years and a lifetime later

Recommendations for rights- and justice-informed family
planning measures

IUSSP Webinar

September 30, 2026

Setting the stage



Dr. Samukeliso Dube

Executive Director, FP2030

IUSSP Panel Members (2023-2026)



Elizabeth Sully

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Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México
(IUSSP Council Liaison)



Ilene Speizer

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill
(Co-chair)



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Madeleine Short Fabic

ICF, The Demographic and Health Surveys Program

The measures we rely on infer what people want

What we measure today

- Unmet need infers a need for contraception from a mismatch between fertility desires and use
- Demand satisfied counts a woman as served if she uses a modern method, whatever her experience of it
- Contraceptive prevalence treats use itself as the outcome

What people directly tell us matters

- Whether they want to be using contraception at all
- Whether they are using the method they want
- Whether they were able to make and act on the decision themselves

None of the standard indicators asks a person whether their own contraceptive needs are being met.

Three lenses guiding the panel

Human rights-based

All couples and individuals have the right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children, and to have the means to do so.

Reproductive justice-informed

The right to bodily autonomy, to have a child, to not have a child, and to parent the children you have in safe and sustainable communities free from state violence and injustice.

Person-centered measurement

Respectful of and responsive to individuals' own preferences, needs and values.



BRINGING THESE LENSES TOGETHER

- Centering the needs, values and preferences of people in how we design measures
- Recognizing a range of equally valid choices and reproductive outcomes
- Moving away from an individualized choice framework
- Analyzing with a lens of power and a focus on marginalization

These three lenses set the test every recommendation in the report had to meet.

