



EQUI
POP.
ORG

2015
2016

Annual activity report

Équilibres & Populations works towards the improvement of women's social status and living conditions, which are a crucial lever of fair and sustainable development. Our action is threefold, and all three components are complementary: sparking change, mobilizing leaders and empowering people.

Équilibres & Populations
www.equipop.org
info@equipop.org

Headquarters
22 rue du Sergent Bauchat
75012 Paris - France
Tel: +33 (0)1 74 01 71 24
Fax: +33 (0)1 74 01 71 25

West Africa Office
09 BP 1660 Ouagadougou 09
Burkina Faso
Tel / Fax: + 226 25 36 73 73

Editorial

At Équilibres & Populations, we are convinced of one thing: for a woman, making smart choices about her education and health, in particular how many children she wants to have and when to have them, can change her life, but it can also profoundly change our societies. In 2015, worldwide, 35% of women were victims of violence, 225 million women who wanted to avoid pregnancy were not able to use contraception, 16 million girls aged 15 to 19 gave birth, 31 million girls of primary school age did not attend school, and nearly 3 million girls suffered sexual mutilation. So many impossible choices, so many damaged lives, so many obstacles to development.

In Francophone West Africa, the instability and recent geopolitical changes have made the situation even more worrisome. In this region, social change is no longer an option but something urgent for millions of women and girls. In the field, organizations and individuals are mobilizing, and promising pathways are being found. In 2015, the teams of Équilibres & Populations put all their energy and expertise at the disposal of the most active stakeholders for change in order to increase the impact of their operations. Coordinating pilot projects, mobilizing resources, orienting public policy, assisting technically local associations and institutions – these are all contributions that are making a difference. In 2015, more girls became aware that they could be leaders, women who wanted it were able to gain access to suitable contraception vis-à-vis their needs, babies were spared being cut, and girls were able to escape early marriage.

On the global scale, 2015 was also the year of adoption of the 17 Sustainable Development Objectives for the next fifteen years. Broadly-based, these objectives require innovation, both in development practices and the partnerships that need to be built. Aware of these stakes, Équilibres & Populations has engaged with determination into a strategic change initiative to fully take on its responsibility in the realization of this road map. Building on more than 20 years of experience, we are continually reinventing ourselves. This means, of course, seeking out and obtaining more human and financial resources in order to make the mission become a reality. In 2015, we are delighted to have brought new energies and skills on board. This also means focusing on two key words that we have really become attached to: partnership and quality. The launch of the new phase of the “Alliance Droits et Santé” project in Benin, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, and Senegal is a concrete result of this!

All this would never have been accomplished without the collaboration and support of our financial and local partners. The former brings us the essential resources we need to translate our plans into actions, while the latter gives us their precious confidence to accompany them while sharing their detailed knowledge of the populations we aim to serve. From Paris to Ouagadougou, from Niamey to New York, from Brussels to Abidjan, together, we are blazing new trails for women’s health and women’s rights; together, let’s build a new path toward development. Thank you for your support!

Auréli Gal-Régniez, *Executive Director*
Alain Marié, *President*

Aurélie Gal-Régniez, Executive Director, Équilibres & Populations



You took the reins at Équilibres & Populations in 2015. What led you to accept this challenge?

The mission of Équilibres & Populations! The promotion of women's health and rights is a major stake in social justice but also a powerful lever for development. Sexual and reproductive health and rights are the keys to women's autonomy. It is a privilege to work for an NGO that is leading the way in France, developing well-known expertise for over 20 years. I am very fond of the identity of Equipop, invested in the highest level of political processes while remaining close to the realities in the field. Creativity, collaboration, and the capacity to learn complexity are at the heart of its DNA. I have occupied several positions here since 2000 and am very familiar with this structure, including its strengths and its areas for improvement. I have been able to observe just what Équilibres & Populations can bring as added value to the sector it operates in and around its geographic origin: Francophone West Africa, and it is this added value that I would like to develop.

During this last decade, have you been able to observe any major changes in West Africa?

The current situation is contrasted. Despite progress, this region remains one of the poorest in the world with the highest maternal mortality rate, unwanted pregnancies, and even child marriages among the highest. The latter years have also been marked by an increase in instability and insecurity. In this context, the condition of women remains a policy question that is often used. However, civil society is organizing itself. Local associations with a real engagement for the cause

of women and their reproductive health AND rights are emerging. Citizens, in particular youth, are starting to make their voices heard. Commitments have been made by the governments with increasing support from the stakeholders. The Ouagadougou Partnership, in favor of family planning, launched in 2011, is a good illustration of this new direction.

Today, according to you, what are the levers that must be activated for the sustainable development of the situation of women in this area of the world?

Technical support for local stakeholders is crucial in my view. Equipop has always operated with a desire to strengthen its partners, and we have been successful with this as some of them now operate with budgets larger than our own! We provide overall accompaniment in our core areas, social justice and advocacy, but also in organizational development. Our challenge: to move up in scale, to allow the emergence of innovative products, and to sustain a critical mass of stakeholders for social change who are able to work together among themselves. At the global level, we need to continue our advocacy. It is urgent for decision-makers to reconsider their whole concept of development by placing human beings at the center. Improving the health and rights of individuals, particularly women and girls, is not an expense but a solid investment that public policy must prioritize both here and elsewhere.

01

Sparking change

In partnership with local actors, Équilibres & Populations sparks social change dynamics at the very heart of the populations.

page 8

02

Mobilizing

Équilibres & Populations mobilizes leaders to create a more favorable institutional and legal environment for human development, and more particularly for the improvement of women and girls' status.

page 18

03

Empowering

Équilibres & Population empowers its development partners by strengthening their intervention capacities.

page 28

04

Learn more about us

Équilibres & Populations was created by a team of doctors and journalists in 1993, in the context of the then upcoming International Cairo Conference on Population and Development. Équilibres & Populations works towards the improvement of women's social status and living conditions, which are a crucial lever of fair and sustainable development.

page 38

2015 in Brief

Great advances for the Delegation of Tasks in Burkina: a pilot project has been launched in which **Equipop** will accompany the Directorate of Family Health of the Ministry of Public Health.
page 20

In Niger, **Equipop** has led a study aiming to better target young girls in vaccination programs, in particular against the virus responsible for cervical cancer.
page 34

In partnership with European organizations, Equipop has made people listen to the voice of adolescent girls within European institutions. In Paris, their “Girl Declaration” was relayed during a conference at the Paris City Hall.

