

# Family Planning Methods and Practice: Africa #1999 #U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1999

Although family planning experts often take a regional view of family planning and refer to the West African region as a whole, this perspective runs the risk of masking the variations in prevalence, method mix, and user characteristics across countries. To compare West Africa to other regions, such averages are useful because they provide information at the macro level while other factors, such as the economy, governance, and disease, may be important determinants of contraceptive use at the individual level. However, when looking at the variation within a region, such as at the national or s FP, family planning. Trends in current use of modern contraception among women exposed to the risk of becoming pregnant (i.e all non-pregnant married or cohabiting women of reproductive age except for those whose menstrual period had not returned or who had not engaged in sexual activity since the most recent birth) are shown in Fig.Â The results (not shown) suggest that a greater increase in the current use of contraceptives occurred in the 1990s (increases of 0.68 and 2.7 percentage points for western and eastern Africa, respectively) than in the early years of the twenty-first century (increases of 0.57 and 1.45 percentage points for western and eastern Africa, respectively). Fig. Family planning services are ðœthe ability of individuals and couples to anticipate and attain their desired number of children and the spacing and timing of their births. It is achieved through use of contraceptive methods and the treatment of involuntary infertility.â€ Family planning may involve consideration of the number of children a woman wishes to have, including the choice to have no children and the age at which she wishes to have them. These matters are influenced by external factors such as