Focus Group Discussion Guide

FGD Number	C10[___]	Completed consent with each participant?	○ Yes
Number of total participants in FGD	_____	Confirmed demographic questionniare with each participant?	○ Yes
FGD Location	_____	Materials prepared for card activity?	○ Yes
Date	_____	Materials prepared for body mapping?	○ Yes
Start time	_____	Materials prepared for questerview?	○ Yes

Bold: Read aloud | *Italics: Do not read aloud (Blue: Notes for moderator; Red: Note to notetaker(s) and observer(s))*

QUESTIONS	PROBES
1. Opening [*2 minutes*]	
My name is [*moderator name*]**, and I will guide our discussion today. This is** [*notetaker name(s)*] **and** [*observer name(s)*]**. They will be helping me today.** **Before we begin, I will remind you of a few things. We will record the discussion so the study team can review it later to learn as much as possible from what you have to say. The study team will keep the recording private. Please do not share what others say during this discussion with people outside of the group after the discussion. Although we have just asked everyone to keep the discussion private, we cannot be certain everyone in the group will follow this request.** **Remember, joining this discussion is completely your choice. You do not have to talk about anything you do not want to, and you may decide to leave the discussion at any time. There are no right or wrong answers to any of the questions we will ask today. Sometimes, people can feel embarrassed or uncomfortable talking about their menstrual cycles or using contraception. However, we hope you will talk with us about anything freely and openly so we can hear about your experiences, thoughts, and opinions. The discussion will last a little more than an hour.** **Do you have any questions for me before our discussion?** *Answer any questions.* **Okay, I will start recording now. It is helpful if you speak clearly, slowly, and one at a time for the recording.**	
BEGIN RECORDING	
Today is [*say date*] **at** [*say time*]**, and this is Focus Group** [*say Focus Group ID*]**.**	

QUESTIONS	PROBES
2. Warm up [*3 minutes*]	
Before we begin, I would like to help our minds think creatively and openly. Because we are not sharing names or personal information today, I have one short question to help us get to know each other. *Ask either Question 2.1 or 2.2*	
2.1 What animal do you most relate to, and why did you select this animal?	*You can provide example or go first*
2.2 Please tell us one thing that is true about yourself and one thing that is false. We will then guess which is the truth and which is the lie.	*You can provide example or go first*
Thank you. We are very happy you are each part of our discussion today. Let us begin.	
3. Introducing menstrual changes [*7 minutes*]	
Now, for the rest of our discussion today, we will talk about menstrual cycles.	
3.1 People sometimes use different words when talking about the menstrual cycle or the days of the month when they are bleeding. What are some of the words you use?	**a) What are other words people use?** *Probe to find out if there are **different words** for:* • *the days in the month when they are bleeding (e.g., "your period"), and* • *the whole monthly menstrual cycle, including the days they are not bleeding.*
If you would like to, please use words discussed in 3.1 for the rest of the discussion instead of "menstrual cycle" and "period".	
3.2 How do people usually keep track of their menstrual cycles to help know when they might start bleeding the next time?	*Try to focus on tracking cycles for people who are not using contraception, so participants do not begin talking about their menstrual changes yet.* *Or you can ask this question as part of 4.2.*
So we all have the same understanding for the rest of the discussion, when I say, "menstrual cycle", I am talking about the monthly cycles women usually have. This includes the days of the month when you are bleeding, the time just before you bleed, the time just after bleeding, and other times of the month in between. **Does that make sense?** *Answer any questions or probe if respondents seem uncertain*.	

QUESTIONS	PROBES
4. Experiences with menstrual changes [*Up to 25 minutes*]	
Notetaker 2 will begin making cards in this section with participant responses written on them. Cards for each menstrual change will be in a different color. ***Note**: Throughout this section, participants may describe other types of changes than we ask about in each question. Please try to **use the card colors for the type of change they describe** if this happens, rather than defaulting to the color for the question number.*	
Now, I would like you to think about how your own menstrual cycles have changed while you are using contraceptive, both changes you have liked and changes you have not liked. ***Note throughout this section**: Please probe for positive and negative experiences if both are not discussed.*	
4.1 First, please tell me about any ways contraception has changed <u>HOW OFTEN YOU HAVE BLEEDING</u>. *We are aiming to capture changes in the **<u>frequency of their bleeding</u** in this question.* ***Note:** Throughout this section, participants may describe other types of changes than we ask about in each question, and this is okay. Please try to keep track of this so you can adjust later.*	*If you need to clarify:* **For example, bleeding that comes more often or less often than before using contraception** **a) Sometimes people's bleeding stops for a time while they are using contraception. Can you tell me about any experiences you had like this?** • *Probe for **terms** people use (e.g., stopped periods, skipped periods, etc.)* • *Probe for any experiences with stopped periods that go on **after discontinuing** contraception.*
4.2 Next, please tell me about any ways contraception has changed <u>HOW REGULARLY YOU HAVE BLEEDING</u>. *We are aiming to capture changes in the **<u>predictability/regularity of their bleeding</u>**.* *Section continues on next page*	*If you need to clarify:* **For example, bleeding that comes when you do not expect or bleeding that is more regular** **a) Do you find it is now easier or harder to know when your bleeding will start? What about when your bleeding will end?** *Could ask question 3.2 about tracking here*