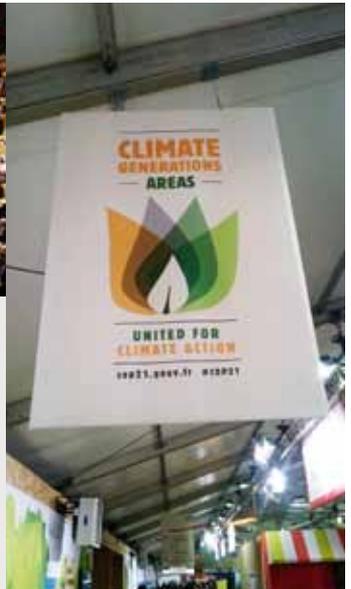


Launch of the second phase of the Alliance Droits et Santé: **Equipop** will reinforce 15 African NGOs to increase their impact in the area of family planning and the health of adolescent boys and girls.
page 30

In 2015, the project *Protect the Next Generation* welcomed 52 new villages, bringing the number of villages in the operation to 152, of which 112 are engaged in the fight to end FGM.
page 10

In Niger, with the support of UNFPA, **Equipop** has trained young parliamentarian girls in leadership. Interpersonal communication, self-confidence, and role models were on the program of this training.
page 14

Throughout the year, **Equipop** has been involved in UN negotiations. Present at the UN during the 59th CSW, Equipop also closely monitored the adoption of the Objectives for Sustainable Development.
page 24



10 décembre 2015

**Dernière journée
des droits de l'Homme !**

Le Collectif droits humains pour tou-te-s rassemble des actrices et acteurs de la société civile engagé-e-s pour que l'expression « droits de l'Homme » soit remplacée par « droits humains ».

The French Committee of NGOs for liaison and information at the UN gave **Equipop** the 2015 Prize for Health and Civil Solidarity.

December 10th: last day for the Rights of Man: **Equipop** moves to the forefront with the collective Droits Humains pour tou-te-s.

Équilibres & Populations argued that women must be taken into account at the COP21 negotiations.
page 27

01

Sparking change

In partnership with local actors, Équilibres & Populations sparks social change dynamics at the very heart of the populations.





Stopping FGM in Mali: toward sustainable improvement in the health and status of women and girls

In Mali, Equipop is working with the communities in 250 villages in the Kayes health district toward ending Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), in partnership with the Malian NGO AMSOPT (Malian Association for monitoring and guiding traditional practices). By stopping FGM, the “Protect the Next Generation” project aims at improving sustainably the health, rights, and status of Mali’s women and girls.

TOWARD A DYNAMIC FOR GLOBAL CHANGE

Guiding communities toward abandoning FGM is a means of approaching the other types of gender-based violence: in 2015, among the 100 villages having decided to abandon FGM, 49 also took a position against child marriage. The priority was then to reinforce the dynamics of global change in these villages using more sensitivity training on the problems associated with gender, violence against women, and respecting their rights. In parallel, accompanying the process to abandon FGM in the 52 new villages was done in a context favorable to change: the majority of these volunteered to participate in the project.

In order to bring about more involvement by community leaders in the maintenance of the decision against FGM, village guidance committees were created in 96 villages. These committees have the mission of overseeing and ensuring that no girls undergo FGM in their community. Members, consisting of the village chief, counselors, representatives of women's and youth groups, as well as the project relays, also organize home visits and briefings.



TRAINING IS THE CORE OF OUR WORK

Two of the measures of success are the participation and concrete involvement of the communities in stopping FGM. Yet, this participation cannot be effective without strengthening the competences of key and influential persons in the community.

In 2015, training courses were organized for community and religious leaders, the project relays, women's group representatives, traditional communicators, radio broadcasters, and teachers to relay the activities and messages related to the project. The purpose of this training was to provide knowledge and information on harmful traditional practices, including FGM, human rights, and the remedies available in case of risk of violence.



ON THE ROAD TO CAPITALIZATION: IDENTIFYING KNOWLEDGE AND KNOW-HOW

Engaged in 2014, the process of capitalization continued in 2015. A consultant was recruited to accompany Equipop in identifying knowledge and know-how regarding the project. A working collection of information, interviews, and meetings was carried out to highlight and explain the procedures used to support communities towards the abandonment of FGM. This work will be complemented by a field mission in the Kayes region in 2016. Once completed, the capitalization process will be shared with partners to further formalize the methods of intervention and develop project strategies in other areas.

A STRONG COMMITMENT AT THE EUROPEAN LEVEL

FGM also exists in Europe in certain communities from the countries where it is customary. In an effort to build bridges between countries of origin and Diasporas, Equipop has committed itself in recent years to the implementation of mobilization activities in migrant communities in France. In 2015, Equipop trained 8 migrant relays from communities in the region of Kayes regarding FGM, child marriage, and human rights. This training had the goal of allowing these migrant relays to educate their peers and inform them about changes underway in their communities of origin.

Equipop also became committed in Europe to the abandonment of FGM through its active participation in the networks *End FGM European Network* and *Excisions, Parlons-en !*. Since 2015, Equipop has been a member of the Administrative Council of these two networks.

• What does Equipop do?

It takes care of the definition of the operational strategy, coordination and monitoring of the project with local teams, technical support in operational and budgetary management, fundraising (raising over 500,000 euros since 2014), promotion and project communication, and facilitation of building links with institutions.

• For whom?

Communities in 152 villages in the Kayes region of Mali

• Why?

Because protecting girls and women from FGM and early marriage is not only to enforce their fundamental rights but also to sustainably improve their health and that of their future children.

Protecting the Next Generation, by the numbers

250 VILLAGES

In the district of Kayes

152 VILLAGES

in the operation

112 VILLAGES HAVE ABANDONED FGM SINCE THE START OF THE PROJECT

2014

16 new communities

officially abandon the practice of female sexual mutilation

45 villages

also abandon child marriage

2015

50 new villages

officially abandon the practice of female sexual mutilation

49 villages

also abandon child marriage

INTERVIEW

Seydou Niang, an engaged stakeholder in the abandonment of harmful traditional practices

Can you talk to me about yourself and how you came to meet Equipop?

