

# IUD USE AND DISCONTINUATION IN BANGLADESH

Mahboob-E-Alam<sup>1</sup>, H. Searing<sup>2</sup>, J. Bradley<sup>2</sup> and F. Shabnam<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The ACQUIRE Project, EngenderHealth, Bangladesh. <sup>2</sup> The ACQUIRE Project, EngenderHealth, New York.

## Background

### Study Design

A retrospective cross-section design identified 375 IUD acceptors from six districts. 330 acceptors interviewed 12 months post insertion. In depth interviews with 30 women who discontinued due to side effects.

### Study Objectives

- ◆ The outcome of IUD use among acceptors within the first 12 months
- ◆ The reasons given for discontinuation
- ◆ Common side effects, how they were experienced
- ◆ Key determinants of discontinuation
- ◆ Preinsertion and postinsertion health-sector support for IUD clients

### Acceptors' Characteristics

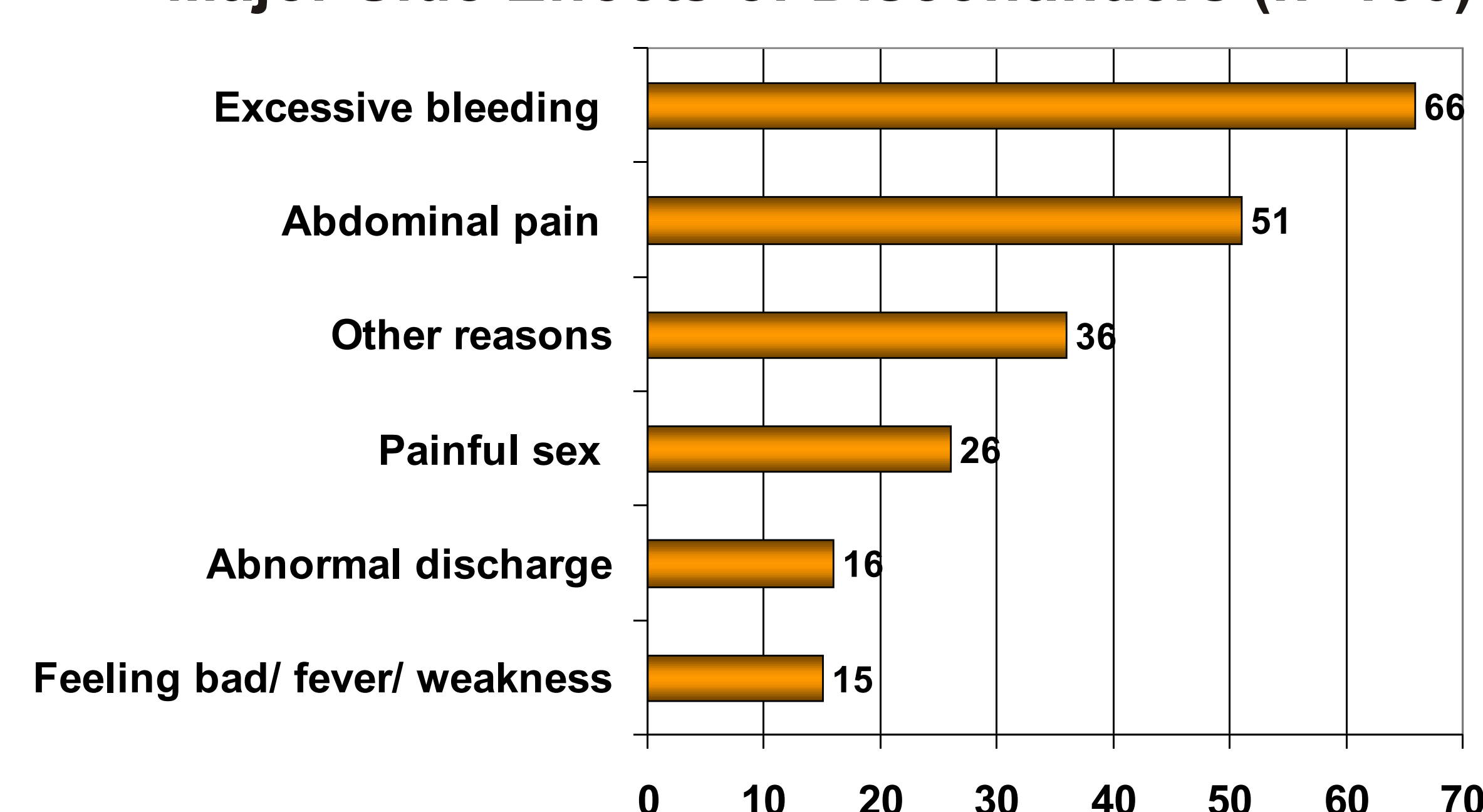
- ◆ Mean age 29 years, 60% under the age of 30 years
- ◆ 40% illiterate
- ◆ In 7 days, did not read newspaper (75%), radio (68%), TV (46%)
- ◆ Mean parity 2.8, 21% having more than 3 children
- ◆ 63% does not want no more kids

