



User Profiles

CT Innovation Lab

Imagining the future of women's contraception

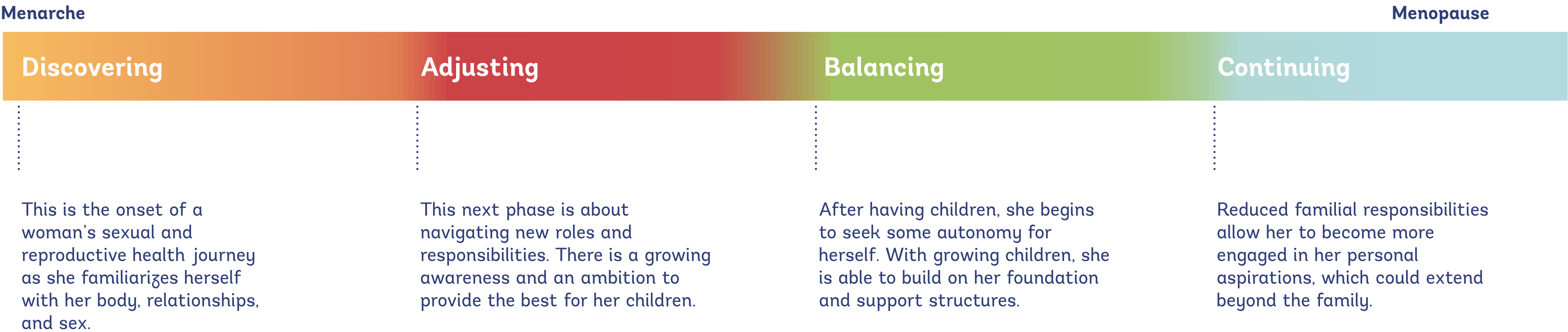
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A women's reproductive journey from menarche to menopause has several key milestones.

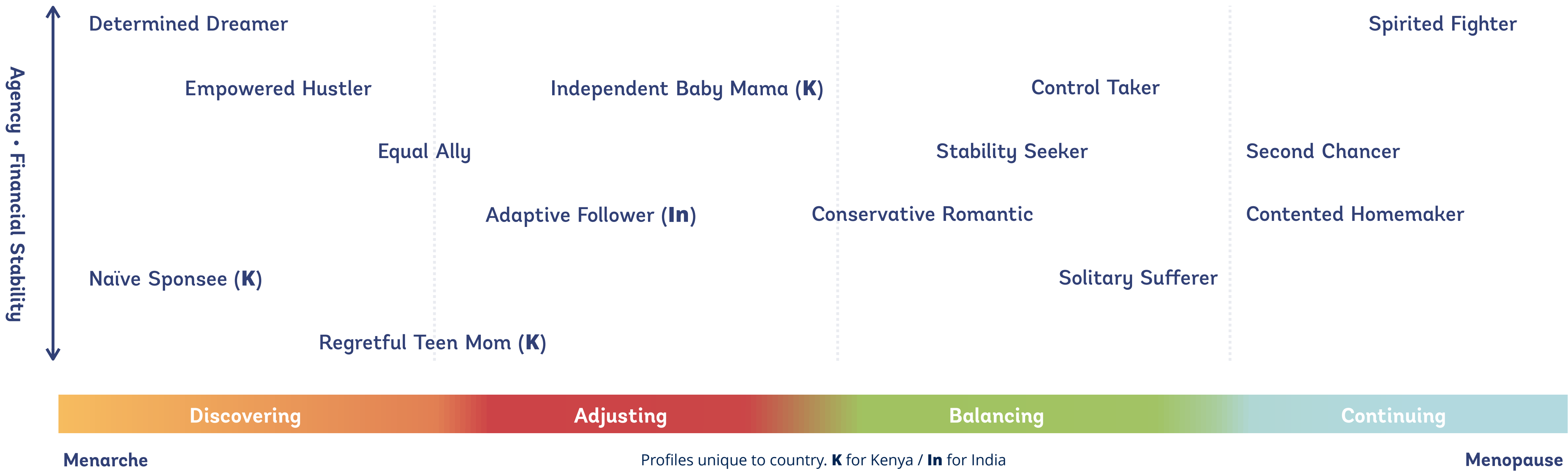
These milestones can be summarized into four key phases that represent her changing roles across her life. Each phase thus presents a set of distinct needs that affect her contraceptive decision-making.

