

# **Problem of the involvement of men in the reproductive health in Burkina Faso**

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## **Introduction**

Since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994, a broad mandate was given to the family planning program at the international level to address the needs of women and men of all ages and reduce inequities related to gender.

Burkina Faso is a signatory of the program of action of the conference: the empowerment and participation of men are identified as critical aspects for improving services and policies in reproductive health.

The involvement of men is considered one of three ways:

- Man as a client of RH services for himself.
- Man as a partner and support within the couple for reproductive health.
- Man as a force for change within the community.

## **Impact of the non-involvement of men in the promotion of reproductive health services in Burkina Faso**

For several decades, the consideration of inequality between men and women in the development process, and particularly valuation of the active role of women in this process, has always constituted to Burkina Faso a concern for national authorities and development partners **that make the issue of fairness and equality in civic rights, civil, political, economic, social and health matters, a central axis in the decisive process and development management.**

Overall, men and women face many problems in health. Despite efforts in recent years to integrate gender into the health system, the overall situation remains below expectations. Regardless, the health system is subject to several disadvantages and criticisms of unequal access to health care and the poor availability of sexual and reproductive health adapted to each social class.

These inequalities and gender disparities are characterized by under-utilization of health services (34%) mainly due to the distance, poverty and low purchasing power of the general population and women in particular. Added to this is the lack of decision-making power of women, because they are the gender that determines whether or not to seek out care at a health facility.

One also notes a lack of involvement of men in the Health Management of family reproduction. This is also reflected in the attendance of health services for reproductive health (RH) issues in decision-making in favor of sexual and reproductive health (SRH). Of 433 primary target interviewees, 72.5% say they have never attended the centers for reproductive health.

## **Promote the involvement of men in the promotion of reproductive health in Burkina Faso**

Given the place of men in the family and society in Burkina, and a low utilization of reproductive health services, we must insist on a greater role of men in gender issues and health, hence the need for effective male involvement in sexual and reproductive health discussions. Efforts are being made in this direction already, but many challenges remain.

The following strategies could contribute significantly to the involvement of more men in the management of sexual and reproductive health of the couple and / or family:

- Invitation of men to RH activities.

- Male involvement in the organization of activities of SRH.
- Mobilization of political and religious leaders around the activities of SRH.
- Changing the perception of the people on RH issues and the role of men in SRH.
- The involvement of men in reproductive health in marriage, family and community.
- Promoting effective use of reproductive health services for men.
- Encouraging men to promote the health and rights of women and SRH in the family.
- A more effective community involvement in sexual and reproductive health.

The following photos are examples of the involvement of a man in the reproductive health choices of the couple.





This householder has traveled a distance of 15 kilometers with his wife and children to come and choose a contraceptive method during one of the advanced strategies of MSI / BF in a town about 120 kilometers from the capital Ouagadougou. This fine example should be encouraged and followed suit by other men.

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