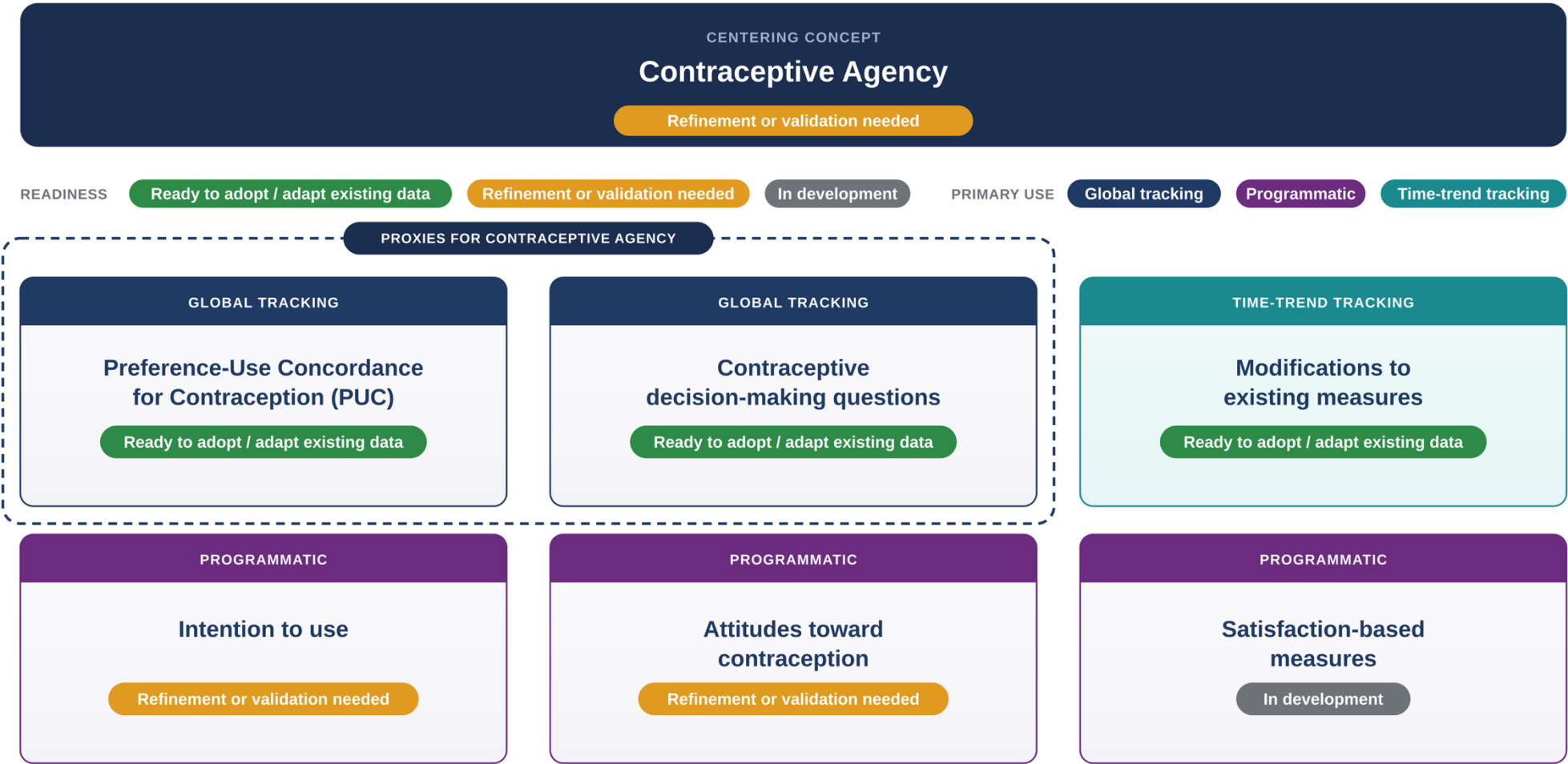
Three years of building consensus



Every recommendation in this report stems from the consultative process.
Where there is disagreement or uncertainty, we explicitly say so.



The recommendations at a glance



Full figure and summary table: report pp. 3 and 5

Contraceptive agency

The ability of an individual to make and act on decisions related to whether to do something to avoid or delay pregnancy, and what, if anything, to do when they are not actively trying to become pregnant.

Holt et al., 2024

Two domains

- Agency in decision-making: the ability to form and voice your own preferences
- Agency in acting on decisions: the ability to act on your decisions

Not the same as

- Autonomy: related to 'agency in acting on decisions', representing the ability to act without interference from external or contextual factors
- Empowerment: a broader, dynamic process encompassing structural and contextual dimensions beyond individual decision-making

Refinement or validation needed

A concise three-to-five-question module is the medium-term goal. It does not exist yet.

How to measure agency now, and what comes later

SHORT-TERM

Use two proxies

- Preference-Use Concordance (PUC, next slide) as a proxy for acting on decisions
- Contraceptive decision-making questions as a proxy for decision-making*
- Both use items already in DHS or ready to field now

MEDIUM-TERM

Build the module

- Validate existing scales (ACDS, EMERGE) across contexts and populations
- Develop a concise three-to-five-question module
- Align with UNFPA's sexual and reproductive agency work

*Add one question to what DHS already asks: "Who do you want to make the decision of whether you or your partner use contraception?"

Preference-Use Concordance for Contraception (PUC)

Compare what people directly say they want with what they are doing.

		IS USING A METHOD (OR THEIR PREFERRED METHOD)	
		No	Yes
WANTS TO USE The individual's own stated desire or preference	No	A Does not want to use and is not using Aligned	B Does not want to use but is using Misaligned
	Yes	C Wants to use but is not using Misaligned	D Wants to use and is using Aligned

Cells A and D are concordant. Indicator 1 is the share of all respondents who fall in A or D.

Preference-Use Concordance for Contraception (PUC)

Compare what people directly say they want with what they are doing.

1

Ask everyone

Are you currently using any method for pregnancy prevention?

2

Ask everyone

Do you want to be using any method of contraception?

3

Ask current users

Do you want to be using your current method?

Ready to adopt / adapt existing data

Three questions. Fieldable in the next survey round.

PUC: Three indicators from three questions

INDICATOR 1	INDICATOR 2	INDICATOR 3
Concordance to use or not use Using and want to be, OR not using and do not want to be Denominator: all respondents	Wanted method use Among users, are they using the method they want? Denominator: current users	Composite Both conditions met Denominator: all respondents

Report the components and the composite. Non-users who do not want to use are counted as aligned.

Three measures for programs, not for global tracking

Intention to use

Refinement or validation needed

Standardize a timeframe (next 12 months). In addition to asking non-users about starting or resuming, ask users about continuation and switching.

Attitudes

Refinement or validation needed

Move beyond binary approve / disapprove. Use multi-dimensional tools with odd-numbered scales that allow ambivalence.

Method Satisfaction

In development

Do not adopt single-item measures. Separate method satisfaction from service satisfaction. Do not equate continuation with satisfaction.

These belong in program monitoring, where they can change what a service does. Not everything is relevant for global tracking: shifts in intentions and attitudes do not have an obvious directionality (positive or negative), and satisfaction is not yet defined well enough to compare across countries.

What to do with unmet need & other standard measures

Keep using them

- Time trends matter
- Behavior matters
- Existing measures remain the basis for advocacy, especially while new measures are adopted

But stop interpreting them as need

- Unmet need measures misalignment between fertility intentions and contraceptive use
- Contraceptive prevalence measures a behavior;
- Neither is a measure of an individual's contraceptive need

Three changes you can make with data you already collect

Unmet demand

Fold intention to use into the unmet need calculation (Adding It Up 2024), making the estimate more closely reflective of individuals' contraceptive need

Use at last sex

Include both "current use" and "use at last sex" questions in the measurement of contraceptive prevalence for unmarried women, correcting a known underestimate

Decision-making

Report the decision not to use as well as the decision to use, as both are indicative of agency

Ready to adopt / adapt existing data

No new data collection required for any of the three.