Back home, you don't talk about yourself; it is others who talk about you and that is what is most objective! I fight for equality and against any form of violence by bringing awareness through dialogue and respect. I got to know Équilibres & Populations through the intermediary of a former employee who introduced me to the project, "Protect the Next Generation." We exchanged ideas on the strategies and activities to implement with migrants and discussed with the project lead the degree to which training would be valuable. We designed modules together, and I am the person who trained migrants on the subject.

Can you talk to me about your personal history with female sexual mutilation?

Before age 30, it was not a subject that caught my interest. I was born in a family and a community that practiced FGM, and I thought it was normal. It was in 2000, during a training session, that I first heard that FGM was harmful to your health and that it was a violation of people's rights. I was shocked and revolted: I couldn't take any criticism about the practices done by my own family! I had absorbed religious justifications and cultural practices such as female sexual mutilation, and I had trouble accepting the consequences they were talking to me about. Nevertheless, my curiosity pushed me to look into the different views on the practice, the reasons given, and to question doctors and imams. I discovered that none of the reasons was well-founded. I then started to make my family aware and have never stopped fighting the practice since.

Seydou Niang is a community worker leading projects promoting the abandonment of FGM at GAMS Belgium and has participated in the training of relay migrants in France in the Protecting the Next Generation project.



What role, in your view, should the Diasporas have in stopping FGM?

The Diasporas have a big role to play: They are full members of their communities. Female sexual mutilation is not just a women's issue; it is a norm that involves all communities. The involvement of the diasporas is indispensable: once made aware, they understand the harm done by the practice and can then take advantage of their influence to help those back home to understand and to make the decision to protect girls: to abandon Female Genital Mutilation.

What role do men play in stopping female sexual mutilation in your view?

Men have a more important role to play than people think. Of course, it is mostly women who cut girls, and they are the ones who suffer the consequences. But men are fathers, husbands, and brothers, and they cannot remain indifferent to the suffering of women associated with FGM. Their place is decisive in the community: if they are against it, the practice does not continue.

Do you want to add anything else?

I would like to salute the memory of Kadiatou who fought all her life for the well-being of her community. She was with us during the training and her loss was a great shock to all of us. For her memory, and that of all those people who took up the fight before us, we have the duty to continue.



Training girls for leadership: a first in Niger

In Niger, where the rights of adolescent girls are a far-fetched concept, Equipop has supported UNFPA to ensure 400 girls in the situation of vulnerability in the *Ilimin*¹ program can make their voices heard. The objective: to train young female students already involved in citizen actions so that they can transmit this knowledge to other adolescents in the program.

¹ The Ilimin Program is a program led by UNFPA Niger to strengthen the capacities of young girls who were subjected to marriage and/or teen pregnancy, to enable them to be the master of their lives and their future.

FROM FIELD ACTION TO TRAINING

For more than 10 years, the work of Équilibres & Populations has concentrated on adolescent girls in a situation of vulnerability. With all this experience in the field, the teams of NGOs first prepared a training guide. This guide allows young girl leaders to initiate other girls in to the development of their skills starting from the principle that every individual, through relationships with others in society, has the power to act and transform their environment at different levels. It is about accompanying them as they grow an awareness of their internal and collective resources while helping them turn toward taking action, thanks to tools relating to managing a collective project or via interpersonal communication.

SUPPORTING CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT IN YOUNG FEMALE LEADERS

Second, a workshop done in the field has allowed us to train about twenty young women identified by UNFPA as team leaders. Aged 15 to 23 years, they are high school students, or third-year medical students or engineering students. They already have real citizen engagement: some are members of the Youth Parliament of Niger and others are members of national youth movements.

During the training, the engagement of these young women was complete, with some applying their training right from day one in their family environment: “Before defending my opinions with others, I wanted to try it with my family,” one of them confided in us. In order to protect themselves, meetings between these young women and filial beneficiaries were also organized. These moments of sharing proved to be decisive for future trainers as most of them were not well aware of what the young girls in the Illimin program were going through. They were listened to attentively along with the story of the lives of their sisters who mixed early marriage and pregnancy, stopping school at age 11 to 14, domestic violence, and a desire to just get out and go back to school.

“ Through this training, I became aware of my role as a girl who is a leader: it is not about changing the world for me, but for all those girls who did not have a chance to go to school and choose their own future. ”

Djamila Ghuissa

TRAINING OF FEMALE TRAINERS: THE SNOWBALL EFFECT

Following the initial training, 20 girls have been working with the UNFPA team to test the training they had received and refine the teaching methods and tools offered. They have put their ideas into action by offering themselves a first round of training with sixty girls from the Ilimin program. In groups of 3, the young trainers have trained young girls from Niamey and Dosso. A process during which Equipop has remotely supported them. After this first duplication, a new phase of training with leaders who are girls, in order to finalize the key guide prepared by Equipop, is planned for 2016. This will allow for the standardization of the leadership training for girls and by girls in Niger to attain the critical number of 400 trained girls.

- **What does Equipop do?**
Preparation of a leadership training manual and a train-the-trainers course
- **For whom?**
400 girls in a condition of vulnerability in Niger
- **Why?**
Because when a girl has confidence and that she has the expertise to make its voice heard, she cannot only succeed but can also actively contribute to breaking the vicious circle of poverty.

Young Nigerian Women



At 19 years of age, three-quarters of young women started their reproductive lives.

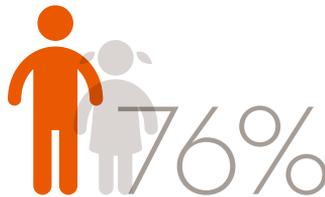


63% of adolescents aged 15 to 19 are married (more than half a million teens).

Among those from 20-24 years,



28% were married before age 15



76% were married before age 18

INTERVIEW

Halimatou Zika Sombeize, a girl devoted to women in Niger

Halimatou Zika Sombeize is a founding member and president of the Niger Young Women's Leadership Group, where she trains young girls in leadership.



What did you get out of the training given by Équilibres & Populations on leadership?

Faced with the challenges that girls must deal with in our country, such as pervasively present traditions or misinterpretations of religion, they must be able to express their views. This training allowed me to strengthen my abilities: I know how better to express myself, communicate with others, adapt my speech to my interlocutors, but even more convincing: I have learned about leadership in depth. I now know how to progress from an idea to a project: how to write, set goals, and establish methods: these are the basic elements you need to undertake a project. This training also allowed me to be in touch with other young female leaders who we have given the courage to convey everything that we have taught the girls in our country, who have not been as fortunate as we have been in school.

