

## Sampling strategy for MDICP-1 and MDICP-2

The MDICP is conducted in three distinctive districts of Malawi, one in each of the three regions of the country. Rumphi District, located in the Northern region of the country, follows the patrilineal system of kinship and lineage where residence is ideally patrilocal, inheritance is traced through sons, and parents of a groom pay bridewealth to parents of his bride. Rumphi District is inhabited primarily by Tumbuka, is predominantly Protestant. Balaka District (formerly part of Machinga District), in the South, follows a matrilineal system of kinship and lineage system where residence is ideally matrilocal, although it is not uncommon for wives to live at least some period of time in their husband's village. Balaka District is inhabited by Yao and is predominantly Muslim. Mchinji District, in the Center, follows a less rigid matrilineal system whereby residence may be matrilocal or patrilocal depending on the fulfillment of certain payments. Mchinji District is inhabited by Chewa, with almost equal proportions of Catholics and Protestants.

The sampling strategy was not designed to be representative of the national population of rural Malawi, although the sample characteristics closely match the characteristics of the rural population of the Malawi Demographic and Health Survey. The target sample was 500 ever married women in each district, plus their husbands. Husbands were included in the sample not only to gauge the effect of informal conversation networks on their sexual and fertility behavior, but also to examine the extent of informal conversations between husbands and wives on these issues. For polygamous men, it was important to restrict the men's responses about dealings with their spouse to one of their wives. This was done by randomly assigning the reference wife prior to interviewing. If a man had two or three wives who qualified for our sample, each wife had an equal chance of being a referent wife. Thus, w/ 2 wives --> 1/2 chance; w/ 3 wives --> 1/3 chance. In each case we marked questionnaires before going to the field (eg. "if 2 wives then ask about second wife in this case"). However, the way that the questionnaires were distributed in the field was random.

The sampling strategy adopted for the three districts in the MDICP-1 differed in order to permit comparison with earlier surveys. In Mchinji and Rumphi districts the sample was designed to cover Census Enumeration Areas (CEAs) included in the 1988 Traditional Methods of Child Spacing in Malawi (TMCSM) survey. However, since the TMCSM sampled women regardless of their marital status, the CEAs included in the TMCSM survey had fewer ever-married women than the MDICP target sample of 500 women in each district. Three neighboring CEAs covered by the 1988 survey were thus added to the MDICP-1 sample. In each district a cluster sampling strategy was used with a total of 145 villages randomly selected. Household lists of those reported as being normally resident in those villages were compiled by our team in the week prior to fieldwork. A sample of eligible women was then randomly selected from the household list. Since villages varied in size, sampling fractions were used that were inversely proportional to village populations, such that a higher proportion of eligible women in the smaller villages was sampled.

Balaka district was chosen instead of the district covered by the TMCSM in the southern region of Malawi (Chiradzulu District) in order to examine the impact of a Community Based Distribution (CBD) initiative in the area, following a baseline survey conducted by the German

aid agency GTZ with 1098 women and men in 1993. After taking into account the high rate of population growth in Malawi (roughly 3% per year) it was estimated that a 1 in 4 sampling procedure needed to be administered in only 9 of the 18 original GTZ villages in order to yield the target sample of 500 women. Consequently, the MDICP-1 sampled 9 out of 18 villages surveyed by GTZ in the 1993; 4 of the 7 CBD villages; and 5 of the 11 non-CBD villages. A random 1 in 4 sample of women of reproductive age (15-50) and their husbands was then drawn. The 1 in 4 sample was expected to yield about 90 women who were also interviewed by GTZ and about 75 men. Using lists of names taken from the GTZ questionnaires, 260 women and 125 men were over-sampled, in each case divided equally between the CBD and non-CBD area.

MDICP-1, carried out in 1998, interviewed 1541 ever-married women of childbearing age and 1198 men (of which 1065 were husbands of the currently married women in the sample, and the rest an oversample to compensate for an unexpectedly large number of men who were away). In the summer of 2001, the second round of the survey (MDICP-2) followed-up the same respondents (excluding those who were reported as dead in the 1999 Family Transfers Project and women who had reached an age over 50) and also interviewed their new spouses of respondents who had changed marital status between the two survey rounds (the number of those interviewed in 2001 was 1571 women and 1097 men including 186 new wives and 28 new husbands).