Four principles that apply to all recommendations

1

Say what it is for

Global monitoring and program management need different measures. Describe who should use this measure and why.

2

Make it fieldable

Small numbers of questions that fit existing platforms: DHS, MICS, national surveys.

3

Test across populations

Adolescents, unmarried people, men, sexual and gender minorities, humanitarian and rural settings.

4

Guard against misuse

Indicator reference sheets and guidance on what each measure does and does not say.

WHAT WE ARE ASKING OF YOU

Four things you can do

Survey implementers

Field the three PUC questions in your next round

Country programs

Report decision-making for use and non-use, using data you already have

Researchers

Test PUC question order, and validate agency measures in your setting

Donors and global bodies

Make room for person-centered measures in the post-2030 framework

Read it, use it, tell us what you find



In the report

- Recommendations at a glance (p. 3)
- A section on each measure, with readiness and intended use
- Appendix A: a question bank you can lift from
- Appendix C: what is being tested, and where

What we still need

- Cognitive testing of PUC question order
- Validation across men, adolescents, and unmarried people
- Country partners willing to field these in their next survey round(s)
- Your view on where this work adds value and where it still needs work

Report and supporting materials: iussp.org/en/rethinking-family-planning-measurement-reproductive-justice-and-rights-lens

Questions and offers to collaborate are welcome in the chat and beyond.

Discussant reflections



Evelyn Opondo

International Center for
Research on Women (ICRW)



Yohannes Wado

African Population and Health
Research Center (APHRC)

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Launching the next phase: Contraceptive agency (2026-2029)



Contraceptive agency

The ability of an individual to make and act on decisions related to whether to do something to avoid or delay pregnancy, and what, if anything, to do when they are not actively trying to become pregnant.

Holt et al., 2024

Two domains

- Agency in decision-making: forming and voicing your own preference
- Agency in acting on decisions: being able to act on it

Not the same as

- Autonomy: acting without external interference, a component of agency
- Empowerment: a broader, dynamic process beyond contraception

Refinement or validation needed

A concise three-to-five-question module is the medium-term goal. It does not exist yet. Importantly, no validated measures of enabling environment around it.

Brings us to the work of our new panel!

WHY NOW

A rare window to shape what comes next



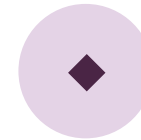
The SDG clock

SDG Target 5.6 concludes in 2030 — the next three years are the window to influence what a post-2030 framework measures.



A ready partner

UNFPA's new Technical Advisory Group on Sexual and Reproductive Agency (TAG-SRA) gives the panel a natural, aligned collaborator.



A field that agrees

Consensus from the first panel's global consultation points squarely at contraceptive agency as the top priority.

IUSSP Follow-On Panel :- Measure Contraceptive Agency: From Rights-Based Frameworks to Survey-Ready Indicators

CONTINUING PANEL MEMBERS



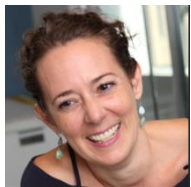
Ilene Speizer
University of North Carolina at
Chapel Hill, *(Co-chair)*



Niranjan Saggurti
Population Council
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ICF, The Demographic and Health
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NEW PANEL MEMBERS



Lonkila Moussa Zan
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Catherine Birabwa
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Sai Jyothirmmai Racherla
Asian-Pacific Resource and
Research Center for
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Caroline Kabiru
African Population
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Anna Kågesten
Karolinska Institute

NEW COUNCIL LIAISON (FORMER PANEL MEMBER)



Georgina Binstock
Centro de Estudios de
Población y CONICET

Panel Objectives

Develop a concise, survey-ready measure of agency

- Build on prior work of panel that engaged global community

Examine social, normative and systemic conditions that shape agency

- Advance measurement beyond individual-level agency; consider enabling environment; need to seek external funding

Inform post-2030 indicator frameworks

- Prepare for post 2030 and engage with SDG indicator custodian (UNFPA) and global community

Engage diverse, multi-regional researchers and practitioners

We invite you to join these panel activities and help drive this agenda forward

PROPOSED ACTIVITIES OF PANEL



Partner with UNFPA Technical Advisory Group on Sexual and Reproductive Agency; FP2030 PME-WG; DHS/MICS; and many of you!

ENGAGE WITH US!

- **Reach out** to any panel member if you are measuring agency and/or its influences at the social, normative or systemic levels
- **Share** your agency questions, tools or data, or offer a site to pilot the module
- **Meet us** at regional conferences, where we will host one-on-one and group discussions
- **Follow** our work on the IUSSP Panel site

For any questions or interest to connect with the panel, please write to any of us at:

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Together, we can measure what matters: people's ability to decide for themselves.

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Thank you!