QUESTIONS	PROBES
4.3 Now, please tell me about any ways contraception has changed <u>HOW LONG YOU HAVE BLEEDING</u>. *We are aiming to capture changes in the **<u>duration of their bleeding</u>**.*	*If you need to clarify:* **For example, when you do have bleeding, how many days does it last? Is this longer or shorter than before using contraception?**
4.4 When you have bleeding, how does contraception change <u>HOW MUCH YOU BLEED</u> during those days? *We are aiming to capture changes in the **<u>volume of their bleeding</u>**.*	*If you need to clarify:* **For example, do you have more bleeding or less bleeding? Is the bleeding heavier or lighter?**
4.5 What about <u>HOW YOUR BLEEDING LOOKS</u>? How has contraception changed what you blood looks like? *We are aiming to capture changes in the **<u>color, consistency, and smell of their blood</u>**.*	*If you need to clarify:* **For example, how has the color of your blood changed?** **a) How has contraception changed any clots or small clumps of blood in your bleeding?** **b) What about other fluid that isn't blood? What do you see besides blood?** • *Probe around **cervical/vaginal fluid** both **during their bleeding**, and at times **they are not bleeding**.*
4.6 Can you please tell me how contraception has changed your <u>MENSTRUAL CRAMPS</u>? *We are aiming to capture changes in the **<u>frequency and severity of their cramping</u>**.* ***Note**: We will discuss where the cramping happens and how it feels in the body mapping. It is okay if the participants mention that now, but we do not need to probe around it yet.*	*If you need to clarify:* **For example, have your menstrual cramps gotten better or worse with contraception?** *Probe around if they have cramps **more or less often** with contraception and if the cramps are **stronger or lighter** than before.*
While you have been sharing your experiences, [*Notetaker name(s*] **has/have been noting them on cards to help us remember. Now let us review what we have said so far.** *Read cards aloud to participants as they are being taped on the wall, color by color.* *Section continues on next page*	*Notetaker(s) and observer tape the current cards up on the wall, grouping the colors/type of menstrual changes together.*

QUESTIONS	PROBES
4.7 Are there <u>ANY OTHER WAYS</u> contraception has changed your menstrual cycle that we have not talked about yet and need to add to the wall? *Read aloud the additional cards as they are taped to the wall.*	*Notetaker 2 will return to making cards. Please **use the card color for the type of change they describe** if describing answers to previous questions.* *Probe about **delays in their normal period returning** after discontinuing contraception.*
4.8 Now, how have all these changes to your menstrual cycle <u>MADE YOUR BODY FEEL</u>?	*Notetaker 2 continues making cards.* *If you need to clarify:* **For example, have these changes made your body feel any different? Any better or worse?** *Probe around positive and negative impacts on:* • *Bloating* • *Energy* • *Emotions* • *Sleep* • *Other aspects of health*
4.9 Finally, how have all these menstrual changes <u>IMPACTED YOUR DAY-TO-DAY LIFE</u>?	*Probe, around positive and negative impacts to:* • *Personal life* • *Work outside the home* • *Household chores/duties* • *Relationship and sex life* • *Costs/hassle of managing menstrual health* • *Other aspects of financial wellbeing* • *Other important domains of life (e.g., practicing religion)*
[*Notetaker name(s*] **has/have again been noting what you have said on cards to help us remember.** *Read cards aloud to participants as they are being taped on the wall, color by color.*	*Notetaker 2 and observer(s) tape the cards on the wall from the last two questions.*
4.10 Are there <u>ANY MORE</u> we need to add?	*Notetaker 2 continues making cards.*