## Findings

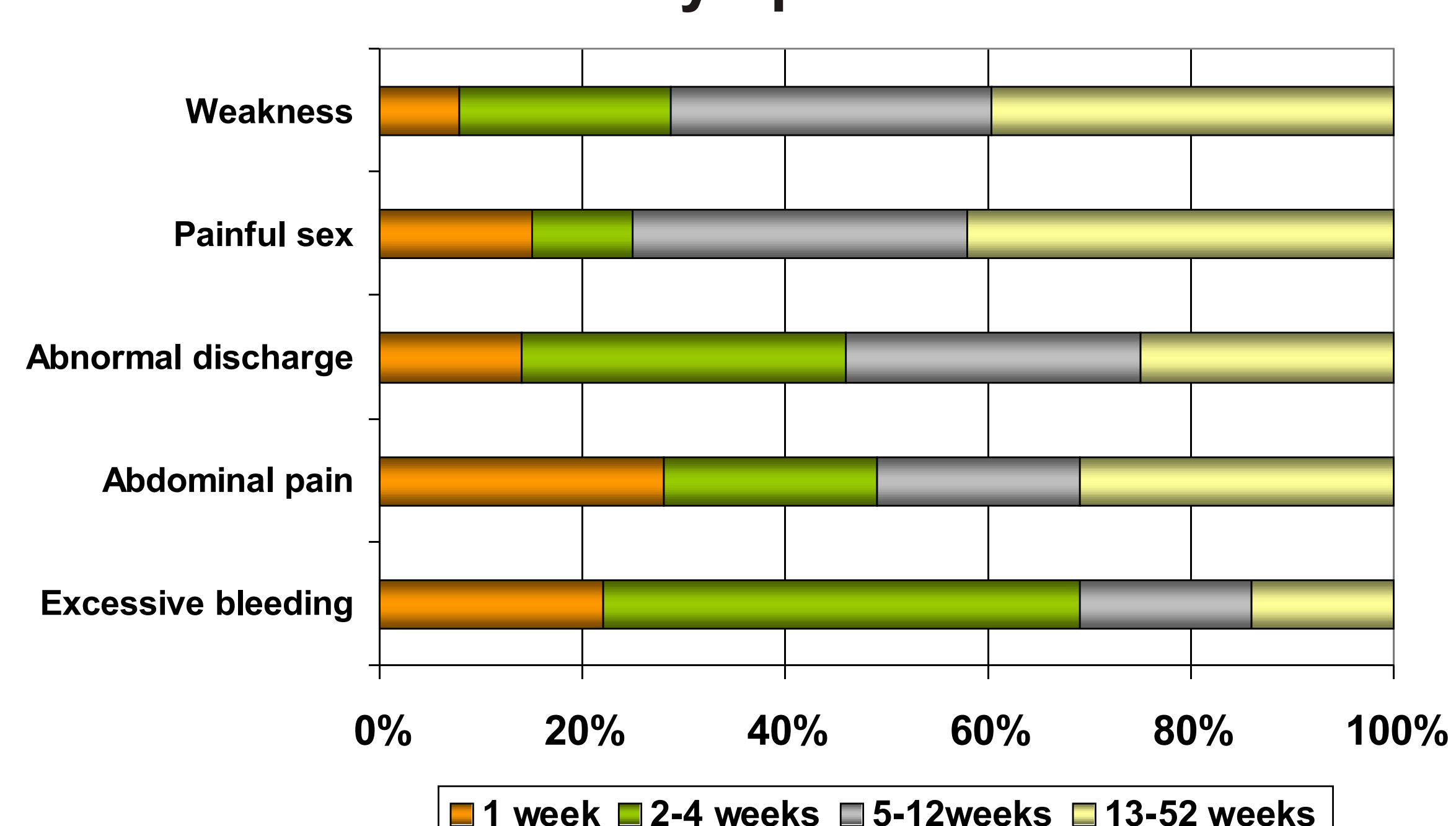
### Continuation/ Discontinuation

- ◆ More than half (53%) women continued and were mostly satisfied (92%).
- ◆ Of these women, one-third planned to continue use 1-5 years, 15% for 6-9 years and remaining 54% for 10 years.
- ◆ 47% women discontinued within 12 months.
- ◆ 8% acceptors (17% discontinuers) removed within first month.
- ◆ 20% acceptors (43% discontinuers) removed within first 3 months.
- ◆ Mean length of use of first-year discontinuers - 2.7 months
- ◆ 27% discontinuers removed the IUD themselves.

Major Side Effects of Discontinuers (n=156)



