Mobilizing Religious Leaders for FP and MNCH in Pakistan

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People everywhere have the right and opportunity to live a healthy reproductive life.

**Areas of Involvement**
- Contraception
- Maternal & Newborn Health
- HIV and AIDS
- Adolescents
- Abortion & Postabortion Care
- Advocacy

**Approach**
- Valuing communities' roles
- Building capacity and creating innovations
- Pioneering and advocating

**Outcome**
FP is not growing as evidenced by the stagnating CPR.
Proportion of Couples by Status of Contraception Use

Over half have never used contraceptives—almost 20% of ever users have dropped out.
## Reason for Not Intending to Use Contraception 2006-07

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Percent of women</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fertility-related reasons</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infrequent sex/no sex</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Menopausal/had hysterectomy</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infertile/can’t get pregnant</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to God</td>
<td>28.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wants more children</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Method-related reasons</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health concerns</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear of side effects</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opposition to use</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondent opposed</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband opposed</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious prohibition</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

50 percent do not intend to use
Mostly on Religious Grounds
Barriers

• FP is understood as limiting family size
• The message **Not Acceptable** by many on religious, economic and social grounds
Fertility Preferences

- No more, 43
- Another soon, 21
- Another later, 20
- Sterilized, 8
- Declared infecund, 3
The Realization

• Realization in the Bureaucracy
  – Religious Leaders influence play important role
  – Political Will to Engage Religious Leaders (RLs)

• Ongoing activities by public sector (25000 RLs)
  – assumption RLs to take own initiative but did not

• Realization among RLs
  – to contribute towards social development

• **Serious bias** among doctors that FP not supported by religion

• Project developed by ESD in June 2009
PROJECT GOAL

Active mobilization of religious leaders to support family planning through enhancing spacing among pregnancies and improving maternal health
Planning

• Identifying champions and building alliances
• Development of Material and Endorsement from Religious Institutions
• Fostering partnerships to build local ownership and sustainability
Implementation

• Capacity building
• Conduct training workshop(s) for Religious leaders using cascade training of trainers followed by step-down training
• Outreach services to disseminate health messages and supporting fatwas
Muslim Sects in Pakistan

Proportion wise no authentic figures exist. Sunni around 90%
Implementation

• Organizational support
  – Core Group, Subgroups - Curriculum and Training
    • Bureaucrats, Academicians, Senior Religious Leaders all sects

• Development of Compendium and Curriculum
  – consensus and inclusion of material and evidence from the Life of Holy Prophet and Islamic History
  – Integration of family planning into maternal, neonatal and child health services

• Availability of TA from ESD
  – tremendous help material, resources, guidance
Process

• Compile Fatawa in support of RH/FP/ MNCH

• Obtain endorsement of religious material from heads of religious sects and Institutions

• Consensus development among RLs
  – HTSP approach readily accepted by all stakeholders including RLs
  – FP (for spacing) in line with Islamic precepts
  – FP seen integrated as part of maternal child health
Active Engagement of RLs
**Process**

- Established a forum to engage RLs & to address misconceptions
  - Contribution in material development – ownership
  - Planning process – Training Plan and Scale up
  - Development of their role and responsibilities
- Breaking the barriers / isolation
  - bureaucrats working with religious leaders
- Sense of social responsibility to social change
Turning Points

Two Core Sore Issues Resolved

• Linking Size with sustenance of family
• Limiting family size to two

Paradigm Shift to Birth Spacing Acceptable

Availability of alternative model
  – Grounded in health of mother
  – Focus on spacing
  – Support subject to continuity of fecundability
Emerging Issues

Black Box

• How does Contraceptive Technology works
  “Contraception equivalent to killing of fetus “
  (Contraception related to abortion)

• Culture practices misunderstood for religious responsibilities

• Top religious leadership MUST approve first
Outputs

• Trained District Trainers – 86 from 25 districts

• MAJOR CHANGE
  – RLs acknowledge their role based on ignorance
  – RL willingness to promote family planning
  – RL willingness to promote HTSP through meetings and sermons
  – RL willingness to train other RLs to expand the circle

• SCALE UP - Step Down Training 2000 RLs in 22 districts (more in process)
Training Of Trainers Workshop
Mobilizing Religious Leaders
For F.P/RH/MNCH
Feb 05 - 09, 2011
Balochistan Quetta
PIONEERS AND CHAMPIONS
Across all Sects

Pioneering and advocating
Champions to Media

Pioneering and advocating
Immediate Results

Community Level Meetings and Dissemination by Religious Leaders

FP Adoption by RLs

Feel the Change in Making
ENGAGE RLs to START A CHANGE

THANK YOU