Within each phase, aspects such as agency, motivations, perceptions and barriers contribute towards further diversifying the needs of different women. We have captured this uniqueness through a set of user profiles.



The user profiles illustrated here represent the range of women that we met during our research. While these are constructed from women in Kenya and India, they represent a robust range of women with aspects recognizable across most cultures.

In mapping the user profiles across this journey, we have chosen to focus on key inflection points. While these profiles are not exhaustive, they present a set of unique needs that should drive the design of their ideal contraceptive methods.



Discovering

	Determined Dreamer	Empowered Hustler	Naïve Sponsee
	<p>A spirit of determined independence defines this modern woman: she is ambitious and will not settle down before achieving her dreams. She is prudent about her sexual choices, as she wants to focus on her future.</p>	<p>She is an empowered feminist seeking a balance between fun and risk. Progressive and liberated, she seeks to enjoy what life has to offer before eventually 'settling down'.</p>	<p>Disempowered and dependent, she is young, susceptible to peer pressure and driven into risky relationships. Her situation is exacerbated by low-income realities.</p>
	<p><i>“I want to live my own life. I have slowly removed all my shackles and tried to explain that to my parents as well.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Settling down means no more fun, no more side guys. It is a lot of responsibility. For now, I want to explore and have fun.”</i></p>	<p><i>“I met him at the local shop, and he started buying me sanitary napkins and hair oil - things my family could not provide because they are poor.”</i></p>
Enablers	<p>She has a strong group of friends and peers who encourage and support her and provide a safe space for self-expression.</p>	<p>She has access to alternative spaces and providers like a youth friendly clinic, where she gets comprehensive and positive information on sex and protection.</p>	<p>She aspires for the good things in life. Since her own family cannot support her, she hopes that her sponsor/ partner will provide for her.</p>
Barriers	<p>She gets her information through peers and school activities (health clubs / faith-based sermons), which can be fairly biased and limited to abstinence-only messages.</p>	<p>She is dependent on family for support, as she is still figuring out her plans for the future. Despite her high awareness, she still faces provider biases and disfavor when accessing CT, given her age and marital status.</p>	<p>Due to very low awareness and mobility, she might have had an unintended pregnancy after her first few sexual experiences. She is at her partner's or sponsor's mercy to not get pregnant.</p>

Determined Dreamer

"Why should I have to use CT, perhaps there is something that both of us can share."



Empowered Hustler

"Getting a method without being judged by anyone would be ideal."



Naïve Sponsee

"I don't want to rely on him, I really need to protect myself from HIV and pregnancy."



