

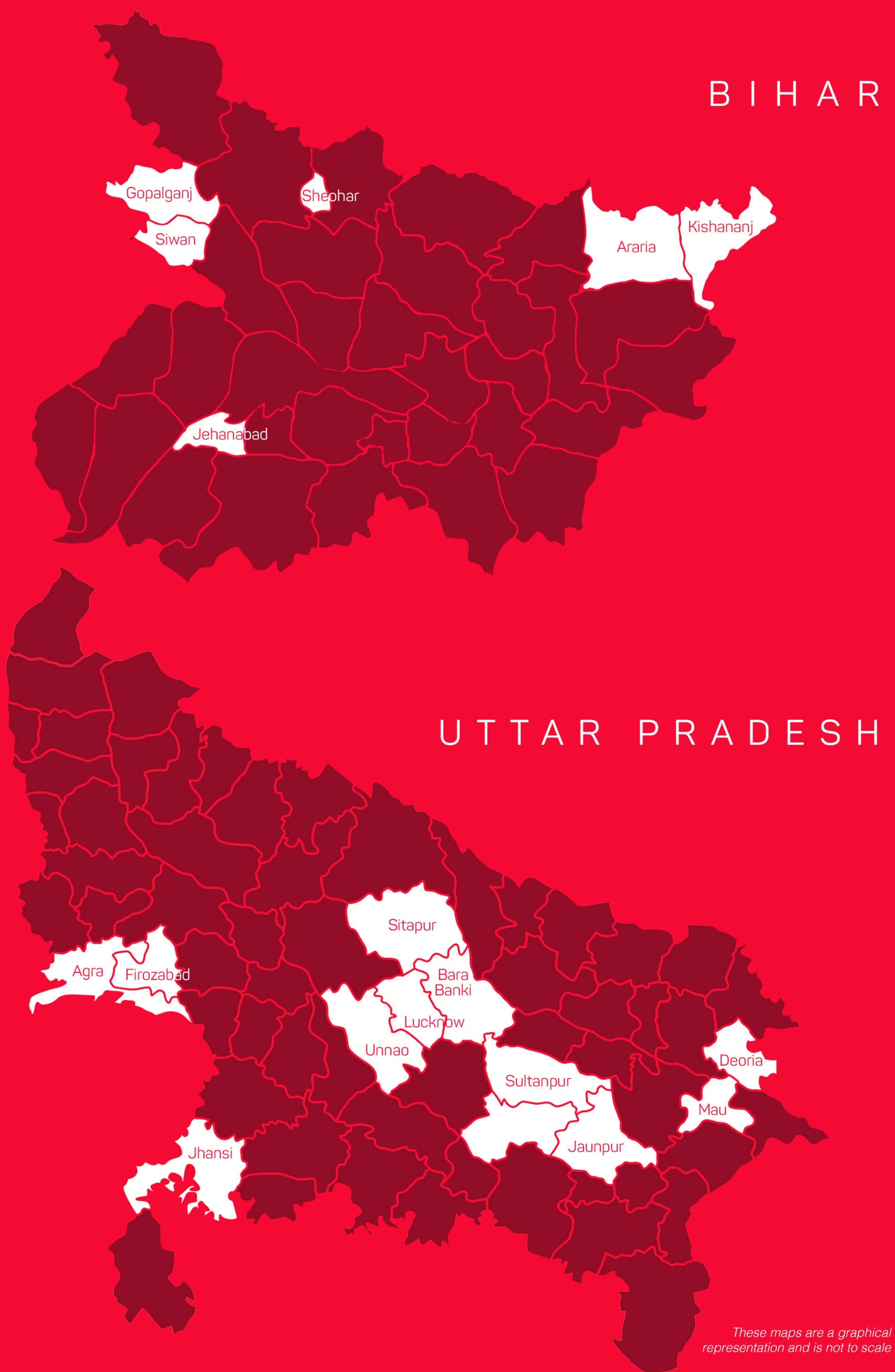
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FAMILY PLANNING

PROMOTING INVESTMENTS IN FAMILY PLANNING FOR IMPACT
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Population Foundation of India considers family planning a human right and an investment that impacts all 17 global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). PFI's programmes work through multiple approaches that provide women the choice to plan their reproductive health, improve the quality of services, and promote innovations in resource mobilisation, community participation and addressing social norms. PFI continues to underline the need to include young people and men in family planning programmes.

PFI promotes planning and resource mobilisation for family planning through **district working groups (DWGs), community action, civil society partners, and the private sector**. PFI implements the convergence model of district working groups for family planning in 18 districts across Bihar and Uttar Pradesh.



Reports and data released in 2017 indicate mixed results in India's progress towards its family planning goals. The **World Population Prospects: The 2017 Revision**, a report published by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the, states that India's population, currently at 1.3 billion, would overtake China's by 2024.

