Pulling Together: Parliamentarians and Faith Communities

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Current Political and Religious Support

• Religious leaders have become advocates for:
  – The religious acceptability of family planning
  – The impact of HIV/AIDS and need for services
  – Discontinuing female genital cutting (FGC)
  – Treatment of malaria based on the Quran and Hadiths

• Parliamentarians have championed:
  – The HIV/AIDS Law
  – Administrative regulations to implement the 2002 RH Law

• A cadre of trained policy champions and advocates work through a range of networks
Vibrant Networks in Mali

**RNILS**: National Islamic Network for the Fight Against AIDS

**RIPOD**: Islamic Network for Population and Development

**RISE**: Islamic Network for Child Survival

**UNAFEM**: National Union of Malian Muslim Women

**Alliance** of Muslim and Christian religious leaders against HIV

**REMAPOD**: Parliamentarian Network for Population and Development
Religious leaders have adapted tools by incorporating material from the Quran and Hadiths and the Bible

- Islamic and Christian versions of AIM and RAPID advocacy presentations
- Advocacy tool for use by religious leaders to discontinue FGC
- Sermon on pregnancy, malaria, and Islam
- Curricula for medersa schools on FP, HIV, and malaria
2008 Administrative Regulations for RH Law

- In 2008, the Minister of Health signed several administrative regulations that translate the 2002 RH Law for implementation.

- The Parliamentarian Network for Population and Development (REMAPOD), with support from HPI, advocated for the regulations.

Loi n° 02 – 044 / du 24 juin 2002: Relative à la santé de la reproduction
Advocacy Networks Expanded

Islamic Network for Population and Development (RIPOD)

- Established in 1996
- Expanded in 2008 to six districts
- Enhanced RIPOD membership makes it easier to engage religious leaders at the district level in promoting acceptance of FP
Policy Champions Are Recognized

Honorable Fanta Mantchini Diarra Sissoko

- Presented results from the AIDS Impact Model (AIM) at a workshop of the Malian Parliamentarians’ Health Commission to draw attention to the issue
- Recognized as a champion for HIV/AIDS and FP/RH among her peers in Parliament
Religious Leaders Reach Their Followers

Islamic Network for Child Survival (RISE)

- In late 2009, RISE and other religious leaders networks’ Khutuba (sermon) on the prevention and treatment of malaria based on the Quran and the Hadiths.

- The sermon is being used by imams, preachers, and medersa teachers through CDs, audio cassettes, and radio broadcasts.
• Many women ask for birth limitation (instead of spacing)

• Relief after hearing “… your religion is not against … or your religion supports …”

• Communities highly appreciate parliamentarians’ involvement in health
Next Steps

• **Create and/or reinforce** steering committees at the local level (composed of leaders, stakeholders at the community level)

• **Train** the steering committees to be accountable for:
  – Following up and monitoring the immediate impact of policy dialogue and advocacy sessions (change in BCC)
  – Defining relevant communication needs of the community

• **Adapt** communication themes to identified needs

• **Translate** key FP/RH laws into local languages to ensure awareness at the community level