Adjusting

	Independent Baby Mama	Equal Ally	Adaptive Follower	Regretful Teen Mom
	Independent, empowered and self-sufficient, she benefits from a strong support system, and sees herself as both caregiver and provider for her child.	With the support of her husband, she ambitiously vows to overcome their financial insecurity in order to provide a better future for their children while enjoying life together.	From a traditional background, she has sacrificed personal pursuits for family interests and is still settling into a largely new environment. She is disempowered and relies on her new family to provide direction and purpose.	A single woman who mothered a child out of wedlock whilst still young, she is attempting to re-align her life after a temporary loss of hope and sense of regret for disappointing her family and community.
	<i>“I am everything to my son - caregiver and provider, mother and father.”</i>	<i>“It would be nice to have a TV but it’s not essential. We are together and happy, that’s all that matters.”</i>	<i>“My parents chose him from some photos and then went to meet his family. We met at our wedding for the first time.”</i>	<i>“I had only one boyfriend, and it was a ‘time-pass’ relationship. I didn’t love him. I only did it because all the girls around me had boyfriends.”</i>
Enablers	Her peers who have faced similar circumstances are her strength, and she likes spending time with them when she is not working. She looks up to older women in her family or community and often goes to them for financial and emotional advice.	Her husband is her confidante and is extremely supportive of her. During their free time they talk about the life they would like to create for themselves and their children. She might also hope to finish her education someday, after her children can take care of themselves.	She is at the brink of her journey to creating her own family. After having lived a sheltered life, this is her first experience of independence from her own family, and she is making sense of many ‘firsts’ (relationship, sex, domestic responsibilities) with anxiety and excitement.	Her awareness increases during antenatal care visits and she relies on providers to give her further information on contraception and safe-guarding herself.
Barriers	She cannot afford to have anymore children in the near future until she is financially stable. She might have partners (dating or in union) whom she does not yet trust fully, and hence wants to be in control of contraception and family planning.	While they are independent, they are also inexperienced in matters pertaining to domestic life. They are learning through trial and error and might not have time to proactively manage things, as they are both busy working and taking care of their children.	She has lost the security blanket of her social network and is starting from scratch. She is dependent on older women in the household (mother-in-law and sisters-in-law) for advice and guidance, but they might not necessarily look out for her best interests.	She is managing motherhood alone and her sexual partners may not always be cooperative of her using contraception.

Independent Baby Mama

"I don't want to get pregnant but I also don't want any bad side effects."



Equal Ally

"After our last child we decided to wait. This is our mutual decision and we are happy to share the responsibility."



Adaptive Follower

"We are just getting to know each other and so I want something that is hidden from my mother in law."



Regretful Teen Mom

"I don't foresee having sex in the near future, I still would like to get a method just in case."



Balancing

	Control Taker	Stability Seeker	Conservative Romantic	Solitary Sufferer
	<p>She is an ambitious risk-taker who has reached some stability in her family life. She seeks to become more independent financially and wants to focus on expanding her own business.</p>	<p>She is aspiring towards independence and is hardworking and committed to building a better future, though additional children at this stage could negatively affect these plans.</p>	<p>She is in a stable relationship and seeks support and guidance from her partner, whom she is financially dependent upon. She has traditional values and dreams and seeks stability through achieving family goals.</p>	<p>Completely subservient to her husband and in-laws, her future is uncertain. Because her husband's work is unreliable, she takes on whatever menial jobs she can find to contribute to household income. Her singular desire is to provide her children a better life than her own.</p>
	<p><i>“It’s never too late to have children. I had my fourth kid when I was 37, and I would like to have more children if we have the resources to support them.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Though things aren’t great for us right now, I am hopeful that things will change for the better.”</i></p>	<p><i>“A woman’s role is that of a homemaker. She should support her husband and help her children. This is how our society has always been.”</i></p>	<p><i>“I don’t have any dreams for myself, they’re all for my kids. If I had a supportive husband and family, I could have dreamt for myself.”</i></p>
Enablers	<p>She enjoys working, particularly because of inspirational women who have employed her. Her employers have supported her transition into an entrepreneur and even assisted her financially.</p>	<p>She is socially savvy and always looking for advice and interesting information that she can use to uplift her life. Her husband is supportive of her endeavors and tries to enable her to the best of his capabilities.</p>	<p>She has a caring husband, who earns enough to take care of the family and feels she need only manage the household.</p>	<p>She is in survival mode, and tries not to provoke her husband and in-laws. Being employed and seeking refuge in religion provides her with some respite.</p>
Barriers	<p>Struggling to balance work and family, she is stressed, which ultimately takes a toll on her health. Her busy life might also affect her relationship with her partner, who wants more time with her.</p>	<p>She has used several methods but is struggling to find the right fit. Any additional children at this stage could negatively affect her plans.</p>	<p>Owing to her unfinished education, she feels unconfident of her own abilities and relies on her husband or other ‘knowledgeable’ people (like health providers) to make decisions for her.</p>	<p>She is extremely vulnerable and has no decision-making capabilities. Her husband or in-laws dictate her fertility management and the number of children she should have.</p>

Control Taker

"I want a no-fuss 100% effective method, so I can focus on growing my business. But if we change our mind, I want to be able to conceive quickly."

