

Fertility and FP Measurement Double Feature:

Updates on Measurement with a Person-
Centered Lens and Measuring Individual and
Community Agency

**Hosted by: IUSSP Panel on Rethinking FP Measurement with a Reproductive
Justice and Rights Lens & Agency for All Project
PAA 2024, Columbus, Ohio
April 17th, 2024**

Agenda for Today

- **What's happening in FP measurement**
- **Updates from IUSSP expert group meeting**
- **Participant reflections**
- **Break for refreshments**
- **Two brief presentations from Agency for All project**
- **Breakout sessions**
- **Report out**
- **Wrap-up and next steps**

What's Happening in FP Measurement

- **A lot!** In the last few years alone, there have been a series of articles, think pieces, and convenings on urging our FP field to move beyond traditional measures of success (contraceptive use, unmet need) to more person-centered measures.
 - This work builds on decades of research before and after ICPD (1994), and on RJ movement in the US (starting with Sistersong 1994)
 - Traditional measures (mCPR, unmet need, etc.) don't consider people's contraceptive preferences or values
 - Example: Someone might not want to become pregnant and not using contraception (unmet need), but they don't want to use contraception and that reflects agency in their decision making
 - Example: Someone might want to become pregnant and using contraception (counted in mCPR) but they have no need for pregnancy protection (and we don't ask why this is the case)
 - We are now at an inflection point where exciting new research is (hopefully) reaching a point of consensus to re-think (or at least, complement) traditional FP measurement.

Assessing approaches to demand-side family planning measurement with a reproductive justice and rights framework

IUSSP Expert Group Meeting
Mombasa, Kenya
March 5-7, 2024



IUSSP Panel on Rethinking FP Measurement with a Reproductive Rights and Justice Lens

Steering Committee Members



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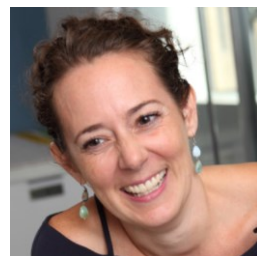
Georgina Binstock
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Purpose of Mombasa Meeting



Increased criticism of standard demand-side FP measures



Recognition that reproductive autonomy is threatened by a focus on contraceptive uptake



Importance of reframing goals and programmatic intentions to reflect individual's values and preferences



Need to engage researchers, program implementers, policy makers, advocates, and other civil society members globally



A “year of measurement” where we can/should consider what we measure (and why) and consider new/better measures

Meeting Objectives

Convene

Convene researchers, program implementers, policymakers, advocates, and other civil society members to come together and examine measures and measurement approaches with a reproductive rights and justice lens

Identify

Identify measures that can be used to assess family planning progress, opportunities, and gaps in a way that is reflective of individuals' self-identified needs and goals (i.e., person-centered)

Advance

Discuss ways forward to advance global family planning measurement

Setting the Stage - Grounding Frameworks

Human Rights-based FP

Ensuring that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and have the means to do so.

Reproductive Justice

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

Person-centered

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

Person-Centered and Reproductive Justice and Rights Informed Measurement

- **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
 - Moving away from an individualized choice framework
 - Analyzed with a lens of power and a focus on marginalization

Intention to Use FP

- Intention to use is a recently popular indicator to capture “demand for family planning”
- Presentations on:
 - Scoping review on intention to use (Boydell)
 - Who actually fulfills intention to use and who doesn’t (Kibira)
 - Association between intention to use and contraceptive self-efficacy among adolescents (Zavier)
- Breakout group discussions: Intention to use what? Intention to use among whom? What are implications for FP programs and monitoring? Is this really person-centered?
- Lots of pushback on this measure:
 - Might work for a very specific population, but not for many;
 - How does one determine the strength of intention to use?
 - The goal still seems to be increasing mCPR, it feels like “tinkering at the margins” for building person-centered measures
 - What do you do with people reporting ambivalence?

Measuring Method Preferences

Proposals for new questions/measures to include:

Contraceptive preference types (Cardona):

- Direct: Preference for a certain method over all other contraceptive options
- Indirect: Preference for the characteristics (attributes) of contraceptive methods

Direct preferences (Burke):

- (1) If you could use any type of birth control method you wanted, regardless of cost of other difficulties, what method would you be most likely to use?
- (2) *(If discordant from current use, question on barriers to preferred method use)*: Why are you not using that method?