Why is it important to talk about leadership to young girls, in your opinion?

It is very important to talk about leadership: girls have the right to choose. Here, in Niger, 70-75% of girls are married before 18 years of age. Leadership is present in each of us, and of these girls, you just have to trigger it, so that they can say no to early and/or forced marriage, so they can go to school to learn to express themselves. Being a leader means changing things – and not only for yourself, but for everyone: it's having the courage to speak for your own person, your family, your community.

Halimatou, can you tell us about yourself in a few words?

I am an engineering student in mines and the environment. In 2008-2009, I was a junior deputy and in 2013, I had the honor of representing Niger in the Francophone Youth Parliament following a contest. I participated in certain conferences and international forums, including the ECOSOC forum on youth participation in the passage of the MDGs to SDGs. This opportunity was a key triggering event for me: I realized, in contact with other young people, that the real problem impeding development is the fact that girls do not have the same opportunities as boys in many countries, including Niger. That gave me the desire to work harder, specifically for these girls. By working with other young people, we formed the Niger Young Women's Leadership Group, within which we advocate for the empowerment of women and girls. This happens, for us, through their enrollment and retention in school, through gender equality, the promotion of women's leadership, the fight against child marriage, and also by the participation of girls in the sustainable development of Niger. We believe in giving the same opportunities to girls and boys; in Niger, girls not only lack access to education but also lack role models as inspiration. We show them that it is possible to stay in school and become an engineer, doctor, manager, or an accountant: these professions are not reserved just for men!

02

Mobilizing

Équilibres & Populations mobilizes leaders to create a more favorable institutional and legal environment for human development, and more particularly for the improvement of women and girls' status.







The delegation of tasks in family planning, soon a reality in Burkina Faso

In Burkina Faso, the rate of contraceptive prevalence (modern methods) is very low (15%). The Burkina Faso government has made several commitments to family planning, and more and more programs are in place; however, despite these advances, developments remain halting. In 2015, we collaboratively built an experimental project for the delegation of tasks that will speed up these changes.

According to the 2010 Demographic and Health Survey, 24% of girls and women of childbearing age still have unmet needs in the area of family planning. This has important implications for women's health: the overall fertility rate is 6 children per woman, and the maternal and infant mortality rates are very high: today, there are 341 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, and 129 infant deaths per 1,000 live births

DELEGATION OF TASKS: AN INNOVATIVE STRATEGY

Given these data, Équilibres & Populations has argued for several years in Burkina Faso for the implementation of the delegation of tasks. This innovative strategy is a real lever to improve the indicators of family planning, and improve the health of women and children.

The delegation of tasks provides a solution to the problem of the shortage of qualified health personnel to provide family planning services. Geographic barriers will be considerably reduced, allowing girls and women, especially those living in the most remote rural health centers, to gain access more easily to family planning services. In fact, in rural areas, registered nurses, along with assistant and registered midwives, represent the majority of health workers closest to the populations present in the health centers.

LOCAL AND INTERNATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS

In November 2014, the Ministry of Health of Burkina Faso, in collaboration with Equipop, started experimenting with the delegation of tasks in two regions of Burkina Faso, namely Mouhoun and Hauts-Bassins. The delegation of tasks means authorizing registered nurses, as well as licensed and assistant midwives, to offer long-term contraceptive methods (intrauterine devices and implants) and allows community-based health workers to initiate the offer of pills and to administer injections.

Specifically, in the field, Equipop will participate actively in this experimental phase under the supervision of the Ministry of Health, in close collaboration with the Burkina Association for Family Welfare and the NGO Marie Stopes International, which will ensure the coordination of the project. For this pilot phase, \$1,200,000 has been allocated.

“ The delegation of tasks will allow us to go beyond to meet the family planning needs of girls and women, however far they may be from health centers. ”

Brigitte Syan

Four areas of intervention have been defined:

- ▶ Capacity building with health staff for better service quality, improving the supply of services in health centers, social promotion and community-level work, in order to bring family planning services to the broader populations
- ▶ Fighting for the lifting of institutional and operational obstacles that have been put in place
- ▶ Monitoring and evaluation for the information of the identified indicators
- ▶ The capitalization of the results for scaling them up in Burkina Faso and in the sub-region

In Burkina Faso, as in other countries of the sub-region, the delegation of tasks is an innovative and promising strategy that will help improve women's access to family planning and reduce maternal and infant mortality, of which the majority are preventable.

• What does Equipop do?

Removing institutional barriers to the implementation of the delegation of tasks, resource mobilization, support for the Directorate of Family Health, capitalization of the experience with health workers

• For whom?

Some 230 community-based health workers and 80 registered nurses and assistant and registered midwives in the public sector, many women and girls in 2 health districts

• Why?

Because increasing access to contraceptives for women and girls who want them, as remote as the health centers may be, will allow them to make important choices for themselves and their families.

The principle of the delegation of tasks



INTERVIEW

Dr. Mathieu Bougma, partisan for the delegation of tasks

Dr. Mathieu Bougma is head of the Family Planning service within the Directorate of Family Health in the Ministry of Public Health of Burkina Faso.



How did you get to know Equipop?

The Directorate of Family Health was already closely cooperating with Equipop when I took office. This dynamic team works hard on all fronts in favor of family planning (mobilizing resources, re-establishment and maintenance, even increasing the budget line devoted to contraceptive products, etc.). Working with Equipop is a pleasure: strongly committed, Equipop is associated with other strategic partners, such as MSI or the ABBEF.

Can you talk to us about the Memorandum of Understanding signed in November 2014 with Equipop?

In November 2014, after a long appeal, Equipop and the Ministry of Health of Burkina Faso signed an agreement dealing with the delegation of tasks in the field of family planning. The signing of this agreement saw the birth of an experiment in the delegation of tasks, governing front-line health workers (assistant and registered midwives) and community-based health workers.

How is that going? Has the project started?

The project is starting. We are in the full recruitment phase for a coordinator who will pilot the project in two health districts. At the same time, mobilizing resources continues and could lead us in the end to scale all the way up.

What added value does the delegation of tasks bring to women in the Burkina Faso context?