QUESTIONS	PROBES
5. Body mapping [*12 minutes*]	
We will now do an activity together so you can show us about your experiences with menstrual cramping while using contraception. **We will give each of you stickers and ask you to put them on the poster ANYWHERE ON THE BODY where you have felt menstrual cramping while using contraception. The stickers are in different colors, each for different methods of contraception.**	*Notetaker tapes body maps up on wall.*
First, let us have people who are using PILLS or have used them in the past come and get yellow stickers. Please put your yellow stickers anywhere on the body where you had menstrual cramping.	*Probe if needed:* **Are there other places on the body where you have felt menstrual cramping with this method? You can use more stickers in the same color for those places.** *Pills = yellow stickers*
Now, please come and get green stickers if you are using INJECTIONS or have used them in the past. Please put your green stickers anywhere on the body where you had menstrual cramping.	*Probe if needed for other places they have felt menstrual cramping.* *Injectables = green stickers*
*Repeat for **IMPLANTS** in blue stickers, purple for **NON-HORMONAL IUDs**, red for **HORMONAL IUDs**, and orange for **ANY OTHER METHODS** or if they are unsure about the method (e.g., whether nonhormonal or hormonal IUD).*	*Implants = blue* *Non-hormonal/copper IUD = purple* *Hormonal IUD = red* *Other hormonal methods = orange*
Now, let us all come get one last sticker. [*gold star stickers*] **This time, please put the sticker on the poster in the ONE PLACE ON THE BODY where the menstrual cramping bothers you the most.** *Participants may need to use two gold star stickers for both side in one place on the body.*	*Gold stars = most bothersome place*
Thank you. Let us all come back to our seats. *Section continues on next page*	

QUESTIONS	PROBES
5.1. I see some stickers here [*point to location*]. What words would use to describe this place on the body?	**a) What are other words people sometimes use for this part of the body with menstrual cramps?**
5.2. Now, can someone who put a sticker here tell me about their menstrual cramping?	**a) What other words would you use to describe the menstrual cramping?** **b) What other experiences have you had with menstrual cramping here?**
If there are any gold star stickers around this location, ask Question 5.3. **5.3. Why does menstrual cramping here bother you the most?**	**a) What are other reasons you find it most bothersome here?**
Repeat 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 for all sticker locations	
5.4. How do you manage your menstrual cramping?	**a) What activities do you avoid because the cramping?** *Probe around if there are things they do or any medication or herbs they take to reduce the pain.*
If reduced pain was not already discussed, ask Question 5.5. **5.5. Have any of you had less or reduced menstrual cramping and pain while using contraception? Can you tell me about that experience?**	

QUESTIONS	PROBES
6. Desired information before using contraception [*5 minutes*]	
For the next few questions, let us look back at all the ways contraception has changed your menstrual cycles that we have here on our wall, all the places you have menstrual cramping, and all the ways these changes have impacted you.	
6.1. What information did you get from the clinic or healthcare provider about changes to your menstrual cycle before you started the method you are using?	**a) How was this information helpful?** **b) Not helpful?**
6.2. Now, think about all the things we have talked about today. What do you wish they had told you more about the changes to your menstrual cycle before you started the method?	**a) What information would have helped you prepare better for the changes?** **b) What information would have made your experience with the contraceptive method better?**
6.3. What is the most important information you would want a friend to know about these changes before starting contraception?	*Probe about why it is the most important.*
Thank you, all. We will now do one last activity.	

QUESTIONS	PROBES
7. Questerview [*9 minutes*]	
For this final activity, we will talk about two questions healthcare providers or researchers sometimes ask people about their menstrual cycle. I will ask you each question, and we will take a few minutes to discuss the answers.	*Notetaker 2 tapes first question to the wall.*
The first question we will talk about is: **WHEN YOU LAST HAD A PERIOD, WOULD YOU DESCRIBE IT AS: LIGHT, MODERATE, OR HEAVY?** ***Note**: Please read the question **exactly how it is written**, as if participants were completing a survey with the question. If they are not sure how to answer, please ask them to pick the answer they think is best or they can stay seated in a "Don't know" group.*	
Please raise your hand if you would say light. Could you please come to *[say side of room]* **side of the room?** **If you would say heavy, please come over to the** [*say other side of room]* **side of the room.** **And for the rest of you, if you would say moderate, please stand in the middle part of the room.** *If there is anyone who does not have an answer, they can stay seated.*	*Notetaker notes how many participants are in each group.*
7.1. How did you decide on your answer?	*Probe for at least three responses and at least one person from each group in the room.*
7.2. How long ago was the period you were thinking about when you answered the question? • **Could you raise your hand if it was within the last month or two?** • **About three to six months ago?** • **More than six months ago?**	*Notetaker notes how many for each time.*
7.3. Was there anything [else] about this first question that made it difficult to answer?	*Probe for at least one person from each group in the room.*
Thank you. Now for the second question, we will stay in our groups.	*Notetaker 2 tapes the second question to the wall.*