Direct preferences (Huber-Krum):

Do you prefer to use a different method from the one you're currently using?

- Which method
- Barriers to use

Take-aways:

- Universal question for users and non-users
- Correlated with other key outcomes (discontinuation, subsequent pregnancy)
- Incorporates preference for non-use and traditional method use
- **But:**
 - Strength in preferences
 - Stability of preferences
 - Are changes in preferences bad?

New Measures Incorporating FP Preferences

Proposals for new questions/measures to include:

Preference-Aligned Fertility Management (PFM) (Holt):

- Step 1: Preference for use/non-use: Ask whether they want to use contraception; Ask whether they are using it.
- Step 2: Method-specific preference: For contraceptive users, ask whether current method is what they want to use now.

Satisfaction-adjusted PFM (Rothschild):

- Included method satisfaction question

Adjusting unmet need (Mulhern):

- Among users: “Do you wish you were using a different method?”
- Among nonusers: “Do you want to be using a method of family planning?”

Adjusting demand satisfied (Gausman):

- Incorporating demand, choice and satisfaction iteratively into demand satisfied

Adjusting contraceptive use (Jadhav)

- *Composite measures of use at last sex and current use*
- *Consistent definitions of sexual recency (12 months)*

Take-aways:

- Disconnecting FP need from fertility preferences
- All choices as equally valid
- Incorporates needs of users (rather than focusing on non-users only)
- **But:**
 - Validity of an adirectional comparative measure
 - Need to interpret in the context of the larger enabling environment

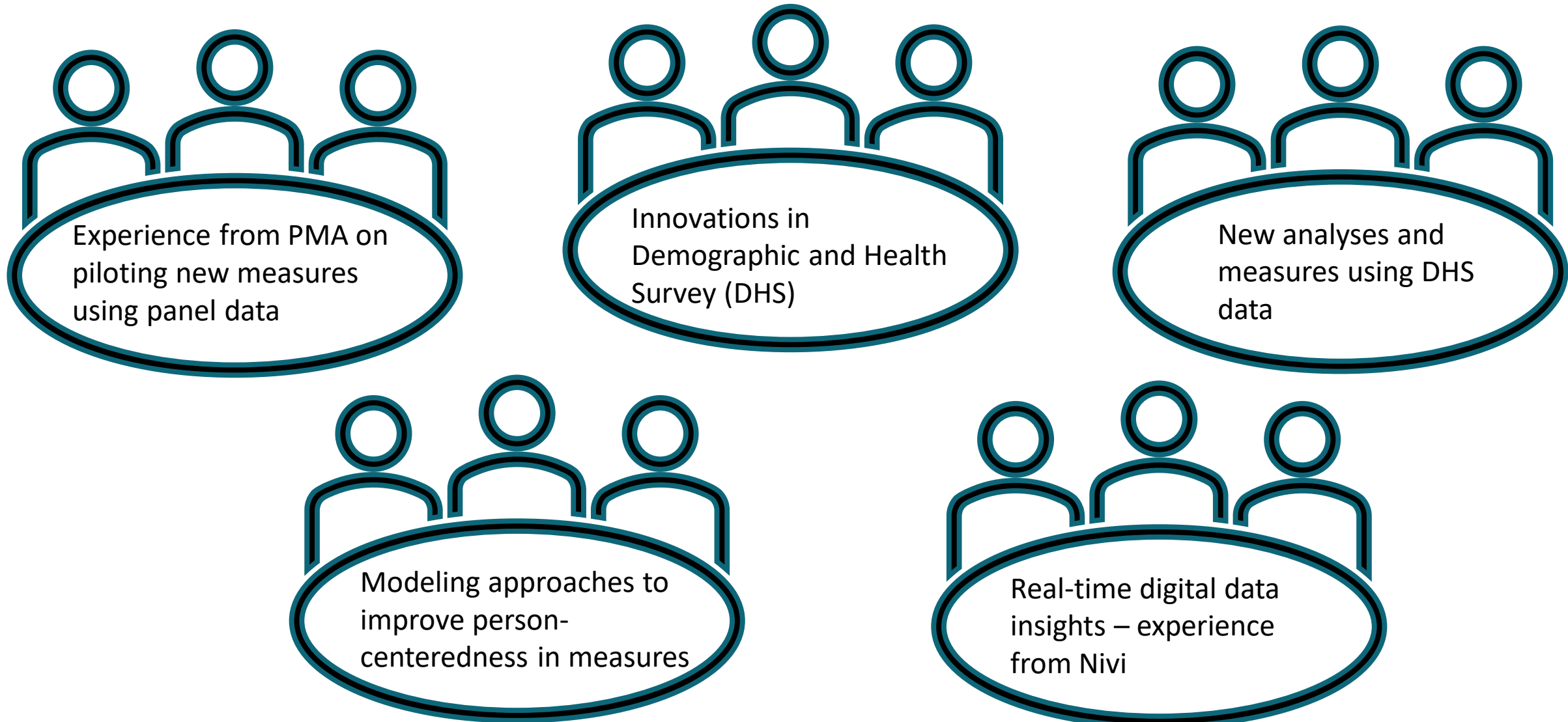
Contraceptive and Reproductive Autonomy and Agency

