

MEDIA KIT

ISLAMIC SUPPORT FOR FAMILY PLANNING



Sources:
The DHS Program. (2015) Kenya Demographic and Health Survey, 2014. Retrieved from http://dhsprogram.com/Publications/Publication-Search.cfm?ctry_id=20&country=Kenya

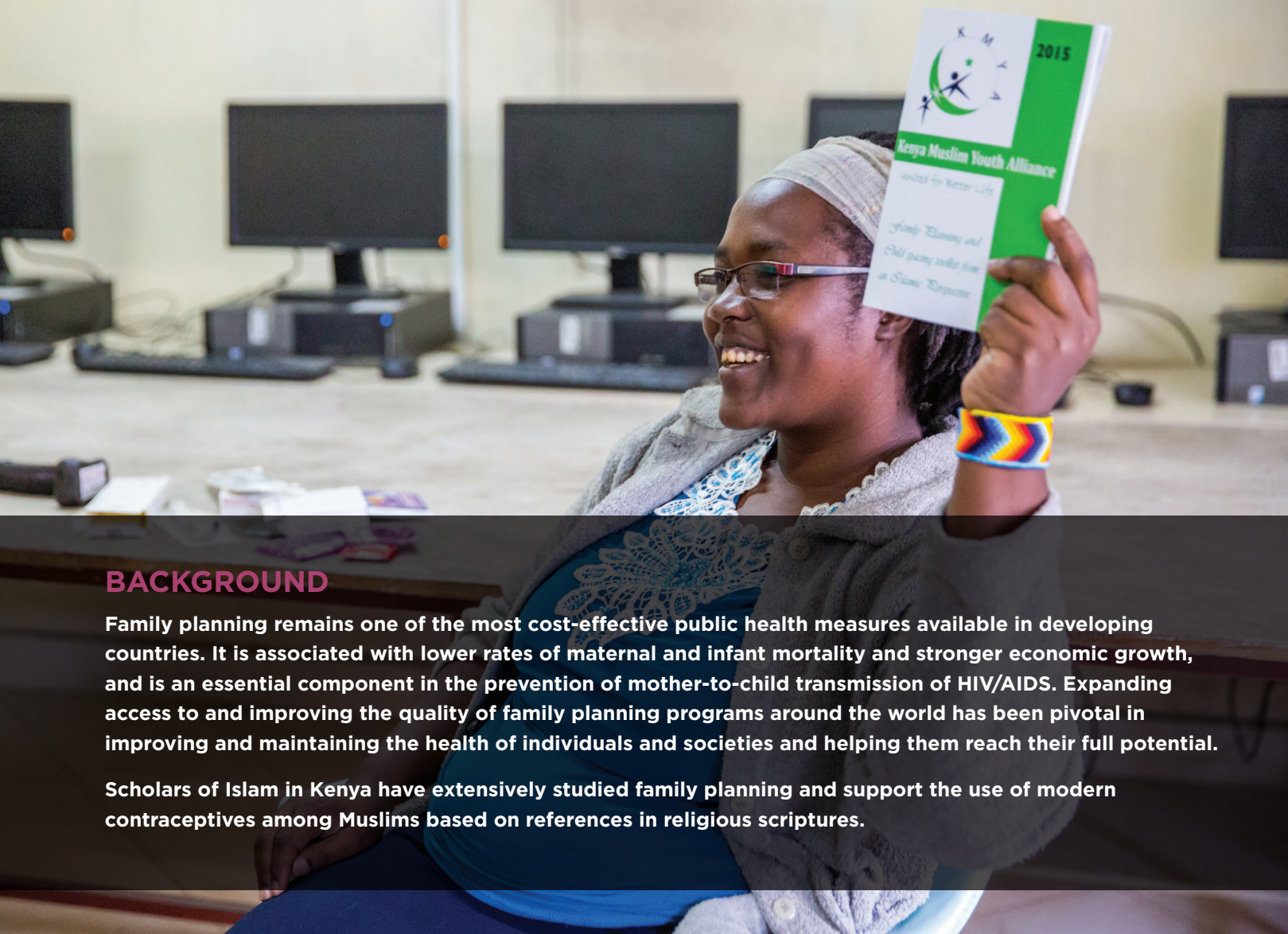


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BACKGROUND

Family planning remains one of the most cost-effective public health measures available in developing countries. It is associated with lower rates of maternal and infant mortality and stronger economic growth, and is an essential component in the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV/AIDS. Expanding access to and improving the quality of family planning programs around the world has been pivotal in improving and maintaining the health of individuals and societies and helping them reach their full potential.

Scholars of Islam in Kenya have extensively studied family planning and support the use of modern contraceptives among Muslims based on references in religious scriptures.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

- The main sources of Islamic jurisprudence are 1. The Qu'ran, 2. The Sunnah (the prophet's sayings, his deeds and his approvals) 3. Ijma (consensus of Muslim scholars) and 4. Qiyas (analogical deductions or reasoning).
- Most Islamic scholars and Muslim reproductive health experts accept the use of temporary contraceptive methods under Islam. These include natural family planning methods, condoms, hormonal pills, spermicides, contraceptive injections, implants, and IUDs, among other methods.
- Virtually all scholars consider temporary forms of contraception permissible under Islam for the mother's health, and most allow for at least some forms of birth control when it is a mutual decision by husband and wife.
- Scholars agree that Islam is a religion of moderation and point to the principles of "permissibility" and "liberty"—the idea that everything is lawful unless explicitly designated otherwise in the Quran or in the prophet's tradition (Sunnah). Proponents of the use of modern family planning methods maintain that there is no text in the Quran or in the Sunnah that prohibits family planning.
- Some early forms of birth control were practiced during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad and he did not object to their appropriate use. This includes the withdrawal method and the lactational amenorrhea method, where a woman prevents pregnancy after giving birth by breastfeeding.
- In the Quran there is evidence in favor of child spacing, as it advises mothers to breastfeed their children for a period of two years (Quran, 2:233).

“Mothers may breast feed their children two complete years, for whoever desires to complete the nursing period” – (Qur'an 2:233).

PROMOTING FAMILY PLANNING AMONG KENYAN MUSLIMS



In Kenya, 18% of married women have an unmet need for family planning.

In Northeastern Kenya, which is predominantly Muslim, the contraceptive prevalence is only 3% against the national prevalence of 58%.¹

Kenya Muslim Youth Development Organization (KMYDO), a national youth-led Muslim youth organization, has mobilized support for the use of family planning among Muslims by creating a guide with information and guidance for religious leaders, health providers, and families on the use of accepted contraceptive methods within the Islamic framework.

KMYDO has also successfully worked with the Nakuru County government to establish a budget line for family planning to help ensure that the sexual and reproductive health needs of the community are met.

TALK TO THE EXPERTS

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MUSLIM FAMILY PLANNING VOICES

Omar Sgee Mwinyi is the Secretary of the Makarim Madrassa. For Omar, speaking to Muslim men with low education about family planning and sexual health issues often is a challenge. KMYDO's Muslim family planning guide helps him in his outreach to other men, which includes condom distribution. In particular, the guide has helped in facilitating discussion between community members, health providers and religious leaders. Imams and religious leaders advocate for family planning during Friday prayers. Female community health workers also use the guide to educate women about contraceptive methods through the religious perspective, and they refer and accompany women to facilities for family planning services. "Ladies who learn about this can talk to men, and men can talk to each other. We can't keep quiet. We have to talk to each other. We can't miss any of the methods."

Mildred Akinyi Isaya is a community health worker providing family planning and youth services at the Bondeni Clinic in Nakuru. She also works at a nearby comprehensive care clinic. She hosts family planning discussions for women as part of the Amina Network, a community based health and economic empowerment program that targets women and girls, which was established by the local Makarim Madrassa in partnership with KMYDO. Her clients see her for family planning consultations, pre-conception and antenatal care. The clinic offers contraceptive services to youth.

Mildred says kids are starting to have sex as early as nine years old, and she sees youth infected with HIV and getting pregnant. Young people in the area have low levels of education.

KMYDO's family planning guide makes a difference in her counseling by showing the Muslim community that they can use methods under Islam. Mildred says that some methods have been embraced, although some feel that methods like condoms are only for the younger generation. At least through her counseling using the guide, they have an idea of what to expect with all methods. She says there is still work to be done to take these messages into the community. She expects so much change.

Abdulkarim Hamza Ramadhani is a recent newlywed. He wants kids in the future once he and his wife are fully settled. "I have a plan. When I become employed, maybe I will be able to save for my children so when they grow up, they have money that can support their education and food." He brought his wife to community family planning sessions, and the couple decided to get a six-year Norplant. "We bought a new bed, a new chair, and utensils for the house. Let's say she was pregnant, we wouldn't have had time to buy those things. We'd put our concentration on the baby, not toward the lifestyle we want to achieve." He is glad that local community health volunteers have KMYDO's Muslim family planning guide as a resource. "It's helping a lot of young men and girls to avoid being school dropouts and avoid early pregnancy. It helps us a lot."