QUESTIONS	PROBES
Section continues on next page	
Sometimes healthcare providers or researchers may ask you: **ON THE HEAVIEST DAY OF YOUR LAST PERIOD, HOW MANY MENSTRUAL PADS, TAMPONS, OR OTHER MATERIALS DID YOU NEED TO USE TO COLLECT OR ABSORB YOUR BLEEDING FOR THAT DAY?** ***Note**: Please read the question **exactly how it is written**.*	
Please raise your hand if: • **You used one?** • **Two, three, or four?** • **Five, six, or seven?** • **Eight, nine or ten?** • **Eleven, twelve, or thirteen?** • **More than thirteen?**	*Notetaker notes how many participants answer from **each group** in the room.*
If there are any differences in answers to this question within groups, ask Question 7.4. **7.4. Why do you think people in your group had different answers to this second question?**	*Probe for at least one person from each group in the room.*
7.5. Was there anything [else] about this second questions that made it difficult to answer?	*Probe for at least one person from each group in the room.* **a) How do you think someone would answer this question if they used something other than pads or tampons?** • *Probe around menstrual cups, toilet paper, other materials* **b) How do you think someone would answer this question if they often do not have enough pads, tampons, or other materials for the amount of bleeding they have?**

QUESTIONS	PROBES
7.6. Sometimes people have a very small amount of bleeding, and they may not even need to use any menstrual pad, tampon, 'panty liner', or other material. What words would you use to describe this very small amount of bleeding?	**a) Are there other words people sometimes use?** **b) What does the word "spotting" mean to you?** • *Probe if there are different meanings for the word "spotting" than related to menstruation.* **c) How do you know when you have this type of bleeding?** **d) How do you choose whether or not you use a menstrual pad, tampon, or other material for this type of bleeding?** **e) Finally, when you have this very small amount of bleeding** [*or spotting or other word from earlier probe*]**, how would you answer the second question** [*repeat question if needed*]**?**

QUESTIONS	PROBES
*If there is time, ask the next two questions. Otherwise, skip to "**Closing**"* **You have been very helpful in telling us about these two questions. We do have two more things healthcare providers or researchers may ask people using contraception, and we would like your opinion.**	
Sometimes healthcare providers or researchers want to know about whether or not you had sex recently. For some people, this is a sensitive topic, and it may be hard to talk about. **7.7. So, how would you like to be asked if you had sex or not?**	**a) What words would make it easier or more comfortable to answer?** **b) What does the word "sex" mean to you?** **c) What do the words "sexual intercourse" mean to you? What about "vaginal intercourse"?**
Thank you. Healthcare providers or researchers sometimes ask whether or not you used a second method of contraception when you last had sex. **7.8. How do you think it is best to ask this question?**	**a) What words would make it easier to understand and answer?** **b) What do the words "a second method of contraception" mean to you? What methods do you think about?** **c) If you are asked this question, would you think to include withdrawal as a second method?** • *If needed:* **Withdrawal or "pulling out" is when the man can be careful and pull out before climax.** • *Probe:* **What about if it was not to prevent pregnancy, for example the man pulls out for another reason?** **d) If you are asked this question, would you think to include not having sex on some days of the month to avoid getting pregnant?**
Thank you. We are coming to the end of our discussion.	

QUESTIONS	PROBES
8. Closing [*2 minutes*]	
8.1. Before we end, is there anything else you think we should know about your experiences with your menstrual cycle while taking contraception that we did not talk about yet today?	
Thank you for joining our discussion today. We are very grateful that you have shared your thoughts, experiences, and opinions with us. This information will be helpful to our study. **I will stop the recording now. Today is** [*say date*] **at** [*say time*]**, and this is Focus Group** [*say Focus Group ID*].	
STOP RECORDING.	
Now that we are finished, I would like to ask you about our discussion. What was one thing you liked about our discussion today, and what was one thing you wish was different during the discussion?	

End time _____

Materials compiled

◯ Yes Completed eligiblity questionnaires

◯ Yes Cards from card activity

◯ Yes Photo of card activity

◯ Yes Body maps

◯ Yes Photo of Body maps

◯ Yes Recordings