Duration of Symptoms of Discontinuers



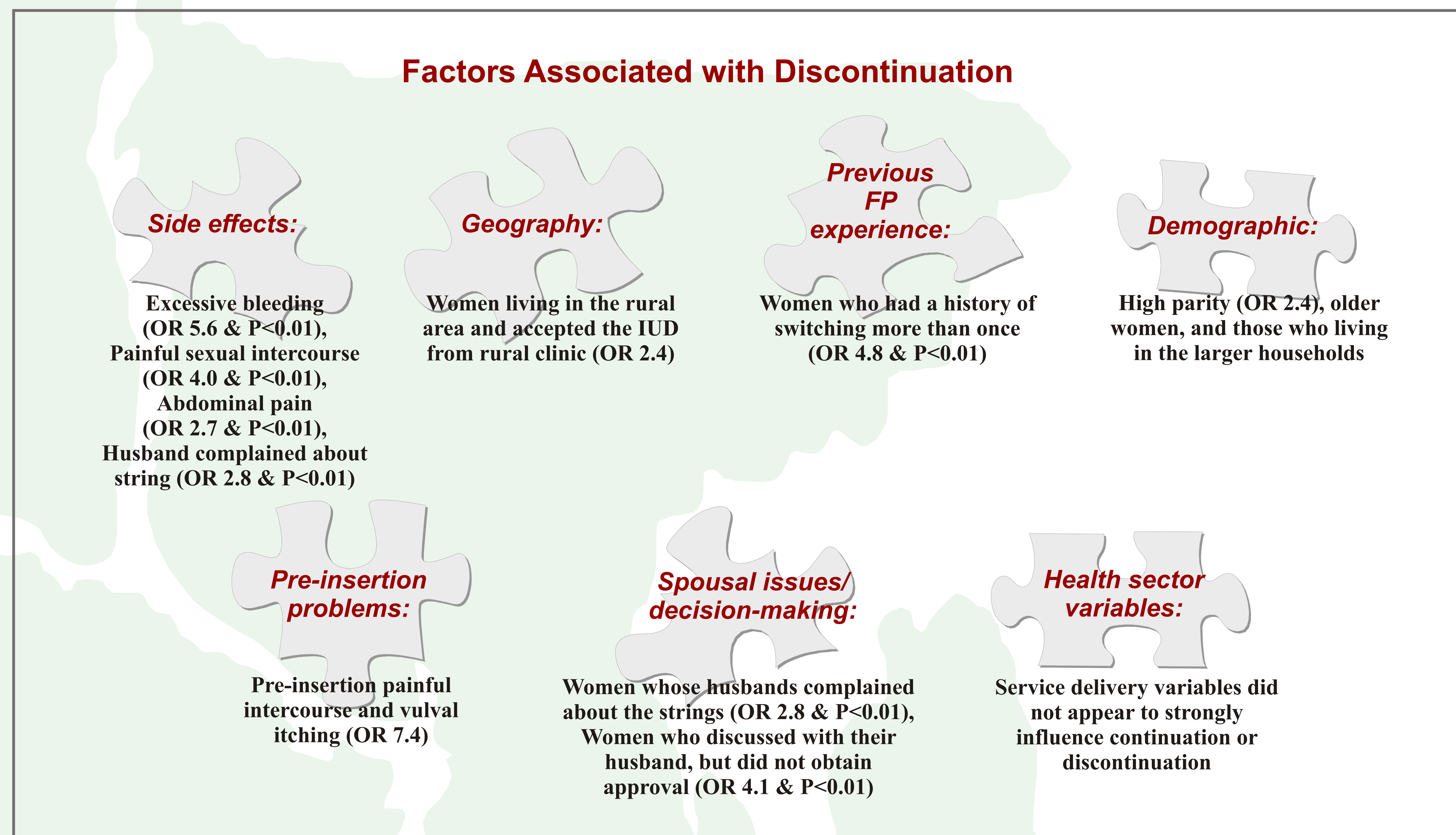
### IUD Decision Making

One in four women (24%) did not discuss the decision to use an IUD with their husband. Of those women who did discuss the decision, 72% reported their husband approved of the decision and only 4% of the cases did the husband not approve.

### Method Switching

- ◆ 89% had some previous experience of using contraceptive.
- ◆ Of the 156 discontinuers, 116 switched to another method (pill 74%, injectable 12%, condom 10% and other 3%)
- ◆ 88% were still using the new method.
- ◆ 84% were happy with the new method.

### Factors Associated with Discontinuation



### Excessive Bleeding

- ◆ Problem stopped after removal
- ◆ Heaviest days – pad change 4-5 times (normal 1-2)
- ◆ Duration – 4-5 days (normal 1-3)
- ◆ Most described “enduring” this for a long time  
Feeling very unwell: weakness, tiredness, vertigo, palpitations, “uneasy feelings” unable to work, feverish, having “bloodless body”, difficulty moving, standing
- ◆ Most forewarned, but information seemed vague, advising only to come back – seemed to want concrete advice

### Emotional Responses

- Guilt:** unable to pray and drawing attention, unable to work (tending cows, carrying rice), cost money, made spouses angry, unable to have sex
- Shame:** staining clothes, remain indoors, washing pads, community shame and inability to do “janaja”
- Fear:** fear of perforation, disease, continued health decline, death. Fear for the children’s future, fear “insides would come out” (prolapse)
- Marital anxiety:** unable to perform wifely role, husband generally angry, insist removal, verbally abuse, “My husband used bad language, I didn’t feel joy in anything - and I would not survive long”

### Husbands' Issues

- ◆ If husbands were not consulted, women were much more likely to experience side effects.
- ◆ Menstrual changes were unacceptable to the husbands.
- ◆ Husbands were usually the ones to decide on removal.
- ◆ Husbands hold the purse strings medicines.
- ◆ Wife has to be seen to be praying and working.
- ◆ Sex life affected.

## Recommendations

- ◆ Providers should seriously look into the pre-insertion conduction.
- ◆ Address menstrual issues more openly with clients, their partners and community leaders
- ◆ Consider routine prophylaxis for bleeding
- ◆ Provision of Ibuprofen and Iron tablets after IUD insertion
- ◆ Strengthen capacity of field workers to support (counsel) clients during first three months post insertion
- ◆ Special operational study can be undertaken to find out the ways and means of reducing discontinuation rate.