- Measuring **contraceptive hesitancy** (McDougal)
- Agency in Family Planning: A scoping review of the **conceptualization and measurement of agency** in low- and middle-income countries (Wood)
- **Family Planning Self-Efficacy** as a measure of Reproductive Agency: Findings from Bihar, India (Bhan)
- Development and Validation of a Measure of **Contraceptive Decision-making Agency** in Nigeria and Uganda (Challa)

Take-aways:

- Need for clarified terminology
 - Autonomy = decision making in isolation
 - Agency = broader context in which that decision is being made
- Agency by its very nature relational; do our measures reflect that?
- Agency often operationalized through ability to decide use of contraception (SDG 5.6.1): What about ability to decide not to use? Or to have an abortion? Or to carry a pregnancy to term? Or to give birth and raise their child in a safe environment?

Reflecting on Data Innovations and Sources



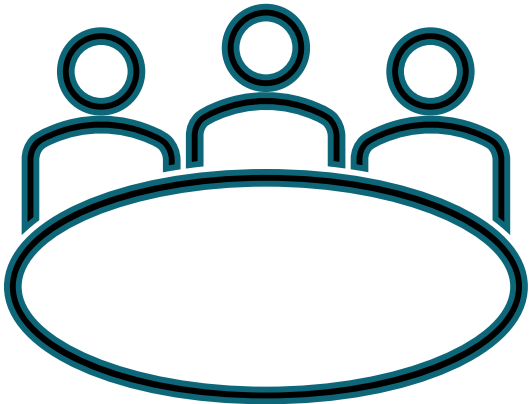
Engaging Data Users in Measurement Innovations