Stability Seeker

"I don't want another child before my son is old enough to take care of himself, but I am scared of another accident. I wish I had something that was more sure."

Conservative Romantic

"Only natural methods which do not require planning ahead will work for us, as my husband has a strong aversion to modern medicine."

Solitary Sufferer

"When he found out I was using the implant, he came home and threatened to cut it out with a knife. I need something that he won't find out about."



Continuing

	Spirited Fighter	Second Chancer	Contented Homemaker
	<p>Traditional constraints forced this ambitious woman to abandon many of her aspirations in order to fulfill her role as wife and mother. However, she has now gained independence and even plays an active role in the community.</p>	<p>Despite a difficult start to her married life and a domineering mother-in-law, her passive husband has come around to be more supportive of her now. This, along with some new social networks she has formed, has enabled her to become more independent.</p>	<p>She has been through challenging relationships and unreliable partners, but is now in a position where things are looking positive. Her role is to ensure her husband's and children's success.</p>
	<p><i>“I was so stupid, I didn’t know anything. I could barely talk to anyone. Now people call me whenever they need any issue resolved. It feels good to be needed by my community.”</i></p>	<p><i>“I can’t forget the way my mother-in-law mistreated me after my last child was born. I couldn’t take it anymore, I decided I have to move away.”</i></p>	<p><i>“My husband and I decided not to have anymore children after we had our fourth kid.”</i></p>
Enablers	<p>In the absence of an engaged partner and supportive family ecosystem, she has sought inspiration from strong women role models in her community. This has also inspired her to become an advocate for others who have suffered a similar fate.</p>	<p>New social networks and relationships she has formed with women in her community have given her more confidence to voice her concerns and seek more autonomy.</p>	<p>Having met some of her family goals, she likes to spend time with her community groups (faith or self-help), which are her primary support system. Women from her family are still important role models and also help her with decisions relating to domestic or financial matters.</p>
Barriers	<p>Even though she has become self-sufficient, she cannot abandon her duties as a mother and often struggles to find time for her kids. Her husband's and in-law's lack of appreciation is very disheartening; she can not help but feel demoralized at times.</p>	<p>Her husband tries to be supportive, but also feels beholden to his family and the need to be respectful of their wishes.</p>	<p>She does not want to have any more children, but does not feel comfortable going for an invasive method. Her female friends advise her to follow traditional methods, and she is unsure of which extreme to pick.</p>

Spirited Fighter

"I tried many methods in the past, but they gave me bad side effects. We hardly have sex now, so I don't want to go through all that unnecessary trouble anymore."



Second Chancer

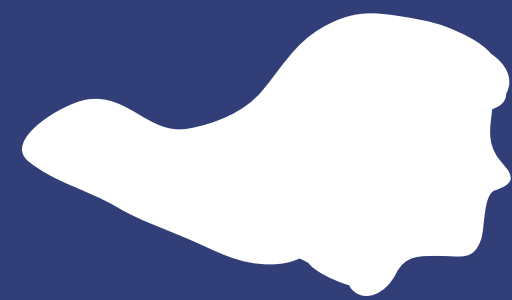
"I'm done with having children, but what if I change my mind? How can I get anything permanent? You never know what lies in the future."



Contented Homemaker

"I don't want more children, but I am scared of getting the surgery, where anything can go wrong. I wish there was another way to stop."





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