

## **Understanding the Decision-Making Process and Access to Abortion among Women in Bihar**

In September 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 agenda for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for inclusive and sustainable development. Unlike its predecessor, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the SDGs had a stand-alone goal of gender equality and empowering women and girls. As part of this agenda, countries committed to universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, but many gaps slowed the project's progress. More than 225 million women have an unmet need for contraceptive methods.

Similarly, in India, according to the NFHS-5 report, while the total unmet needs for family planning are reducing nationally, state-level disparities are worth highlighting. Bihar, for example, has made remarkable progress in closing the gap in the total unmet needs for family planning services, but it still lags behind the national average. Therefore, we must understand women's abortion-seeking pathways and the factors influencing abortion-seeking decisions in Bihar.

This study aimed to explore some factors related to abortion services available in the state and the perspectives of both the abortion seekers and the providers of abortion services. The specific objectives of the assessment were to:

1. assess the understanding of family planning and related services amongst women in Bihar,
2. assess the understanding of abortion and abortion-related services amongst women in Bihar, and
3. explore and establish the abortion-seeking pathways of women in Bihar.

Major activities undertaken to complete the endline assignment were as follows:

- Task 1: Subscribing the Survey CTO and developing the survey CTO version of the questionnaire
- Task 2: Mapping a detailed work plan for executing data collection
- Task 3: Providing inputs to tool finalization, reviewing the translations and internally testing the app version of the questionnaire for any logical or other errors
- Task 4: Conducting pilot for questionnaire testing
- Task 4: Providing listing and main survey training with support from Surgo Ventures
- Task 5: Listing of information for sampling and selection of survey beneficiaries
- Task 6: Surveying women, ASHA/TBA, and chemists in PSUs selected by Surgo Ventures
- Task 7: Ensuring data quality through debriefing sessions with field team
- Task 8: Submitting final cleaned data and the data collection report to Surgo Ventures