With the pilot introduction of new contraceptive methods, we were seeing an increase in the range of existing methods. The latter allowed for an increase in the coverage rates in family planning. The organization of events such as national FP week also allows us to build awareness and increase our coverage. The delegation of tasks will allow access to injectables in the pilot districts by completing the community-based distribution of the contraceptives that already exist in the field.

Are the authorities ready to work with civil society?

Yes, there are good cooperative relationships between civil society and the authorities. Civil society is organizing and strengthening, particularly through the implementation of the technical group, Health and Reproduction, which brings together approximately 25 associations and NGOs.

Do you have an exact launch date?

The launch of the project, initially planned for July 8, 2016, has been postponed. We are working with our partners to determine a new date. Nevertheless, the regional health directors involved were officially informed by the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Health about the launch of the project. Everything has been done to avoid obstacles to its implementation!



Promoting SRHR in the 2030 development agenda: the combat won by Equipop in 2015

Access to contraception, fighting against inequality between women and men, promoting health: in 2015, Equipop put its technical and policy expertise into the promotion of sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR), both at the national and international level. Overview of the major advances of the year.

In March 2015, Pascale Boistard declared to the UN Tribune: “not one region, not one country, has obtained the objective of equality between women and men, neither in fact, nor in law.” The Secretary of State for Women’s Rights stressed that, in particular, there is still “reticence surrounding the rights to contraception and abortion, even as women also face significant risks when their sexual and reproductive rights are not respected.” On this basis, she strongly called for the inclusion of gender equality in “the post-2015 agenda” to which the Countries of the entire world would agree, in September 2015, under the name of SDG (Sustainable Development Goals).

FRANCE, NOW A LEADER IN THE PROMOTION OF SRHR

This demand has been made by Equipop for many years. In 2015, the association thus continued its work to motivate key persons in France and displayed its presence at international conferences. Thanks to its international networks and partners, Equipop has also facilitated diplomatic exchanges in order to build strong support on the bottom line before the adoption of the SDOs. This last effort was indispensable as conservative countries, which were very well organized, were questioning fundamental freedoms, particularly in the area of sexuality. In fact, France has pushed strongly for the inclusion of equality between women and men in the area of SRHR in the 2030 development agenda. This kind of stance has been steadily gaining intensity in recent years, and France has become one of the biggest promoters of SRHR in diplomacy; this is one of the manifestations of the long-term success of the advocacy of Equipop.

A GOOD RESULT: SDGs UPON WHICH WE CAN BUILD

The Sustainable Development Goals are the basis upon which great progress can be made. Equality between women and men is specifically integrated into this (Objective 5), and across all areas, into all other objectives.

The presence of two targets is a particular success: as a health-related target, Target 3.7 provides for “universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including for family planning, information and education” Target 5.6, for its part, proposes to “Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.”

If we add to this the fact that the SDGs are intended to be universal, unlike the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs, 2000-2015), which were limited to the fight against poverty, we can say that this new framework houses the necessary conditions for advancing the rights of everyone in the area of sexuality.

IMPLEMENTING THE UN TEXTS

However, conservative states have succeeded in excluding the expression “SRHR” from SDGs, which limits the universally-recognized concepts. This means that, to implement projects that concretely guarantee individual rights, we will need to show a strong desire in the form of volunteer work. In this perspective, Equipop continues to build links between funders and partners in the field in West Africa.

At the level of French policy development, Equipop has been even more intensely devoted since 2015 to ensuring that the government aligns its concrete work in the field with its diplomatic discourse. The political argumentation in favor of continued French engagement for SRHR is thus continuing, on the one hand. On the other, through the head of the gender commission for Coordination SUD, Equipop is coordinating the mobilization of French NGOs for the integration of gender into development programs.

Moreover, Equipop supplies its expertise on the technical level, particularly through the Agence Française de Développement. Its experience in the field in West Africa makes it possible to refine strategies and projects that target or must attempt to target the category of marginalized adolescent girls. The SDGs are now set for the next fifteen years; so, 2015 represents an extremely important year to bring about progress in the areas Equipop is working on. We are now in a new era where, we hope, we can achieve new advances in all the key areas and real responses to the actual needs of populations. The Equipop team, in any case, is working intensely toward this.

- **What does Equipop do?**
Contributing to UN processes, informing parliamentarians, co-construction of government policies and programs, and monitoring political and financial commitments
- **For whom?**
The national, European, and international decision-makers and ultimately, for all girls and women who benefit from national and international development programs
- **Why?**
Because orienting policy and securing financing is the way to allow women to choose their lives, and it is also one of the keys to the development of our societies

Two crucial Sustainable Development Goals for sexual and reproductive health and rights



Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

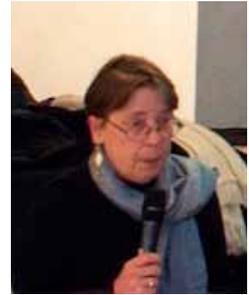


Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

INTERVIEW

Marie-Annick Bourdin, a leader who is advancing the role of women in development

Marie-Annick Bourdin is the Commissioner for International and European Affairs to the High Council for equality between women and men. She contributes to French diplomacy and the rights of women.



How did you get to know Équilibres & Populations?

I began working with Equipop and its Executive Director at the time, Serge Rabier, as soon as my arrival at the High Council for Equality between women and men. I discovered other quality members through events organized by Equipop. I also learned Equipop's collaboration with Danielle Bousquet, president of the High Council for Equality between women and men, within the framework of its parliamentary mandates.

Tell me about the appeal that the High Council for Equality created and sustained at the COP21 in Paris. How did the idea come to you to highlight the place and role of women in the fight against climate change?

Everything began with an internal debate as early as 2014: how to evaluate the role of women in the fight against climate change in light of COP21? With the exception of the Rio Conventions of 1992, no recent international agreements on the environment refer to the role of women or to human rights. We have created a working group, involving civil society, including Equipop, researchers, parliamentarians, and French officials. We then drafted an advocacy document and an appeal to the decision-makers at COP21, in order to ensure that the Paris Agreement incorporates the idea of gender and the empowerment of women, to strengthen their contribution as stakeholders for the development and fight against climate change, and highlighting their resilience to these risks.

How has this appeal been received?

