



Voice, Agency and Participation
Consultation at Women Deliver, Kuala Lumpur
May 28, 2013

The World Bank hosted an interactive consultation on women's voice and agency--focusing on women's reproductive health and family formation--to inform an upcoming report. Jeni Klugman provided an overview of the report, which was followed by remarks from a panel featuring Afshan Khan, CEO, Women for Women International; Kokou Senam é Djagadou, IPPF Africa Region; and William N. Ryerson, President, Population Media Center. The floor was then opened up to the audience--more than 50 conference attendees from a wide array of backgrounds from health practitioners to advocates--who gave thoughtful feedback and guidance to the Bank on how to shape the report.

Afshan Khan:

- Two main challenges for the report to highlight: (1) measuring agency; (2) overlapping disadvantages
- Need to create demand for rights by highlighting the correlation between agency and economic empowerment
- In Rwanda, Women for Women conducted pre- and post survey and found decrease in GBV (self-reported), found that peer networks and support groups affected women's relationships with men and women's own perceptions of agency, and more interest from communities to learn about women's rights
- Working with Promundo in Congo to see if involving men to work as partners with women can lead to better results at the household level

Kokou Senam é Djagadou:

- Sexual and reproductive rights are broader than family formation—young people are not necessarily thinking about family formation
- Needs of young people need to be considered in a rights-based framework
- Sexuality education should include attention to gender and rights and begin in pre-school
- Dialogue should acknowledge the gains for development of involving women, but should be based fundamentally on achievement of rights

William N. Ryerson:

- Gave a live demonstration of some of PMC's media tools
- Emphasized the need for, and the role media can play, in changing perceptions of the norm

Lisa Nichols, Abt Associates:

- Need to consider generational effects and how interact with gender norms—gender norms and shifts vary across the lifecycle and also across generations, young people tend to be more exposed to Western norms and older generations can react protectively to this
- Need to consider multiple cultures around decision-making

Terence Hull, Australian National University:

- Need to consider quality of SRH services and not just coverage
- Need to also consider role of institutions, governance and responsiveness, and institutional threats to women
- Also attention should be paid to rights of migrants

CARE USA:

- Violence because of sexual orientation is under-reported and should be highlighted in the report