The **fourth National Family Health Survey (NFHS-4)** released in January 2018 indicates a significant overall drop in the Total Fertility Rate (TFR)¹ from 2.7 children per woman in 2005-06 to 2.2 children per woman in 2015-16. 24 states have already achieved the replacement level fertility of 2.1. However, there are wide variations in the Total Fertility Rate across states ranging from 1.2 in Sikkim to 3.4 in Bihar. Between 2005-06 and 2015-16, there has been a marginal decline in the use of 'any method of family planning' for India as a whole, and

in 17 out of 28 states. Moreover, male sterilisation has dropped further from 1 per cent to 0.3 per cent and the burden of family planning continues to fall primarily on women.

Given our focus on advocating for a rights-based approach to family planning, PFI promoted three specific strategies with the government - increasing emphasis on spacing births, expanding contraceptive choices by introducing new long acting reversible contraceptives (LARCs) within the public health system, and increasing allocation and expenditure for family planning. Efforts by PFI and other organisations resulted in approval of three new contraceptives (Antara - an injectable contraceptive effective for three months, Chhaya - a weekly contraceptive pill, and the Progestin-only pill - PoP) in the basket of choice within the public health system. These new contraceptives were

launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare through **Mission Parivar Vikas** (MPV - Mission Family Welfare) in June 2017. MPV aims to provide access to a wider basket of contraceptive choices and better family planning services using a rights-based approach. The programme focuses intensively on 145 high fertility districts (TFR of 3 or above) across seven states² that together account for 44 per cent of the country's population.

¹ TFR refers to the total number of children born or likely to be born to a woman in her life time if she were subject to the prevailing rate of age-specific fertility in the population

² Assam, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh



A health centre in Bihar's Araria district offering family planning services on fixed days | Photo: PFI

ACHIEVING BREAKTHROUGHS THROUGH THE CONVERGENCE MODEL & BEHAVIOUR CHANGE COMMUNICATION

Alongside PFI's policy advocacy at the national level, we work with state governments and through core grants to civil society organisations in regions that face challenges in achieving family planning goals. The **convergence model of planning and allocating resources for family planning (FP) through District Working Groups (DWGs)**, being implemented in 18 districts - six districts in Bihar and 12 in Uttar Pradesh as part of the **Advance Family Planning (AFP)** programme - have yielded many 'wins' over the last financial year.

Private health facilities have been roped in to provide free FP counselling in UP's Sultanpur district. The uptake of Intra-Uterine Contraceptive Devices (IUCDs) by women has shot up in Bihar's

Araria district as health facilities providing family planning services on fixed days has risen from 13 to 35. The Agra district Information & Broadcasting department has committed to putting out FP messages in local television channels and newspapers, at an estimated cost of Rs. 600,000. In UP's Mau district, family planning supplies have been restored and a system to monitor and ensure timely replenishment has been put in place.

As part of the **Advocacy, Communication and Accountability** project, a cadre of community level family planning champions were identified and trained as '**Advocates for Change**' (AFCs) in Darbhanga and Nawada districts of Bihar. These included frontline workers such as ASHAs, Anganwadi

workers, and panchayat members who have been mandated to inform and motivate couples to adopt family planning practices, and also ensure the availability of services. After training, the AFCs have reached out to nearly 10,000 households in the 204 intervention villages with family planning messages.

PFI has supported a population stabilisation programme through a core grant to the Save a Mother project in Amethi district of Uttar Pradesh. The programme has significantly improved linkages with government facilities, services and frontline health workers through advocacy and trainings in order to ensure that couples have access to family planning services.

Industry participates in a progressive push for men's participation in family planning

In the town of Firozabad in Uttar Pradesh, best known for its bangles and glassware, the Industrial Association employs approximately 10,000 workers, 95 per cent of whom are men. Following advocacy by PFI, in November 2017 the Association announced an unprecedented three days' paid leave for employees who undergo non-scalpel vasectomy (NSV). In a state where male sterilisation currently accounts for only 0.1 per cent of contraceptive options used, this is a remarkable initiative that has enlisted the private sector in making progress on the district's family planning objectives.



PFI successfully advocated with the Bihar Mahadalit Vikas Mission (BMVM) to extend family planning services to nearly **4 million marginalised households across 38 districts of Bihar** through **10,000 Vikas Mitras** (frontline workers)

Women opting for a spacing method of contraception increased by about three times as compared to the previous year, following PFI's advocacy in selected facilities of the high fertility Araria district (TFR 4.3) of Bihar.

