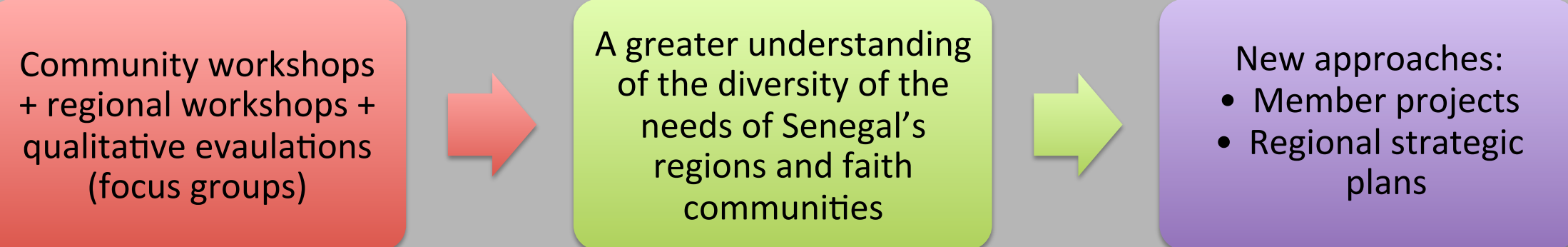


# Developing New Approaches to Respond to the Needs of Faith Communities

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## Southern Senegal Zone

| Indicator  | Kolda                  | Sédhiou                | Ziguinchor             |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| CPR, modern methods (married women 15-49 years)              | 21.1%                  | 20.5%                  | 26.7%                  |
| Average ideal number of children (men and women 15-49 years) | Women: 6.4<br>Men: 7.0 | Women: 6.2<br>Men: 7.8 | Women: 5.0<br>Men: 5.7 |
| Fertility rate*  | 5.5                    | 6.4                    | 4.6                    |
| Unmet need (married women 15-49 years)                       | 25.6%                  | 24.1%                  | 23.3%                  |
| Infant mortality rate (out of 1000 live births)              | 45                     | 53                     | 43                     |

### The Challenge

According to an imam, member of CRSD, in the Southern Senegal Zone:

- Marriage in rural areas is particular compared to other areas: married women belong to the entire family
- Certain traditional and religious leaders view negatively women who decide to use a FP method of their own volition while families need to grow in number of members and heirs
- There is an argument that having many children is important to have hands in the field to have a better harvest for the family
- Traditionally, rural women did not have sexual relations until their children were weaned as they were sent away from their husbands; in this case, women did not need any method to prevent pregnancy—the practice has changed, but this mentality means that some husbands today do not trust letting their wives use planning
- There are concerns about the side effects of contraceptive methods

### The Overall Approach

- Conduct courtesy visits to religious family not convinced of FP
- Organize sermons in the mosques
- Organize conferences in each of the 3 regions of Islamic arguments in favor of FP
- Broadcast of interactive radio shows

### “Zonal Workshop for Religious Leaders of the South on Family Planning and Family Health”

#### The Approach:

Organize a workshop bringing together participants from the 3 regions of the South Zone

- Key figures: 2 regional coordinators of CRSD, authorities of the commune of Ziguinchor, and the commune nurse
- Sensitize participants on:
  - Islamic arguments in favor of FP
  - Benefits of FP
  - Different methods of FP

#### The Results:

50+ participants from the 3 regions sensitized, notably faith leaders and women leaders of the commune

- The presenters highlighted several messages:
  - Family planning is a practice that is certainly present in religion
  - Birth spacing is 2 years in Islam
  - FP has important benefits for the family and does not exist to reduce or even exterminate the African population
  - AZL exists in Islam and thus, by analogy, certain modern methods are authorized
  - Religious leaders have a role to play on FP
- Participants asked a lot of questions about the different methods of contraception
- Participants showed great enthusiasm and expressed their desire to organize activities in their own areas. They also proposed:
  - Multiplying these workshops throughout the zone
  - Sensitizations in the mosques

## Thiès

### “Organizing the Family and the Role of Women in the Household”

#### The Challenge

What do residents of Thiès think about family planning?

“Some religious leaders are contradictory on this subject. They need to harmonize their positions.”

“The Muslim religion is against family planning in certain circumstances because the Prophet wanted the Muslim community to spread throughout the world. However, it's not forbidden to use family planning.”

“There are things that some women take that cause a fair number harmful effects because they're bad for health. If the impure blood that should have left remains inside, that's bad. It's even the source of some divorces because the blood goes to the head and invades the brain, causing a loss of control of the affected person [...] I am not against planning, but the medications that are administered are bad and just bring illnesses.”

#### The Approach

Organize a session on FP during a religious conference

- Key figures: 3 members of CRSD and a midwife
- Sensitize participants on birth spacing to:
  - Avoid dangers to women's health resulting from closely spaced pregnancies (including per-term births and bleeding during delivery)
  - Reduce the risk of infant and maternal mortality
  - Live in harmony as a family

#### The Results

- 300 participants sensitized
- CRSD members emphasized teachings of the Prophet, notably:
  - How to organize families to ensure women's health and the stability of the family
  - The responsibility of women and families in raising children
  - The importance of the quality of the family and not just the quantity

| Indicator  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| CPR, modern methods (married women 15-49 years)              | 33.7%                  |
| Average ideal number of children (men and women 15-49 years) | Women: 5.0<br>Men: 6.7 |
| Fertility rate*  | 4.6                    |
| Unmet need (married women 15-49 years)                       | 19.9%                  |
| Infant mortality rate (out of 1000 live births)              | 40                     |



## Fatick

### “How to Practice Family Planning in Our Society in Accordance with Religion”

#### The Challenge

According to a pastor, member of CRSD:

“In the villages of Mboukhoutour and Yenguelle2 [...], we see the population growing while the natural resources decline considerable. This resource deficit has brought on the undernourishment of the population. We see that the pregnant women and children under 5 suffer enormously. A lot of women die during birth because they are exhausted from closely spaced pregnancies. The children are suffering from malnutrition.”

#### The Approach

Organize a day of sensitization that helps participants to grasp the importance of FP and its benefits

- Key figures: a village imam, a village nurse, a Bajenou gox, and a pastor representing CRSD
- Sensitize participants of birth spacing in order to:
  - Be able to survive with scarce resources
  - Reduce the risk of infant and maternal mortality
  - Bring children into the world that we will be able to feed and educate
  - Foster an environment conducive to the safety and survival of mothers for healthy and sustainable families

#### The Results

- More than 150 people sensitized
- Engagement of participants:
  - The women had technical questions:
    - ❖ What are good methods of FP?
    - ❖ Why is there a disruption of women's periods while using FP?
  - The men had questions regarding the idea that FP aims to reduce the African population
- The pastor was able to respond to the concerns men expressed by explaining the concept of spacing and that FP's goal is family welfare
- The imam explained the importance of spacing for women with illnesses and the period of breastfeeding outlined in the Qur'an

| Indicator  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| CPR, modern methods (married women 15-49 years)              | 27.3%                  |
| Average ideal number of children (men and women 15-49 years) | Women: 5.1<br>Men: 7.4 |
| Fertility rate*  | 5.2                    |
| Unmet need (married women 15-49 years)                       | 25.1%                  |
| Infant mortality rate (out of 1000 live births)              | 33                     |

