Glossary of Key Terms Related to Family Planning

**Abstinence:** Refraining from sexual intercourse of any type. Abstinence is 100% effective in preventing pregnancy, and also prevents transmission of STI’s, including HIV.

**Barrier Method:** A birth control method that provides a physical barrier between the sperm and the egg. Examples of barrier contraceptive methods include condoms, diaphragms, foam, sponges and cervical caps. The effectiveness rate for barrier methods ranges from 77% to 98% in preventing pregnancy.

**Birth Control Method:** An effective, safe, comfortable method to prevent pregnancy. Birth control can be temporary; meaning you can stop using the method and possibly become pregnant. Temporary methods include birth control pills, Depo-Provera, Norplant, IUD, diaphragms, cervical caps, condoms, contraceptive sponges, spermicidal foams, films and creams. Permanent methods, which are not reversible, are tubal ligation for women and vasectomy for men.

**Continuum of care:** An approach to maternal, newborn, and child health that includes integrated service delivery for women and children from before pregnancy to delivery, the immediate postnatal period, and childhood.

**Contraception:** The intentional prevention of conception and pregnancy through hormones, technologies, sexual practices, or surgical procedures.

**Contraceptive prevalence rate (CPR):** The percentage of women of reproductive age (15-49) who are practicing, or whose sexual partners are practicing, any form of contraception.

**Demographic Dividend:** The long-term economic benefits that result from lower fertility rates, the accompanying decrease in dependent populations, and the right investments in human capital.

**Family Planning:** The conscious effort of couples or individuals to plan the number of children they have and to regulate the spacing and timing of their births through contraception and the treatment of involuntary infertility.

**Family Planning 2020 (FP2020):** By building partnerships and enhancing existing efforts, Family Planning 2020 is working to reach 120 million more women and girls in the world’s poorest countries with access to voluntary family planning information, tools and services by 2020.

**Full Access, Full Choice:** The goal of ensuring that everyone, everywhere has access to a range of family planning options that meet their needs is the organizing theme of ICFP 2013.

**Hormonal Method:** Hormonal birth control methods, including pills, rings, implants and patches, use hormones to prevent ovulation, and thus prevent pregnancy.

**Human rights:** Basic freedoms and rights that all people are entitled to, regardless of their gender, nationality, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, or other factors. In an international context, “human rights” often refers to freedoms proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations in 1948. These rights include the right to life, liberty, and security; the right to live free of torture or cruel and inhumane treatment; and the right to live free of arbitrary arrest.

**London Summit:** The UK Government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, in partnership with UNFPA, national governments, donors, civil society, the private sector, the research and development community, and others from around the world, came together at the London Summit on Family Planning to support the right of women and girls to decide, freely and for themselves, whether when and how many children to have.
**Maternal death:** The death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of the termination of pregnancy, due to complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

**Maternal health:** The health of women during pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period.

**Maternal morbidity:** Non-fatal injuries, conditions, or symptoms that result from or are worsened by pregnancy and childbirth, and often have long-term negative repercussions for mothers. Examples include obstetric fistula, anemia, infertility and chronic infection.

**Maternal mortality rate:** The number of maternal deaths during a given time period per 100,000 women of reproductive age (15 to 49) during that same time period.

**Medical abortion:** A safe option for terminating a pregnancy using medications (e.g., mifepristone and misoprostol or misoprostol alone).

**Microbicide:** Creams, gels, films, suppositories, and other products that a woman can apply to lower the risk of transmission of HIV or other sexually transmitted infections, or in some cases, prevent unintended pregnancy.

**Millennium Development Goals (MDGs):** A series of eight broad development goals for 2015 established in 2000 and adopted by countries around the world, which encompass issues of poverty, education, and health. MDG 5 focuses on improving maternal health by reducing maternal mortality by 75% between 1990 and 2015, and assuring universal access to reproductive health by 2015.

**Multipurpose Prevention Technologies (MPTs):** Technologies that simultaneously prevent unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections including HIV.

**Reproductive health:** The state of complete physical, mental and social well-being in all matters relating to the reproductive system, its functions and its processes.

**Sexual and reproductive rights:** A set of rights related to sexual and reproductive health, including the rights to freely and responsibly decide on the number, spacing, and timing of children; to receive the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health care; to make decisions about reproduction free from discrimination, coercion, and violence; and to pursue a safe, satisfying, and consensual sex life.

**Skilled attendants:** Individuals with midwifery skills, such as doctors, nurses, and midwives, who have been trained to provide competent care during pregnancy and childbirth.

**Stock-outs:** Extreme shortage of contraceptive supplies due to dwindling aid budgets, lack of government allocation, or inaccessibility of commodities for any other reason.

**Unmet need for family planning:** The gap between women’s stated desire to avoid having children and their actual use of contraception. This need is generally expressed in demographic and health surveys as a percentage of currently married women aged 15-49 with unmet need.

**Unsafe abortion:** The termination of an unintended pregnancy, either by a person lacking the necessary skills, in an environment lacking minimal sanitary and medical standards, or both.

**Unwanted/unintended pregnancy:** A pregnancy that a woman or girl decides, of her own free will, is undesired.

Sources: