

3 ENCOURAGE INFLUENTIAL INDIVIDUALS TO ACT



3

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WHY: The Influentials whom you identified during Community Social Networks Mapping (Section 1) are individuals who can promote changes in social norms: in this case, the social and gender norms that surround the discussion, acceptance and use of family planning.

WHEN: About four weeks after Catalyzers begin to use the social networks diffusion package in their groups (Section 2), Influentials will begin to play their roles. You should provide the brief orientation that we discuss in this section, therefore, around Month 5. After the orientation, Influentials' activities will continue until the end of implementation: and ideally, long after your formal intervention has ended.

In this section:

- Facilitator Guide for the Orientation of Influentials
- Family Planning Infographics

Component	Month	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
3	Engage Influents to Act					X	X	X	X	X

Task 1: Prepare for and Hold Orientation

You will find a brief *Facilitators' Guide to Influentials Orientation* in this section. It presents four steps to prepare Influentials to take concrete actions.

The orientation is a simple event. It should last a few hours, and consist of brief explanations, discussions, and planning. Facilitators will use the four items noted below during the orientation, but Influentials will receive copies of only the Infographics. Prepare enough copies of the Infographics for all participants to take home with them.

1. **Infographics** that illustrate the concept and scope of unmet need for family planning. The numbers in these infographics were selected as typical of the current situation in West Africa.
2. **Social Networks Diffusion 5 Component Card.** (Section iii)
3. **Social Networks Diffusion Vision Card.** (Section iii)
4. **A set of Story Cards and Activity Cards** to show or remind Influentials of the discussions underway in their communities. (Annex A).

Task 2: Follow Up with Influentials

Facilitators should plan to meet with each Influential about once a month during the last five months of implementation to discuss the activities the Influential undertook (and compare them to activities planned), to provide advice as needed, and to encourage increasingly deep engagement with others on the topics of social and gender norms surrounding reproductive choices including family planning. This regular exchange should be informal. It is not a monitoring activity so much as an opportunity to review, refresh and renew motivation.



Unique Strategy

Actors and Actions: In *Tékponon Jikuagou*, we initially oriented Influentials in their own communities. But we quickly decided, instead, to hold orientations in a centrally located town. Why? Because Influentials are influential: their friends, neighbors and relatives constantly interrupted the orientation to seek their advice. Transporting Influentials to a central location was ultimately the more time- and cost-effective strategy. (It also allowed Influentials from different communities to meet and influence one another.)

A light touch: The role of Influentials illustrates the light touch of the social networks diffusion approach. It is the Influentials themselves who determine the nature and the frequency of their activities. Your task is to prepare them to do what they do best: talk with people, influence and disseminate new ideas.

TOOLS:

- **FACILITATOR GUIDE FOR THE ORIENTATION OF INFLUENTIALS**
- FAMILY PLANNING INFOGRAPHICS





FACILITATOR GUIDE FOR THE ORIENTATION OF INFLUENTIALS

You will organize a meeting to orient the Influential Persons who were identified through the Guide to Community Social Networks Mapping (Section 1). With your gentle guidance, Influential Persons will discuss and reflect on the current situation of family planning in their communities, and identify how they can get involved to improve the situation.

Reminder: The social networks diffusion approach views Influential Persons as allies within a collaborative framework to address problems in their communities that have been identified by data.

Preparation:

- Using the telephone numbers that were collected for the social mapping exercise, invite all Influential Persons (or as many as possible) to the orientation. Let them know that you hope to discuss the situation of family planning in the community, and how to work together to improve it.
- Organize a discussion that will last about **2 hours** at district level (department, county, etc.).
- In this guide, the words in normal text are instructions for you. *Italicized* sentences should be read and explained to participants.

Part 1: Discussion about Infographics

Using the family planning infographics, show and explain the data on unmet need. It is a “data for decision-making” approach. That is to say, this approach uses data to create a dialogue and enhance understanding of problems in the community. Then, it is possible to think about ways to improve the situation.

Use the following script as you introduce the infographics to Influential Persons. You will first explain the meaning of infographics, and then ask questions to create a dialogue.

Note: *The numbers in the following script apply to the districts of Couffo, Benin in 2013, when we launched Tékponon Jikuagou. There may be variations in different sites, but it is also possible that the situation is the same or very similar in your area. You can insert numbers that correspond to your environment if you prefer.*

Infographic 1: Women who risk getting pregnant

How many women in your community risk getting pregnant, although they do not want to become pregnant?

- *1 in 2 women risk getting pregnant, although they do not want to become pregnant.*
- *Why are they at risk? There are two important reasons:*
 - *1 in 10 does not use any family planning method, even though she would like to.*
 - *4 out of 10 women incorrectly think they are not at risk of getting pregnant because they do not recognize their risk.*
- *Women who breastfeeding may think that they cannot get pregnant. But, they can certainly get pregnant because breastfeeding alone does not prevent pregnancy.*
- *Some women use methods that are not effective in preventing pregnancy (example: a traditional ring or withdrawal).*



Reflection questions for Infographic 1:

- Does the fact that 1 in 2 women can get pregnant although she does not want to indicate a problem? Why or why not?
- What will need to change to improve the situation?
- What can we do to encourage these changes?

Infographic 2: The situation at health centers

In the past 12 months, 1 in 16 women went to a health center for a family planning service.

Reflection questions for Infographic 2:

- Does the fact that only 1 in 16 women visited a health center to obtain a family planning method indicate a problem? Why or why not?
- What will need to change to improve the situation?
- What can we do to encourage these changes?

Infographic 3: Couple discussion about family planning

Are couples talking about family planning?

- About 1 in 3 women knows the number of children that her husband wants.
- About 1 in 2 women have spoken of family planning with their husband.