We had a very good response from parliamentarians, whether French, European, or African, and many scientists and international NGOs worldwide have signed our appeal. After his presentation to the President of the COP and Foreign Minister, Laurent Fabius, on October 15, 2015, assured us that he shared our goals and would do his best for our suggestions, but could not guarantee the adherence of 195 states.

What progress can you interpret from this work?

The French government, presiding over COP21, relayed elements of our appeal at the negotiations and in various parallel events at the COP21. The Paris Agreement mentions in its preamble the rights of women and equality between women and men: this is a real advance compared to the CCNUCC report of 1992. The appropriation by women and the fact of taking their interests into account is in the chapters concerning the adapting and strengthening of capacities. We would have liked to achieve other areas where it was included, but the fight continues.

How are you going to continue in view of COP22?

Our advocacy struggle is still valid. We are exchanging with other partners to target this advocacy on women's access to a significant share of "green" financing, ensuring that they are involved in the realization of national contributions. We have already had the opportunity to talk about it with the Moroccan people in charge of COP22, and we will continue to carry this message onward in the context of COP22!

03

Empowering

Équilibres & Populations empowers its development partners by strengthening their intervention capacities.





Equipop, catalyst for commitments to family planning in West Africa

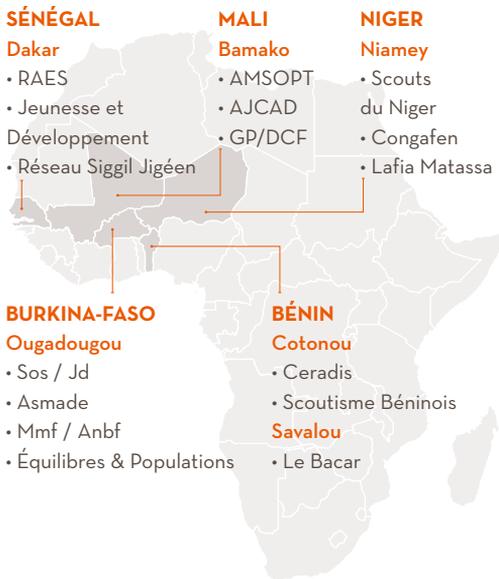
Convinced that any durable social change requires the active and qualitative contribution of the local civil society, Equipop launched in 2013 Alliance Droits et Santé, a network that brings together 9 complementary associations in the sub-region. The objective: unite and strengthen their knowledge in favor of reproductive health for women and girls in West Africa. In 2015, a second phase of this journey started with the project, “Mobilizing in favor of sexual and reproductive health and rights: an Alliance for women and adolescent girls in West Africa.”

Above: All members of Alliance Droits et Santé met in Dakar in order to launch a new phase in the development of the network

ALLIANCE DROITS ET SANTE: THE NETWORK IS GROWING

With this project, 5 new associations have joined the Alliance (Réseau Siggil Jigéen and Jeunesse et Développement in Senegal, Groupe Pivot Droits et Citoyenneté des Femmes, AJCAD, and AMSOPT in Mali), bringing to 15 the number of Alliance Droits et Santé members present in Burkina Faso, Benin, Niger, Mali, and Senegal. The development of the network thus enables the Alliance to increase the scale of its actions and its impact in the sub-region for the sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

Alliance Droits et Santé network



MOBILIZATION: ALL TOGETHER FOR FP

In each country of the network, the objective is to strengthen the political and financial level of commitment among decision-makers in favor of family planning. Equipop will thus accompany members of the network to increase their impact and their efforts at the local, national, and international level. In parallel, it's also about broadening the social

base of associations, by mobilizing citizens in favor of this issue. Concretely, Equipop will implement an integrated strategy to support the advocacy effort through multiple communication channels. At the heart of the advocacy, three central themes will be carried forward by all members of the network: youth access to information and contraception and increasing the demand, as well as the quality, of the services offered. A communication campaign will be used on the web, including national events but also through broadcasts on community radio. One credo: to give the floor to young people and more visibility to the leaders of change who are mobilized in favor of family planning.

Alliance Droits et Santé : THE LEVER EFFECT

Greater impact implies greater means. Sharing strategic oversight of available financing, support in the preparation of proposals, facilitation of relations with sponsors: Equipop also accompanies members of the Alliance in the mobilization of additional resources. In 2015, this support had its first concrete results: Asmade, a member from Burkina Faso, obtained a subsidy of €350,000 from AmplifyChange to strengthen the network activities. The resource mobilization is a strategic area, which strengthens the synergies within the Alliance. The complementarity of associations represents the network's added value. The members of the Alliance have understood this and this increases the chance of success of their proposals: they are increasingly making proposals in consortia.

PARTICIPATING IN THE EMERGENCE OF CREDIBLE AND EFFECTIVE CSOs IN THE LONG TERM: WHEN INNOVATION MEETS PERSONALIZATION

With Alliance Droits et Santé, Equipop is taking the long view. Beyond carrying out specific activities, the idea is to participate in the emergence of strong local associations that are able to be innovative and reliable partners, both for the State and for other development stakeholders. One of the broad-based components of the project is the reinforcement of the capacities of the network members. Thanks to its knowledge of West African associations and a study of each organization conducted in the first phase, Equipop is now able to better personalize its support closer to the needs of the members. In addition to specialists in social and political mobilization, Equipop has acquired professional in organizational support in the areas of accounting/finance, information technology, and resource mobilization. This multidisciplinary team supports the associations in their professional development through webinars, field missions, and distance coaching.

- **What does Equipop do?**
Overall accompanying West African associations in advocacy, communication, management, and administration through distance coaching, training, webinars, field monitoring, and the development of advocacy and communication tools.
- **For whom?**
15 active West African associations in favor of improving the living conditions of women and girls in the sub-region.
- **Why?**
Because the organizations of civil society are the best placed to carry out the actions needed in the long term in favor of the improvement of the health and rights of girls in West Africa, particularly their access to contraception.

The Alliance as of 2015

<p>15 associations</p>	<p>5 countries</p>	<p>100 Champions for family planning</p>	<p>5 advocacy strategies for the repositioning of FP</p>
----------------------------	------------------------	--	--

by 2018

<p>60 Programs on the radio produced in each country</p>	<p>10 Mobilization events</p>	<p>45 Organizational improvement projects</p>	<p>3 Additional million euros, at least, mobilized in favor of FP/RH</p>
--	-----------------------------------	---	--

INTERVIEW

Ousmane Maiga, a new member of Alliance Droits et Santé in Mali

Ousmane Maiga is a program officer for Alliance Droits et Santé within the Association of Youth for Active Citizenship and Democracy (AJCAD) in Mali.