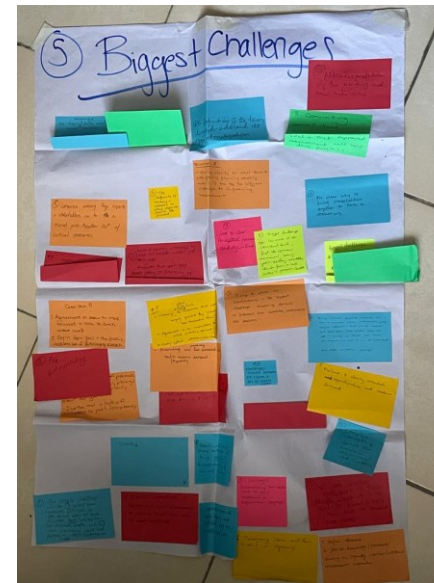
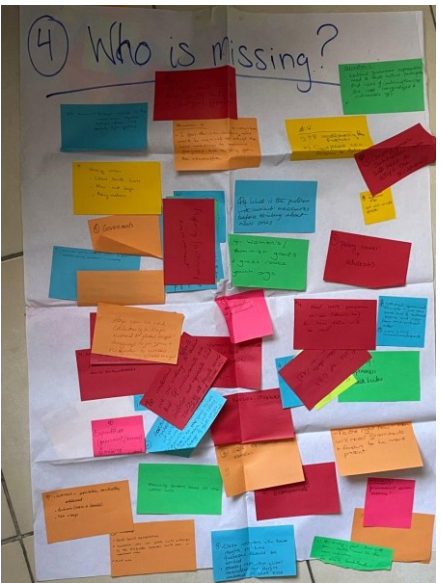
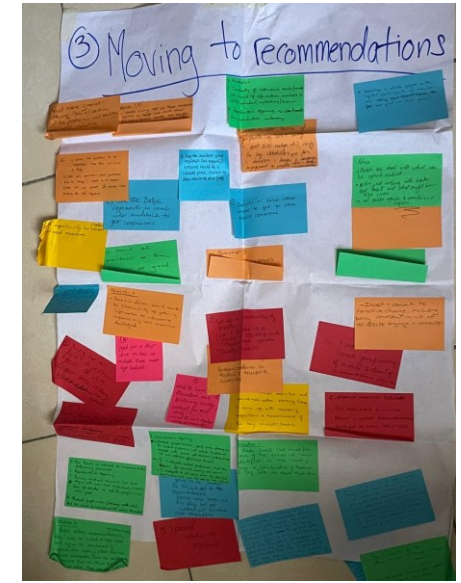
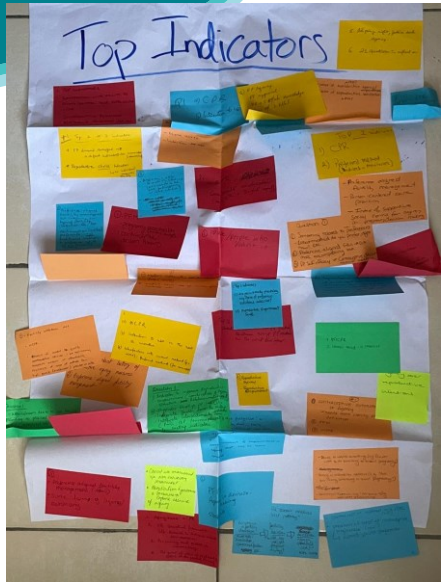
One key to data use at country levels is, to the extent possible, relating indicators from surveys like DHS and PMA to routine data sources like the dhis2.

mCP is often considered (e.g., by WHO) as a proxy for a woman's access to contraceptive services, but this is a weak proxy. Our field is still searching for a valid and reliable measure of access to contraception.

Moving Towards Recommendations:

1. What are the top 2 or 3 indicators that you would use to measure “family planning” ? (Current, new, or aspirational)
2. If you had the ability to invest in the development of a new measure of person-centered family planning measurement, in what areas of research would you put your money?
3. What advice do you have for the Steering Committee and Panel on how to move forward with a process for setting recommendations?
4. Who is missing from the conversation on improved measurement?
5. What do you see as the biggest challenge(s) to improving demand-side family planning measurement?
6. What is the main thing you are taking home from this meeting to bring into your future work?





Overall Thoughts and Next Steps

- Recent calls for and ideas for new measurement; still a need for a larger call to change:
 - Ensuring bodily autonomy also means having measures that **reflect and respect** peoples' own values, preferences and decisions about family planning
- We need a measurement ecosystem!
 - No one magic bullet measure
 - Not ready to throw out the old
 - We keep missing the enabling environment and context; these are critical to interpretation of new rights and justice-informed and person-centered measures
- **Where the Panel is going next**
 - Discussions about a special issue that could include papers/commentaries from the meeting
 - Plans for follow-up discussions around recommendations for measurement
 - Proposing a call-to-action for reconsidering measurement with new framing (i.e., the measurement ecosystem)

**Where we look
dictates what we
learn**

**Not everything that counts can be
counted and not everything that
can be counted counts - Einstein**

**What gets
measured gets
done.**

- **Additional reflections from those who were at the meeting:**
 - Any specific pearls or lessons learned or perspectives on future directions?
- **Reflections from people who were not at the meeting:**
 - Do you have novel rights-based or justice-informed and/or person-centered fertility and family planning measures to recommend we include?
 - Where do you see this conversation going and what feels like it is missing?