



# Norm Entrepreneurs – Faith Actors' Role in Family Planning







**Increasing ownership of family planning  
within the Anglican Church in Africa**

# Introduction

- CAPA is a membership organization of 13 Provinces in Africa whose population is 40 million followers.
- In 2016, the standing committee (policy shaping organ of CAPA) resolved to popularize family planning in the Church's structures.
- They were influenced by mapping studies of teenage pregnancies in the province of Ghana.

# Programme Objective

The objective of this initiative is threefold:

1. To increase awareness on FP through the religious leaders
2. To ensure the Church's health institutions are equipped to provide family planning services and counselling as per age appropriateness.
3. To influence institutions with responsibility of training clergy to make family planning part of their core courses.

**Resolution of Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa Standing Committee, Kitwe, Zambia on May, 10th 2017**

"The Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa Standing Committee meeting at Kitwe Zambia on the 10th May 2017 deliberated on the impact of large populations on the meager resources both at Family and National levels and noted that this is partly responsible for the impoverished living that characterizes the Continent and the degradation of the environment. In keeping with CAPA's mission of building thriving families and communities on the Continent and our stewardship role of mother nature, it was resolved that CAPA Provinces take responsibility for enabling efforts towards a campaign for child spacing and responsible stewardship of the environment on the continent of Africa."

# Outcomes

- Family planning became part of the areas covered in the orientation of new Bishops. These bishops came from South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda and Kenya.
- Dioceses adopted it and used it in preparation of marital counselling sessions
- Uganda Christian University adopted it in its curriculum – This has annual output of 60 clergy.

# Outcomes Continued

- Church health institutions registered with medical bureaus to ensure regular supply of FP commodities.
- In Mityana Diocese, the Bishop rolled out FP from the Diocese to the parishes
- At the youth congress of 2017, young people from 18 Countries were sensitized on family planning and challenged to take responsibility of their bodies by utilizing FP services and counselling.

# Lessons learnt & Conclusion

- Accompanying of faith institutions in their efforts in popularizing FP opens incomparable opportunities and therefore a worthwhile investment.
- Mapping studies help to awaken resistant/reluctant institutions about FP and bring reality home even for the sceptics to FP services.
- Promoting FP through policy organs have phenomenal impact on uptake.



# Lessons Learnt continued...

- Understanding the key organs in the institution and being deliberate in targeting various players for interaction is more strategic than focusing on one group.
- Targeting educational institutions has a high multiplier effect



# CAPA's Next Steps

- We need to undertake multiple studies on teenage pregnancies and impact of poor child spacing on mother's health and productivity.
- We need to organize sessions for all the 450 Bishops and key gate keepers to the Dioceses to engage with the findings of these studies and be exposed to various methods of interventions.
- We need to continue supporting faith based health institutions.



**Kenyan Muslim clergy embraces child spacing after exchanges with Al Azhar University**

# A learning caravan on Islam and child spacing in Kenya

- **Goal:** to inform the large Islamic community at the Kenyan coast (Imams as well as Islamic health stakeholders) on the scientific and scriptural basis of reproductive health and family planning.
- **Duration:** August 2015
- **Partners:** the Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims (SUPKEM), Faith to Action Network, Al-Azhar University
- **Scope:** counties of Mombasa, Kilifi and Lamu.
- **Main strategy:** a multi-disciplinary team of experts travels (caravan) to different areas to deliberate with religious leaders on reproductive health and population issues, including family planning.



# Caravan Strategies

- **Capacity Development:** 65 imams trained on RH/FP, using scientific evidence & Islamic perspectives supported by authenticated texts from the Quran and Hadith.
- **Community mobilization & awareness creation:** The religious leaders paraded through the streets of Mombasa, Malindi and Lamu, and held lectures in mosques
- **Advocacy** with top-level county officials to advocate for increased budgetary allocation for RH/FP services
- **Communication:** A documentary on the Learning Caravan was prepared as a sensitisation tool, and is now used by Imams to educate their faith communities.
- **Expert team** formulates recommendations.



