

FACT SHEET

For Policy Champions, key Decision and Policy Makers in COMPASS States and LGAs

RH NO. 4

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ISSUES IN NIGERIA: THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVES

Highlights


COMPASS related
 Reproductive Health
 Components
 Islamic Perspective—
 Agreements and Exceptions.

“In this century of enlightenment, and considering the human and material resources at our disposal, it is unacceptable to allow our women and children to die in circumstances relating to complications in pregnancy and childbirth.”

-Dr. Abdul-Lateef Adegbite, General Secretary,
 Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, June 2004

Selected Reproductive Health (RH) Components in the National RH Policy and Strategy Framework (see KEY for services of each components)	Islamic Perspectives	
	Agreements	Exceptions
1. Safe Motherhood <i>Be kind to your women for they are a trust in your hands from Allah</i>	Community ownership, male involvement and safe motherhood initiatives are consistent with Islamic teachings.	Male doctors are prohibited from attending females except when lives of mother or infant/child are endangered. Most agree that abortion is only permitted to save a mother's life.
2. Family Planning <i>The best among you in the sight of Allah is he who is the most benevolent and most caring to his family</i>	Child spacing is advised to prevent the mother from becoming pregnant immediately after delivery, or to affect the health of the mother or child.	Couples' decisions to limit or space their number of children should be respected. Vasectomies are forbidden. Tubal ligations allowed only to save health and life of mother
3. Sexually transmitted infections (STI) and HIV/AIDS <i>Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty ...</i>	80% of HIV/AIDS transmissions are through sexual intercourse. Condom use is a personal decision. Prevention, detection, care for STIs/HIV/AIDS are widely accepted.	Objections to term "safe sex". Sex can only be within marriage. Islam condemns adultery and homosexuality Public promotion of condom use not acceptable.
4. Harmful Practices, Reproductive Rights and Gender Issues. <i>Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you</i>	Islam promotes gender equality and justice between the sexes. All harmful practices are forbidden, including between husbands and wives.	Female circumcision is optional under Shari'a; most scholars believe strongly that it should not be done. Marriage can happen at any age but premature consummation is forbidden

Key:

1. **Safe Motherhood:** Prenatal care including referral of high risk pregnancies; Safe delivery under skilled care; Essential obstetrical care (including emergency care of pregnancy complications, labor and first 6 weeks after delivery); Perinatal and neonatal care; Postnatal care; Breastfeeding, including exclusive breastfeeding for first 6 months; Immunization; Growth Monitoring; Infection Prevention.
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2. **Modern FP methods:** Barrier Methods (condoms, diaphragms); Spermicides (foaming tablets, creams, jellies); Intrauterine Device (includes Lippes' Loop and the Copper T); Hormonal Methods (oral pills; injectables; implant); Surgical methods (tubal ligation and vasectomy)
 3. **STIs and HIV/AIDS** diagnosis, including lab testing; Voluntary testing and compulsory pre-marital testing for HIV; Syndromic diagnosis and management of STIs; Condom promotion and distribution; Contact tracing of STIs; Risk assessment; Home-based care and referral for people living with HIV/AIDS; Anti-retroviral drug therapy for HIV/AIDS infected people; Prevention of Mother to Child Transmission of HIV/AIDS (pre-pregnancy and ante-natal screening, labor and postpartum antiretroviral therapy, and infant feeding); Referral; Information, Education and Communication and community awareness creation; Counseling (on condom use and negotiating skills, client/couple risk assessment; behavior change; STD/HIV prevention and safe sex practices; pre and post HIV testing).
 4. **Harmful traditional practices** include: female genital cutting, forced early marriage, traumatic puberty initiation rites, labor and delivery practices, gender based violence, wife inheritance and widowhood rites. Others include preference for the male child and denied inheritance rights for female children.
 5. **Reproductive Rights** include: information on all matters relating to sexual and reproductive health; Sexual and reproductive decision making, including choice of marriage partner, family formation and determination of the number, timing and spacing of children, and the means to exercise those choices; equality and equity for women and men to make free and informed choices in all spheres of life, free from all forms of discrimination; Sexual and reproductive security, including freedom from sexual violence and coercion and right to privacy.