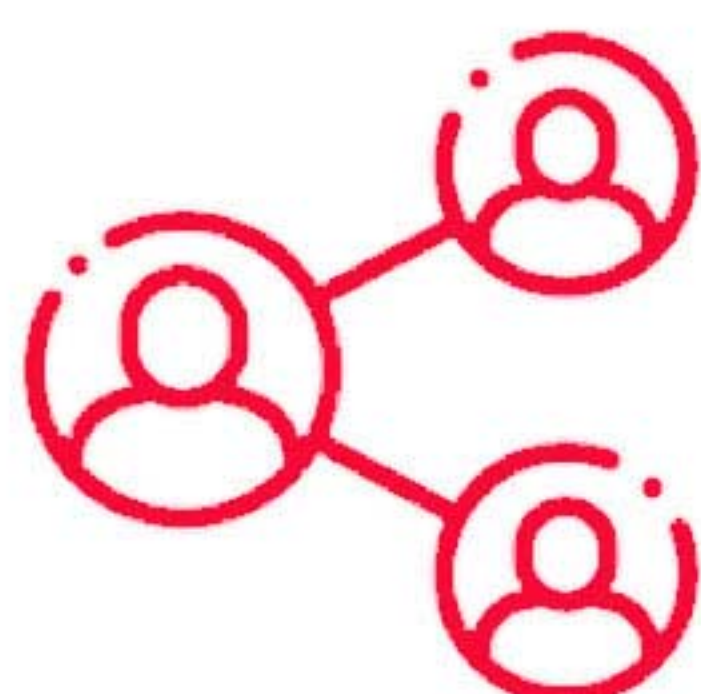
PFI has used **Social and Behaviour Change Communication (SBCC)** as a powerful tool to address the social norms that determine people's decisions on family planning. Our flagship transmedia initiative **Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon** (MKBKSH - I, A Woman, Can Achieve Anything) continued to draw the attention of SBCC experts, researchers and the media in 2017 with its reach and impact. The evaluation of two seasons of MKBKSH showed an improvement in the knowledge, perception and attitude of viewers on the age at marriage, sex selection, domestic violence and gender equity. Most importantly, it increased the space for spousal communication and enhanced women's confidence to negotiate contraception and discuss family planning options. They highlighted how entertainment-education can inspire

even the most vulnerable people to challenge deep set social norms. Based on five such inspiring stories of real life champions, PFI produced a series of short films entitled 'Reel to Real' and released them through its social media platforms in 2017. The men of Chhatarpur in Madhya Pradesh, who were habitual wife-beaters and held regressive beliefs such as preference for sons, went in for sterilisation even after one girl child. Rita Devi, an ASHA worker living in a slum of Patna, gained more knowledge about family planning, contraceptives and nutrition from Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon. It helped her in her work as well as gave her the confidence to talk to her teenage daughter about menstruation, safe sex, and family planning. Nirma Devi from Gaya in Bihar was inspired by MKBKSH to defy established social

norms and convince her husband to adopt the use of condoms; and to go a step further to spread the word on contraception within her She was chosen as **one of BBC's global 100 Women initiative of 2017** for breaking the taboo on contraception in India. The initiative names 100 influential and inspirational women around the world every year.

Men in Chhatarpur script a new role for themselves as family planning champions

PFI's transmedia series *Main Kuch Bhi Kar Sakti Hoon* has inspired Raju Raikwar and his friends in the Chhatarpur region of Madhya Pradesh to become messengers for women's empowerment, gender justice, and male involvement in family planning. These men turned into empathetic partners in their own homes and have adopted messages of the series into ballads to motivate men in villages of the region. "Marriage at the right age. No hurry to have a child soon after. And...you think that female sterilisation is right and male sterilisation wrong. But...I say male sterilisation is the right thing," goes one song that the men perform.



Reached more than 5.7 million social media users and got over 2 million views through PFI's social media handles with *Reel to Real*

MATCHING GLOBAL COMMITMENTS WITH LOCAL EFFORTS

As the Secretariat of the Advocating Reproductive Choices (ARC) coalition, PFI represents ARC as India's civil society focal point for FP2020, a global partnership that supports the rights of women and girls to make their reproductive decisions. PFI participated in the FP 2020 Summit in July 2017 in London. It was a global gathering of representatives from 42 countries, the United Nations, philanthropic foundations, the private sector, civil society and youth advocates. At the Summit, India upped its **commitments on family planning made at the London FP2020 Summit**³ in 2012. It pledged to invest up to 3 billion US dollars, raise modern contraceptive usage from 53.1 to 54.3 per cent and ensure that 74 per cent of the demand for modern contraceptives is satisfied by 2020.

The FP2020 Summit refocused attention on national family planning targets five years after the first Summit in London, enabling PFI and other civil society organisations to draw the attention of policymakers on the issue. PFI maintained its advocacy focus with policymakers, media and opinion leaders through one-to-one engagements within the **Realising Commitments for Family Planning (RCFP) programme**.