Reflection questions for Infographic 3:

- Does the lack of communication about preferences for having children and family planning indicate a problem? Why or why not?
- What will need to change to improve the situation?
- What can we do to encourage these changes?

Infographic 4: Leaders and family planning

In the past 3 months, 1 in 10 people (women and men) heard a leader speak of family planning.

Reflection questions for Infographic 4:

- In your community, can leaders such as you speak of family planning? Why or why not?
- How can leaders discuss family planning in your villages?
- What can we do to encourage these changes?

Infographic 5: Leaders and family planning

What do men and women think about family planning?

- 1 in 10 women think that women who use family planning are promiscuous.
- 2 in 10 men think that women who use family planning are promiscuous.
- Some men and women believe that men whose wives use family planning lack authority, and that a husband will beat his wife if he finds out that she is using family planning.



Reflection questions for Infographic 5:

- *Is there a problem with these perceptions? If yes, what kind of problems? If not, why?*
- *What will need to change to improve the situation?*
- *What can we do to encourage these changes?*

Note: Give each Influential a copy of the infographics for reference.

Part 2: Show the Social Networks Diffusion Vision Card

After presenting the infographics, you will initiate a brief discussion on the family planning situation. Here are some questions and tips to stimulate the discussion.

- *What do you see on the Vision Card? (Bottom images, middle and top of this card)*
- *How does this Vision Card represent the status of family planning and of unmet need?*
- Discuss barriers to using family planning services and reasons that explain the existence of unmet need.
- Raise the issue of barriers related to GENDER, couple communication and decision-making, and how these affect access to family planning services.
- Discuss elements in the community that facilitate easy access to family planning services for couples or women who do not want to have children right away.

Part 3: Update on Social Network Diffusion Package Activities

This is a discussion in the form of exchanges on what is happening in the village. You are **not telling Influentials what you are doing and why**. Influentials can take the lead themselves and share their comments with Facilitators.

- Discuss Catalyzer activities in their villages. You can show the Story & Activity Cards that the Catalyzers use, in case Influentials had not seen them.
 - *What is your experience? What works, and what doesn't with the activities of the Catalyzers?*
- Mention the radio. Ask Influentials:
 - *Do people listen to the radio? What do they learn? What do they think?*

(After the discussion, you can encourage listening to the radio and provide the scheduled time for the shows. See Section 4).

- Talk about expectations of the project:
 - *This Social Networks Diffusion package is meant to facilitate activities in communities and initiate a discussion of the acceptability of family planning*
 - **The duration of this initiative will not exceed 9 months.** *This period is sufficient to catalyze discussions and work with community members to start changing attitudes around the discussion, acceptability, and use of family planning.*



Part 4: Discussion of Actions and Next Steps

Use the Social Networks Diffusion 5 Components Card to launch a discussion on the phenomena that contribute to low utilization of planning family, including: barriers at the level of the health centers (stockouts, unwelcoming staff), cost, access, social disapproval, power imbalance between women and men, etc. You will then discuss how to confront the needs of family planning, especially how Influentials can help solve the challenges.

First Step:

- Ask Influentials: *What can you do to eliminate these barriers? How can you influence the phenomena that contribute to low utilization of family planning services?* **Do not give them a list of activities to undertake.**
- To stimulate ideas, show the image of leaders talking to people about family planning and encouraging them to use the services of health centers (Activity Card # 2).

Second Step:

- Encourage each Influential to identify one or two actions that she/he can take in the coming months to improve perceptions of family planning or its adoption in the community.
- Tell the Influentials that at the end of the month, a Facilitator may travel to their village to see what actions were taken, given the actions that were agreed upon during this session. This will motivate them to be more engaged and challenge themselves. This is not a test, but rather an opportunity to review progress towards goals and determine if Influentials followed through with their plans.

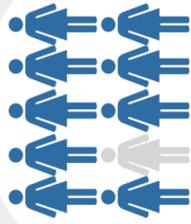
TOOLS:

- FACILITATOR GUIDE FOR THE ORIENTATION OF INFLUENTIALS
- FAMILY PLANNING INFOGRAPHICS





4


 In the last 3 months,
 1 person (woman or
 man) in 10...

...has heard a leader talk about family planning

5

1 in 10 women believe that women who use family planning are promiscuous.

2 in 10 men believe that women who use family planning are promiscuous.

FAMILY PLANNING INFOGRAPHICS

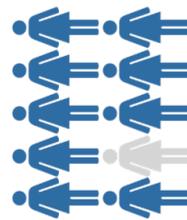
The Data in Images

1

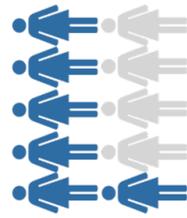


5 in 10 women are at risk of getting pregnant, but don't want to be.

Why are they at risk?



because 1 in 10 use no family planning method despite wanting to use one.



because 4 in 10 think they cannot become pregnant, but they can and fail to realize their risk.

2

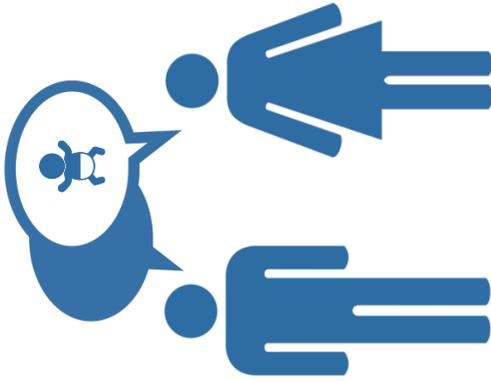
During the last year, 1 in 16 women...



have gone to a health center to obtain family planning services.



3



1 in 3 women know how many children their spouse wants.



1 in 2 women have talked about family planning with their spouse.