# Training





# Awareness creation





# Awareness creation





# Experiential learning

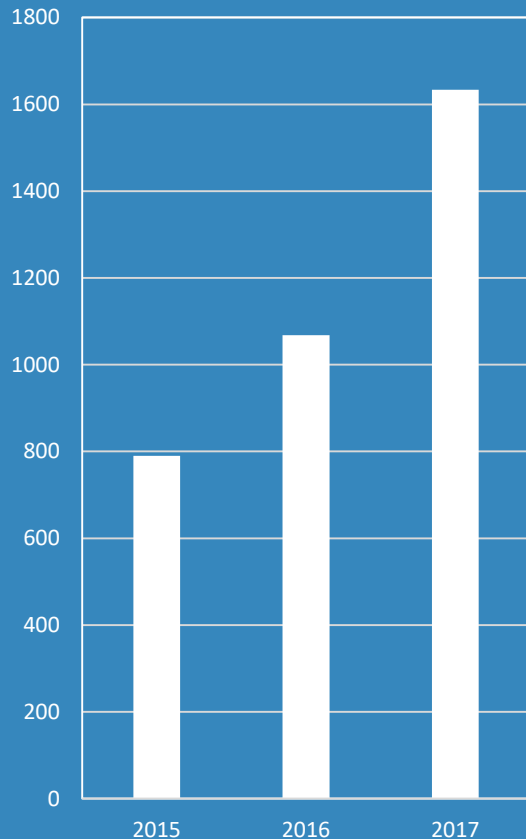


# Recommendations of the caravan

- Increase budgetary allocation of county governments for RH/FP, maternal and child health
- Involve religious leaders in policy making and as public speakers to popularize RH/FP, maternal and child health
- Religious leaders should invite medical and other experts as well as religious leaders to explain both technical issues and scriptural issues to the congregations

- Capacity building of religious leaders using both medical and theological experts and decentralised training in partnership with Al-Azhar university
- Organisation of seminars for specific groups (men, women, adolescents)
- Combine caravan seminars with medical specialised clinics and training

# Outcomes in Kenya



Number of FP clients in SUPKEM health facilities

- 63 imams adopted a 7-point commitment in support of Child Spacing
- Substantial allocations for RH/FP in 2016/17 Kilifi, Mombasa and Lamu County budgets
- 4 scholarships for Tawfiq Hospital to study at Al Azhar & Kenyatta National Hospital in 2016/17
- 20 scholarships to study at Al Azhar University in 2017-2018
- Al Azhar agreed to offer a training programme for 20 imams recommended by Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims
- Al-Azhar's mission in Kenya has resumed: 6 Al Azhar missionaries will be stationed in different parts of Kenya to educate imams on interpretations of religious texts



# Conclusions and lessons learnt

- The methodology was developed and tested by the International Islamic Centre for Population Studies and Research of Al-Azhar University, the most prestigious and the oldest one in the Muslim world.
- Expert team from Al Azhar University used medical and theological arguments to dispel rumours and misconceptions on FP.
- Meet and partner with local authorities to gain support of the task and ensure its success and sustainability.
- Maternal and child health, family health and well-being are starting points to discuss issues related to reproductive health.
- Use socially & culturally acceptable terminology: Rather than “family planning”, say “birth spacing” or “child spacing”.
- Tailor the content to local context: in this case, communities had strong beliefs regarding large families and sons for social status

# Further Steps

- Scale Up the Experience to Other Countries/communities
- Conducting Interfaith Caravans (Christians and Muslims Scholars work jointly)





**Masculinité, Famille et Foi**

# Masculinité, Famille et Foi - Passages Project

- **GOAL:** Reduce intimate partner violence (**IPV**) and improve healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies (**HTSP**) through addressing social norms that shape inequitable gender relations and prevent the use of modern methods of family planning

## PARTNERS

- Tearfund
- Eglise de Christ au Congo
- Association de Santé Familiale
- Institute for Reproductive Health, Georgetown University

## SCOPE

- 17 Protestant congregations, Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)

**DURATION:** 24 month pilot intervention, 2 years scale up



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**Passages**



# Masculinité, Famille et Foi - Intervention package



## FAITH LEADERS

- Gender transformative workshop
- Gender equitable sermons
- Couple mentorship
- Celebration events



## GENDER CHAMPIONS

- Gender transformative workshop
- Facilitating **Community Dialogues**
- Couple mentorship
- Story sharing
- Celebration events



## SERVICE ENVIRONMENT

- Youth-friendly training
- Referral cards
- FP/SRH hotline



## NEWLY MARRIED COUPLES & FIRST-TIME PARENTS



## CONGREGATIONS/ FAITH COMMUNITIES



# General Findings From FP Baseline Activities

- ✓ Nearly 40% of respondents report current use of modern FP
- ✓ Many believe modern FP to be against their religion and would be difficult to use without their faith leaders' approval
- ✓ Majority personally believe FP use to be appropriate behavior and perceive FP use to be approved behavior by the community, but not the typical behavior
- ✓ Norms, attitudes, and decision-making all correlated with intention to use modern FP

# Out comes of the intervention

- Faith leader engagement: **384** sermons preached on IPV and FP resulting in **83071** contacts
- More equitable attitudes noted where faith leaders are more engaged
- Men in churches seeing women as equals and improved couple relations reported by women - **182** testimonies give by couples of change experienced
- Community members see family planning as a choice for couples.