PFI also continues to work through ARC to strengthen and push for rights-based family planning policies. ARC's state chapters in the four high population states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh are aiding the state

governments in tracking progress on the availability, accessibility and usage of family planning services in line with India's FP2020 commitments.

PFI has been an innovator and early adopter of new technologies that afford better and greater access to audiences for its advocacy push. We recognise the increasingly critical role that digital media, especially social media, is playing in shaping public opinion in India. According to some estimates by digital market analysts, the share of media consumption over digital mediums is estimated to touch nearly 31 per cent by the end of 2018, compared to under 18 per cent five years ago. Overall, in 2018, Indians are expected to spend nearly four and a half hours every day watching, streaming, reading and listening to media over cyberspace.⁴

In addition to traditional advocacy activities, PFI also developed new channels of dialogue on family planning through by using social media. To support our analysis of the annual budget put out through print and online media platforms, we conducted Facebook Live sessions with policy makers and leading national experts on family planning, women's rights and public health, also reaching out through them to wider audiences on social media. PFI adapted key messages on family planning into short videos and animated GIFs to make them more accessible to the ever-expanding online audience.

Safeguarding a rights-based approach on sexual and reproductive health

In December 2017, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (I&B Ministry) issued an advisory restricting the airing of condom advertisements on television to slots between 10 pm and 6 am. PFI responded by actively advocating with policymakers, other civil society organisations and with a media article. We sent out a message of caution against bedevilling an already fragile push for spacing methods of contraception.

We suggested that the I&B Ministry allow the airing of condom advertisements under a graded system keeping in mind cultural sensitivities, similar to film certification. The I&B Ministry reversed its order within days, a success for PFI's strategy of active advocacy through diverse platforms on emerging issues that could have an impact on India's rights-based approach to family planning.



Media coverage on PFI's family planning messages averaged at over one article a day (383) in 2017-18

³ FAMILY PLANNING 2020 COMMITMENT, Government of India

⁴ www.emarketer.com/content/in-india-media-use-shows-no-signs-of-leveling-off

SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENT'S JANSANKHYA STHIRATA KOSH (JSK - POPULATION STABILISATION FUND)

The JSK was set up as a registered society by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoHFW) in 2004 in order to highlight the need for action on population stabilisation. PFI initiated a partnership with JSK in 2017 to strengthen its public private partnership (PPP) efforts to promote family planning. This included undertaking a landscaping study on the existing status and best practices in PPP within and outside the health sector; supporting the development of a framework and guidelines for PPP, and roll out of the Social Franchising Scheme (SFS) by JSK. PFI placed a team leader at the national level and state

leads for Uttar Pradesh (UP) and Bihar. These resource persons support JSK in the implementation of the SFS in the two states. The team prepared a detailed analysis on family planning for Bihar and UP based on data from NFHS 3 and 4. They also ensured the timely preparation, review and disbursement of the SFS budget for 2017-18 to the UP State Innovations in Family Planning Services Project Agency (SIFPSA), the semi-government organisation identified as the implementing agency for the Social Franchising Scheme in UP.



More women are accessing family planning counselling and regular check-ups in Bihar's Araria district due to fixed day services | Photo: PFI

SHARING KNOWLEDGE AND GENERATING EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT FAMILY PLANNING MESSAGES

With reports on India's growing population and imminent ranking as home to the largest number of people in the near future, there have been several calls in the past year for coercive measures, such as enforcement of the two-child norm and disincentives to couples, especially women, who have more than two children. PFI works to ensure that such measures are not promoted as they go against the rights-based approach and have disastrous consequences on women and vulnerable communities. We actively participated in national and global forums to share knowledge and best practices in family planning using the rights-based approach. Strategically positioned as a national coalition of research and implementing organisations leading work on family planning in India, **ARC is now part of the Implementing Best Practices (IBP) initiative**, an international partnership of over 45 member organizations dedicated to scaling up global best practices in family planning and reproductive health.

We know that there is no substitute for hard evidence to counter such narratives. In addition to sharing factsheets, notes and opinion articles based on sound analysis of the government's statistics on population, in 2017 PFI commissioned two studies

to generate evidence and bolster its advocacy efforts for family planning.

The study on the **Cost of Inaction in Family Planning in India (Cost of Inaction study)** commissioned by PFI projects the opportunity cost of skewed investments in family planning and consequences of inaction on both women and men, not only in terms of the ability to plan their families, but also in their overall well-being. It also calculates the economic benefits that would accrue if the government were to act on its family planning policies. The study includes an in-depth analysis of the four high fertility states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

A Review of Planning, Budgeting and Expenditure of Family Planning Activities Under NHM (PIP analysis study) analyses the current trends in budgetary allocations and spending on family planning in 18 high focus states. It highlights the overemphasis on terminal methods of contraception in fund allocations, the inefficiencies in spending and the bottlenecks in the planning and management of family planning budgets.