



Technical Brief: Consensus-Building Workshops

What is a consensus-building workshop?

Consensus-building workshops are annual meetings, led by the Ministry of Health, where governments and partners come together to do an annual review of family planning data. This includes review of available data; discussions on the quality of that data; utilization of statistical models and other methodologies to produce annual estimates of core indicators; and assessment of progress towards a country's national family planning strategy. The Track20 M&E Officer plays a key role in this meeting by supporting the use of new methodologies and tools and providing detailed information about the available data.

Overall, the workshops serve as a platform to discuss family planning data and to support the use of data in country level decision-making to improve program implementation and quality of services. Data produced during the meeting is shared with FP2020 to show annual progress and be included in reports.

Who attends consensus-building workshops?

The organization, content and guest list for consensus workshops is led by the Ministry of Health - usually the reproductive health unit - and differs based on presence of in-country partners. The workshops bring together public and private-sector technical experts including UN, bilateral donor, NGO partners, and other relevant ministries. In some countries, the Family Planning Technical Working Group plays a leadership role in this meeting and provides many of the needed participants.

Why are these workshops important?

The consensus-building workshops are of paramount importance in ensuring that annual monitoring is a country-driven process. Dedicating a specific time to generate and evaluate data using new and innovative estimation tools makes it possible for family planning program decision-makers to have timely access to the data that they need to be able to take stock of progress and, if necessary, improve their strategies. Track20 M&E officers are the in-country drivers of this process and sit within government structures that collect, analyze and use family planning data. Consensus-building workshops also provide an important opportunity for transparency for governments and partners about data and methodologies used in-country and internationally, with a focus on synergizing estimates that are used by all partners.

When are these workshops held?

The workshops are typically scheduled in the spring, so that country data is ready for inclusion in the global FP2020 Annual Progress Report. In 2014, Track20 organized the first series of workshops in 10 countries: Côte d'Ivoire, DR Congo, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Malawi, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines and Rwanda.