# Outcomes of the intervention



The Bible says ‘multiply, be fruitful, and fill the earth.’ **However, the Bible is not against family planning**, because when the Bible says ‘multiply, be fruitful, and fill the earth,’ people must be well-educated and well-trained, otherwise they may create problems. **Every couple must first assess their means to finally determine the number of children they must have to assume their responsibilities. Therefore, the Bible also teaches family planning”**

- RELIGIOUS LEADER, MALE, OVER 50 YEARS OLD

# MFF – Learnings

1. Importance of investing in **formative research and diagnostic processes**
2. **Faith leaders** shape social and gender norms and associated behaviors
3. FBOs are **strongly positioned to engage men and couples** in FP
4. **Significant opportunities exist for scaling-up** within existing church structures

# Scale up – plans & considerations

- ✓ Replicate MFF in the 9 control sites in Kinshasa (2019)
  - ✓ Work towards institutionalization within ECC starting with 30 additional ECC congregations in Kinshasa (2019-2020)
  - ✓ Future adaptation for other faith groups
- Dynamic environment of DRC
  - Building capacity of ECC Passages team to become the resource team for ECC on MFF
  - Demand for participation outside of target age groups
  - Ongoing engagement of ECC leadership critical for success





**Faith leaders as key influencers of social norms linked to family planning – the case of Narok and Isiolo counties, Kenya**

# Christian Aid: The case of Narok and Isiolo Counties, Kenya

## Project Background

- Projects were implemented in Narok and Isiolo Counties which are Arid and Semi Arid area in Kenya
- Both counties record low CPR due to negative socio-cultural norms and disempowering faith beliefs around FP use
- Project duration: 2014-2017 and 2015 – 2018
- Target Group: Women of Reproductive Age and Men

## **Project Objectives**

- To address the barriers to accessing quality MNH services(including FP)
- To increase access to reproductive health services and improve knowledge, attitudes and practices related to Family Planning

# Christian Aid: The case of Narok and Isiolo Counties, Kenya

## Christian Aid Approach

Using the **Faith for Life Model (FFL)** which seeks to empower faith leaders to challenge their own personal attitudes and misinterpretations of faith scriptures to enhance factual dialogue with congregations and community members.

## Key Activities

- Mobilization, identification and empowerment of 122 faith leaders
- Contextualizing of the Faith for Life curriculum, production and dissemination of 700FFL manuals
- Identification of scriptures from the bible and Quran that supported healthy family living and practices
- Dissemination of messages from the pulpit
- Integration of FP messaging into sermons and ministering sessions

# Christian Aid: The case of Narok and Isiolo Counties, Kenya

## Project Outcomes

- Narok County: By end of 2017, 45.6% of women of reproductive age (15-49years) reported using FP methods up from 22.5% at baseline
- Narok: 46.7% of young women aged 15-24 reported using FP method up from 31.6%.
- 43.0% of married women reported using modern contraceptives
- *'As a religious leader, I now know what to tell my congregants regarding child spacing. Through the Faith for life model of training, I am able to tell them slowly what scripture says and then they can relate and practice the same. This project has helped me identify with some of these healthy practices and use my platform to reach my people,'* **Religious leader KII respondent, Isiolo Central**



# Christian Aid: The case of Narok and Isiolo Counties, Kenya

## Conclusion and lessons learnt

- Faith leaders are key social norm shapers. Working with them to interrogate scriptural basis for FP can increase uptake. The faith for Life model is effective in enhancing inter-religious dialogue and advocacy for socio-cultural norm and practice transformation.
- Leveraging on the widespread dominance of Muslim and Christian faith practices in Narok and Isiolo has helped increase the uptake of essential services including FP.
- Faith leaders can become powerful agents of behaviour change on basis of scripture if spaces and systematic models to do this are developed

# Christian Aid: The case of Narok and Isiolo Counties, Kenya

## Next Steps

- To work towards gathering a critical mass of faith leaders who are FP champions who can promote FP uptake
- To engage the County Government to adopt the FFL model working closely with Faith Leaders for sustainable demand creation for increased FP uptake



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