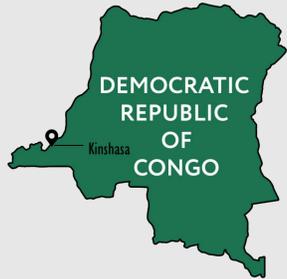# THE WHO & WHEN OF SOCIAL NORMS:
AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF REFERENCE GROUPS, LIFE STAGE & AGE IN KINSHASA

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BACKGROUND

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO — Kinshasa

- Total Fertility Rate: 6.6 *(DHS 2014)*
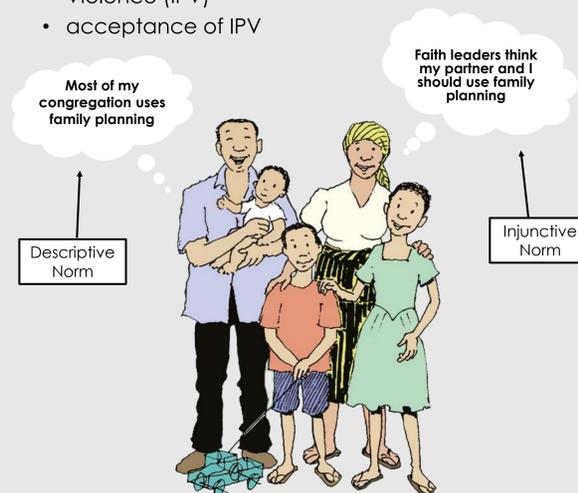- Modern Contraceptive Prevalence Rate for Married Women: 8% *(DHS 2014)*

- The Democratic Republic of Congo has committed to achieving a modern contraceptive prevalence rate (mCPR) of 19% by 2020

- Changing social norms is essential to increasing modern contraceptive prevalence rates

- Dearth of knowledge and consensus on effective approaches for identifying, measuring, or shifting norms

- Few examinations of age, life stage, and reference group differences in normative influence

ANALYSIS GOAL

This analysis (conducted with the larger Transforming Masculinities study) sought to…

assess differences by reference group, life stage & age in perceptions of social norms thought to influence family planning (FP) use, such as:

- perceived congregational approval (injunctive)
- perceived rates of FP use in the faith community (descriptive)
- perceived prevalence of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV)
- acceptance of IPV

Most of my congregation uses family planning — Descriptive Norm

Faith leaders think my partner and I should use family planning — Injunctive Norm

ABOUT THE INTERVENTION

- **Transforming Masculinities / Masculinité, Famille, et Foi (TM/MFF),** a faith-based intervention by Tearfund implemented from January 2017 - September 2018 in 17 Protestant congregations in Kinshasa

- Seeks to shift social norms around FP, IPV, and gender equality

- Uses a process of participatory reflections to identify, create, embrace and disseminate new, positive masculine identities and gender equitable beliefs, and encourage participants to take action within their community

- Conducted a baseline couples survey with 900 men & women (aged 18+) from the 17 congregations

METHODS

- Exploratory factor analyses to determine latent constructs underlying survey social norms questions

- Regression analysis to examine relationship of the following factors with identified social norms constructs:

  - Age in years
  - Life stage (# of children with current partner)
    - No Children
    - One Child
    - Two or More Children
  - Social norms reference groups (11 total)
  - Interactions of life stage & reference group

RESULTS

FP SOCIAL NORMS

- Two constructs:

  1. Faith community's approval of FP use (injunctive)

  2. Perceived rates of FP use in the faith community (descriptive)

- No evidence that FP social norms vary by age

- Participants with 1 child were less likely to perceive that the faith community approves of FP than participants in other life stages

- Participants influenced most by faith leaders perceived lower rates of FP use in the faith community

- Participants influenced most by their partners perceived higher rates of FP use and approval in the faith community

- The influence of friends and other family members on perceived rates of FP use came into play just for participants with 1 child

IPV SOCIAL NORMS

- Two constructs:

  1. Faith community's approval of IPV (injunctive)

  2. Perceived rates of IPV in the faith community (descriptive)

- No evidence that IPV social norms vary by age or life stage

- Perceived approval of IPV in faith community differed significantly for those with 2+ children who were most influenced by faith leaders or paternal relatives

- Participants influenced most by their partners perceived higher rates of IPV perpetration and approval in the faith community

- Participants with 1+ children who were influenced most by their partners perceived lower rates of IPV approval in the faith community than those with no children

- Influence of faith leaders on IPV social norms had differing influences on participants depending on number of children

DISCUSSION

For TM/MFF:
- Baseline results indicate **differentiated programming based on parent status** rather than strictly by age may be warranted
- Baseline results may also **enable better targeting of secondary audiences (i.e. reference groups)**

For Social and Behavior Change Programs:
- A one-size fits-all social norm change approach may not be successful
- May want to target norm change messaging and approaches based on age, life stage and/or reference group influencers
- Integrate age, life stage, reference group-specific approach during formative research and evaluation of normative interventions

REGRESSION RESULTS OF AGE, LIFE STAGES, & INFLUENCERS ON FP SOCIAL NORMS

	Approval of Norms in Community	Rate of Norms in Community
Age	-0.001	0.0002
Number of children (reference is no children)		
One child	**-0.095***	-0.129
Two or more children	-0.077	-0.036
FP Influencer		
Faith Leader	-0.038	**-0.137****
Partner	**0.136****	**0.102***
Friends	0.006	-0.007
1 child * Friends	0.122	**0.468****
Other family member	0.021	-0.062
1 child * Other family member	0.041	**0.256***
Note:	***p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01**	

REGRESSION RESULTS OF AGE, LIFE STAGES, & INFLUENCERS ON IPV SOCIAL NORMS

	Approval of Norms in Community	Rate of Norms in Community
Age	0.002	-0.00001
Number of children (reference is no children)		
One child	0.037	0.046
Two or more children	0.076	-0.008
FP Influencer		
Faith Leader	-0.006	0.089
1 child * Faith Leader	0.008	**0.244***
2 children * Faith Leader	**-0.171****	-0.081
Partner	**0.068****	**0.189****
1 child * Partner	**-0.165****	-0.13
2 children * Partner	**-0.098***	-0.094
Friends	**0.052***	0.011
Paternal Relatives		
2 children * Paternal	**0.149***	0.039
Note:	***p<0.1, **p<0.05, ***p<0.01**	

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Passages