

Gender and Quality of Care: Focus Group Discussion Guide for Male Clients

Vignette A: Antenatal Care

Imagine Jean Claude is a 25-year-old man who lives in this community. He is not a real person who lives here; this is just an example.

Jean Claude's wife Marie would like to use family planning and visited a provider for counseling so she can delay her pregnancy. But Jean Claude objects.

- What could be some of the reasons why Jean Claude objects?
- What should Marie do? Is there anything that a health provider or a community health worker could do?

Jean Claude's wife Marie is now pregnant for the first time. They have been married for about 18 months. They own a small plot of land that they farm, which has allowed them to purchase health insurance for both of them.

Marie is preparing to go to her first antenatal care visit at the local health facility. She has informed Jean Claude that the health facility says that he is supposed to accompany her to this visit.

- What do you think Jean Claude thinks about this?
- What are some reasons why Jean Claude might *want* to attend the visit?
- What are some reasons why Jean Claude might *not* want to attend the visit, or be unable to attend?

After they discussed it, Jean Claude accompanied Marie to the health facility, as recommended. At the facility they met with the health provider for the first antenatal care visit.

- How do you think the health provider should interact with Jean Claude in this situation? With Marie?
 - Probe: made eye contact; spoke to him; asked if he had any questions; listened to his questions or concerns; expressed care; etc.
- Are there reasons why the health provider may not have interacted or behaved toward Jean Claude the way you just described?
- Do you think the health provider interacted with or behaved any differently towards Marie, compared to Jean Claude?
- Do you think the health provider likely involved Jean Claude in any decisions about his wife's care or condition?
- Do you think that Marie receives better care because Jean Marie is present?
- How do you think Jean Claude was likely to feel after attending ANC with Marie?
- What do you think would have happened to Marie if Jean Claude were unable to join her for the first ANC visit?
 - How do you think the health provider would have treated Marie in this situation?
 - Would Marie have been turned away?

- Is Jean Claude likely to accompany Marie to any other ANC visits? Why or why not?
- Are there reasons why Jean Claude might want to attend more visits, even if he is unable to go?

Vignette B: Labor and Delivery

A few months later Marie tells Jean Claude that she is experiencing intense labor pains and that it might be time to go to the hospital.

- What do you think Jean Claude and Marie discussed before deciding when it was time to go to the health facility? What considerations would they have made before deciding it was time to go for the delivery?
- Who do you think made the decision when it is time to go to the hospital?
- Who do you think should make this decision?
- Is Jean Claude likely to accompany Marie to the health facility to deliver? Why or why not?
- Is it common for men in this community to accompany their wives for delivery in this community? Why or not?

Jean Claude decides to go with his wife to the health facility. While they are at the health facility, Marie experiences very difficult labor pains and moans from the pain. Jean Claude then saw one of the nurses slap Marie and shout at her.

- Why do you think the health provider behaved in this way?
- How do you think Jean Claude reacts to seeing this? Does he do anything?
- How does Marie react?
- Are experiences like this common?
- Do you think anything would have been different about Marie's experience if Jean Claude had not accompanied her? Or if Marie was accompanied by her mother instead?

An hour later Marie is brought into the delivery room and eventually gives birth to a healthy baby boy. Before she went into the delivery room, Jean Claude asked the health provider if he could enter the delivery room too.

- Why do you think Jean Claude wanted to be in the delivery room?
- Is Jean Claude likely to be allowed into the delivery room with Marie? Why or why not? Is this common?
- How do you think the health providers and staff at the health facility interact with or behave towards Jean Claude while his wife is in the delivery room?
- Do you think the health providers consulted Jean Claude in any decisions about his wife's care during this time?
 - Do you think they should?
- Do you think Jean Claude asked any questions about the care his wife was receiving? Why or why not?
- Do you think Marie would have been treated differently if Jean Claude was not there?
- Do you think Jean Claude's presence at the health facility improves the care that his wife receives during her delivery? If yes, in what ways?
- What do you think would have happened if Jean Claude and Marie could not afford to pay the medical fees after the birth?
- What do you think should happen in this situation?

Additional Discussion Questions

1. How do you think health providers generally treat men when they accompany their partners for antenatal care or delivery?
2. Do you think health providers treat women and men differently? If so, how? Why? Is there any difference if the health provider is a man or a woman?
3. Do you think men's presence at these services impacts the way that health providers interact with women at these services or the quality of care that women receive? Positively or negatively?
4. Do you think that men have any fears about the care their wives receive when they go alone to access these services? If so, what fears might they have?
5. Do men ever attend family planning services on their own? What are these experiences like? How do the health providers treat men during these visits?
6. Do men ever bring their children for health visits? What are these experiences like? How do the health providers treat men during these visits?
7. Do you think that men's experiences or the way they are treated by health providers are any different when they access other health services, such as malaria treatment? What types of services do men typically access?
8. What would make Jean Claude's and other men's experiences of attending or accompanying their partners to reproductive, maternal and newborn health services in local health facilities better?

We've now reached the end of our discussion.

Thank you very much for your participation. Your input is greatly appreciated. Please remember that your responses will be kept confidential. We ask that you not share the details of this discussion with anyone outside of this group. Thank you!