

# SANCHAR briefs

Science And News: Communicating Health And Research

## Brief #2: Family Planning

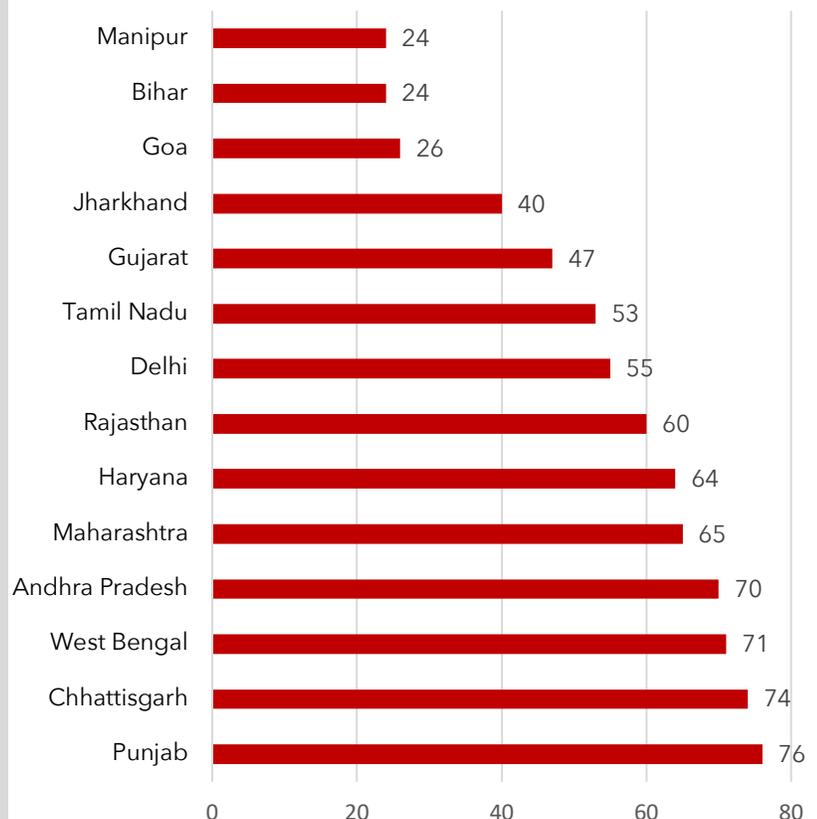
Family planning methods – enabling women to avoid unwanted pregnancies, achieve better health and greater autonomy – are particularly essential in India, where the under-25 population experiences continuous, rapid growth. As the second most populous nation in the world, India was the first to launch a family planning program in 1952. Over the first 27 years, this program shifted the focus of family planning from traditional “rhythm” methods to sterilisation and intra-uterine devices. Since then, total fertility rate has seen a steady decrease, while access to contraceptive methods has improved gradually.

In 2017, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare introduced Mission Family Vikas, aimed at increasing access to high-quality contraceptive methods, such as by freely providing two contraceptive drugs (MPA and Chaya) to government hospitals. Family Vikas’ goal is to stabilise the overall fertility rate at 2.1 by 2025. Additionally, India has signed the Family Planning 2020 agreement (FP2020), under which it commits to providing access to contraceptives to 48 million more women by 2020. Data from the National Family Health Survey presents useful tools to monitor and evaluate the progress of family planning accessibility schemes in India, on a national, state, and district level.

### Quick Facts from NFHS-4 (2015-16):

1. 17.7% of contraceptive non-users reported that a health worker had spoken to them about family planning, a significant increase from 10.1% as per NFHS-3 (2005-06).
2. According to NFHS-4, eight per cent women between 15 and 19 years of age were either already mothers or pregnant.
3. The contraceptive prevalence rate among currently married women age 15-49 decreased slightly, from 56% in 2005-06 to 54% in 2015-16.
4. Knowledge of contraceptive methods is almost universal in India, with 99 percent of currently married women and men age 15-49 knowing at least one method of contraception.

### Contraceptive prevalence rate by state

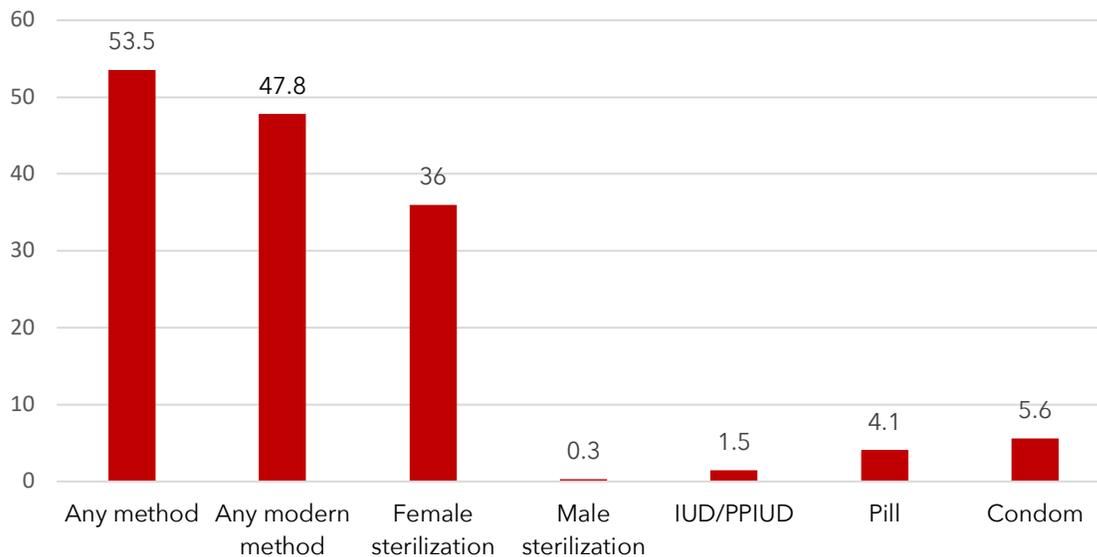


Female sterilization is the most commonly used contraceptive (36% prevalence rate), followed only at 5.6% by condom. Male sterilization is the least common, at 0.3%.

The use of modern methods is 51.3% -- however, this is significantly skewed due to the widespread use of female sterilization and does not reflect high prevalence of reversible methods such as condoms.

76% of men are exposed to family planning information, while 72% of women are exposed to the same. About 60% of men aged 15-49 have seen or heard a message regarding family planning in the last few months; 59% saw such messages on hoardings while 61% were exposed to these via television.

% of women age 15-49 using methods of contraception



### How can this inform your work?

These figures suggest that while progress has been made in spreading awareness about, and increasing the prevalence of, contraceptive methods, these interventions are still skewed towards permanent methods, particularly female sterilization. As journalists, you can shed light on the state of knowledge programs in the field of family planning, as well as provide a sound, data-driven analysis or evaluation of current family planning schemes in India under FP2020. Your work may also help increase access to information about family planning, including modern reversible methods such as condoms.

### Reference:

International Institute for Population Sciences (IIPS) and ICF. 2017. *National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4), 2015-16: India*. Mumbai: IIPS.

*Project SANCHAR is aimed at building capacity and facilitating the adoption of practices to use or draw on evidence in public health communication and practice. To facilitate this, SANCHAR collates and provides data from scientifically validated sources, from national datasets in easily interpretable formats, and accessible visuals that can be downloaded easily.*



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