How did you get to know Equipop?

Equipop approached us in 2015 during a mission to identify the future members of the Alliance in Mali. We explained our activities in the field and on social networks and the head of the project, along with a Benin member, introduced us to the Alliance and its objectives. The idea really spoke to us, so much so that the activities correspond perfectly to the strategic development of AJCAD in terms of reproductive health and public participation; and fortunately, we were chosen as the youth association in Mali!

What motivated you to become a member of the Alliance?

Belonging to the Alliance represents, for us, a lever to improve the living conditions of our populations. Our mission is multifaceted and aims to improve access to sexual and reproductive health and rights, participation in the public space, and decision-making in different fields (education, health, access to water, etc.) for youth in Mali. The Alliance allows us to amplify our strategies and acquire know-how in management, accounting, and communication: in short, in organizational development.

What has this partnership brought you to date?

We have received a lot of information and training. Training in organizational development will help us improve our field programs, thanks to strengthened internal management. Webinars on the advocacy and communication allows us to gain access to reliable,

quality tools. The Alliance is a special networking space but also a forum for discussion about best practices.

Can you tell me about your relationships with other members of the Alliance in Mali?

We work with an association of women, the Groupe Pivot Droits et Citoyenneté des Femmes and a technical association, AMSOPT. We benefit from the know-how and the counsel of these two associations, which are older than AJCAD. We remain in regular contact and together we plan activities to be led in the context of the Alliance in order to increase their impact.

What is, in your view, the future of the partnership?

We, the associations, are the future Alliance Droits et Santé! The Alliance trains credible, reliable, and capable organizations to lead formal advocacy for SRHR. In Mali, we are a heterogeneous group, but the Alliance allows us to create a more consistent platform, which takes into account advocacy targets, focusing on youth, women, and the service providers. At the regional level, the Alliance has a very bright future! Today, our voice matters in West Africa, thanks to our field experience, working to improve access to rights in sexual and reproductive health in 5 countries with relatively similar socio-cultural contexts. I would like to add that we congratulate Equipop for its assistance, networking, and the collaboration space offered by the Alliance.



Adolescent girls at the heart of development: Niger calls on the expertise of Equipop

In spring 2015, Équilibres & Populations has been requested by the Ministry of Public Health of Niger in order to carry out a study to enrich the formulation of national programs. It is its experience in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights among adolescent girls, its knowledge of health systems, institutional workings, and development stakeholders in West Africa, which allowed Equipop to carry out this study.

Equipop aided the Nigerian Ministry of Public Health in the evaluation of adolescent girls' health projects. This study, commissioned by the National Technical Committee on HPV - GAVI composed of the Ministry of Health, WHO, UNICEF, and UNFPA, had the aim of extending the vaccination program against human papillomavirus in Niger.

The goal: collect and compile data, health policies, and operations completed for adolescent girls, particularly those aged 10 to 14 years. The analysis of these data has brought support for an extension of the vaccination against HPV, in particular thanks to a focus on social mobility and communication, aiming to get adolescent girls to understand and accept the vaccination.

THE MISSION OF EQUIPOP: MAP, ANALYZE, AND SHARE

Maternal mortality remains the number one cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19 years. This represents 34% of the deaths in this age range and 20% of all maternal deaths in the country: their situation in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights is alarming. Nevertheless, few national programs operate specifically for the benefit of adolescent girls. For example, the Sexual and Reproductive Health for Youth and Adolescents program, implemented between 2006 and 2010, was not renewed. In the same way, the sectoral financing and programs related to maternal and reproductive health and family planning do not specifically target teenage girls.

Faced with this situation, civil society developed pilot projects favoring the access of adolescents to their sexual health and reproductive rights, supported by a favorable political context. These are the initiatives that Equipop has cataloged and evaluated.

FAVORING APPROPRIATION: A KEY FOR EFFECTIVE PROGRAMMING

Equipop has mapped operations that target adolescents and analyzed them according to different criteria: region, intervention strategy, contribution to national strategies, community mobilization, integration of gender issues, and sustainability of the action. These activities have been prioritized as a function of their contribution to the national immunization strategy and their impact on the extension of the HPV program.

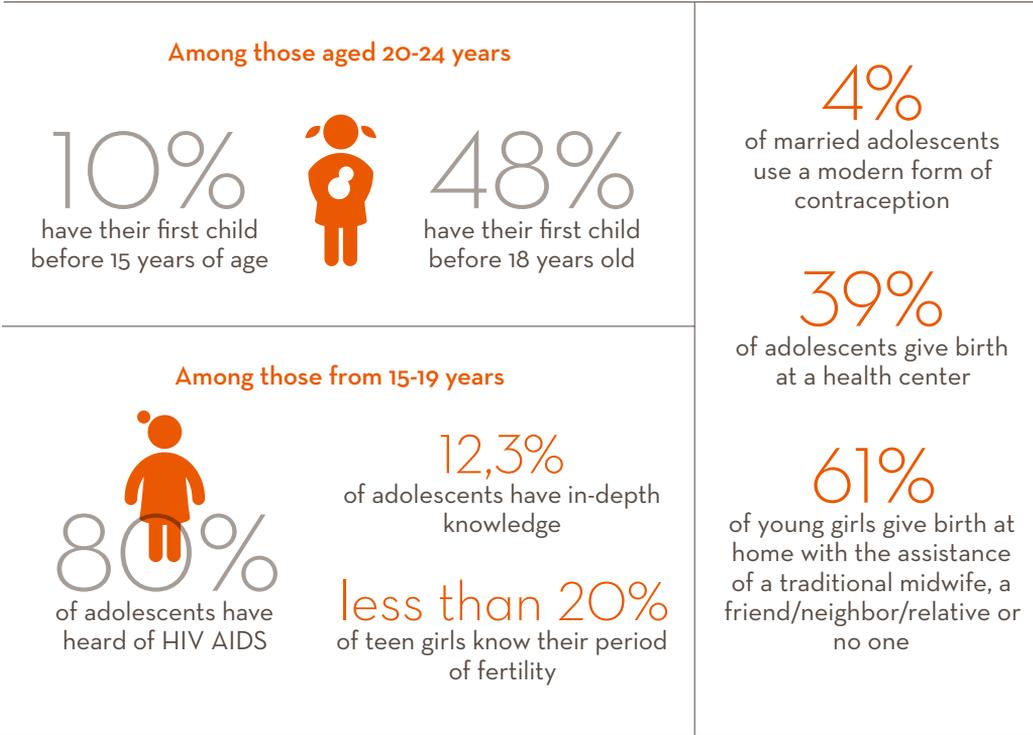
Recommendations of the study:

- ▶ Integrate the HPV vaccine into the broader national vaccination program,
- ▶ Integrate the Health Directorate of Mother and Child and the Sexual and Reproductive Health Division for Youth and Adolescents into the technical committee of the HPV program,
- ▶ Distinguish the measures for the accompaniment and identification of adolescents to be vaccinated according to their school status (schooled or unschooled),
- ▶ Review the strategy and communication message, taking into account the sources of reticence about communicating the benefits of the vaccine (prevention of infertility),
- ▶ Communicate while enlisting the support of national tools implemented in the context of the fight against early marriages and the prevention of teen pregnancies,
- ▶ Reflect on the opportunity for anti-HPV vaccination to supply young girls with information on menstruation and menstrual hygiene; 11 years of age is the ideal time, and this is a preoccupation shared with all persons encountered, whether in institutions or NGOs.

This participatory study also allowed us to educate members of the steering committee and their partners about the situation and to take into account the specific constraints and needs of adolescent girls in the area of SRHR. Innovative interventions catalyzing change were highlighted, and good practices were disseminated. A new synergy between the different stakeholders was created, to better intervene for adolescent girls, particularly regarding their sexual and reproductive health.

- What does Equipop do?**
 Mapping of existing programs, connecting initiatives with stakeholders, preparation of operational recommendations for more impact.
- For whom?**
 The immunology division of the Ministry of Public Health of Niger and adolescents from 3 health districts in Niger, over 1,000 young girls.
- Why?**
 Because it is essential to contextualize policies and programs, utilizing all of the national resources available and taking into account the specific issues of young girls.

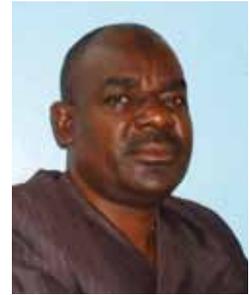
Adolescent girls and SRHR in Niger: some data



INTERVIEW

Sidikou Issaka Maïga, a convinced stakeholder taking girls into account

Sidikou Issaka Maïga is Head of the Vaccination Division at the Directorate of Immunizations, under the umbrella of the General Directorate of Reproductive Health of the Ministry of Public Health of Niger.



What need did the study conducted with Équilibres & Populations meet?

After an epidemiological study, we realized that the cervical cancer statistics showed an important prevalence. We then decided to put together a vaccination demonstration project in the form of a vaccination campaign against human papillomavirus, with the financial support of GAVI Alliance and in collaboration with the WHO, JSI, and UNFPA. These partners were indispensable for the specificity of the vaccination campaign's target: young girls aged 9 to 13 years. We organized this campaign in 3 parts lasting 7 days, at 2- and 4-month intervals. During the first injection, many obstacles were observed. We then needed technical partners in order to orient ourselves around our practices of vaccination for young girls.

What were the results of the study?

The study done by Equipop accompanied the evaluation of costs, and the study of vaccination coverage. These studies allowed us to see our strengths and weaknesses. For example, the presence of an activity timetable was a veritable asset in terms of planning. In contrast, a weak point was the failure in planning: the vaccination campaign that should have been held in the course of the school year, from October to June, which was not met. The study also highlighted that the campaign method was not well suited to this vaccination, as it was too onerous to carry out on a national scale.

In what way were these results and recommendations useful to you?

Thanks to this study, we were better organized: we were able to set a start date of October 2016 for the first HPV vaccine dose in all pilot schools. The health workers will vaccinate the girls on the same outing schedule as the vaccination of children from 0 to 23 months and pregnant women, according to a calendar communicated in advance, to reach as many individuals as possible. We have also communicated upstream on the importance of vaccinating young girls in order to gain the support of communities, parents, and the girls themselves.

What is, in your view, the value added by Equipop?

Before this study, we didn't have a strategy toward young girls as a group of adolescents. Equipop demonstrated to us the importance of social mobilization in favor of this target. We were able to mobilize the religious, teachers and mothers, we were right up to the televised debate, with health experts and religious figures. Equipop allowed us to understand that this kind of dialogue permits us to begin conversations about the topics in earnest. In June 2016, we had vaccinated 626 girls out in the community in the plan for routine vaccination. Today, the populations are involved and it is the girls themselves who are asking to be vaccinated!

04

Learn more about us

Équilibres & Populations was created by a team of doctors and journalists in 1993, in the context of the then upcoming International Cairo Conference on Population and Development. Équilibres & Populations works towards the improvement of women's social status and living conditions, which are a crucial lever of fair and sustainable development.

Équilibres & Populations currently has sixteen employees and fifty members and runs on an annual budget of €1.5 million. Our headquarters are located in Paris and we also opened a subregional office in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, five years ago.

Our vision and values

We, at Équilibres & Populations, firmly believe that sustainable development cannot be achieved as long as the female half of humanity is left behind. Improved social status and living conditions for women, and improved sexual and reproductive health and rights in particular, are both a lever and an indicator of development.

Our vision is based on a number of core values:



RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Équilibres & Populations calls for the universal recognition of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. This must be achieved for everyone, everywhere, through political and social participation and appropriation.



WELL-BEING, FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Équilibres & Populations considers that the well-being of a people is not measured only by economic indicators but also by the ability of individuals to make enlightened and autonomous choices, while also accepting their own responsibility towards society.



SOCIAL JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS

Équilibres & Populations stands up for a conception of human development that gives everyone the same social, political and economic opportunities. We want a development that cares about fairness and solidarity, especially between genders and generations, for the success of the present days must not be achieved to the detriment of part of the population or of generations to come.

These values are reflected in our guiding principles



COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

At Équilibres & Populations, we systematically adopt a collaborative approach in our action. We see such an approach as a guarantee of quality in terms of ownership, accountability, sustainability, rooting, empowerment and legitimacy.

This collaborative approach implies the establishment of a sustained dialog and aims to closely associate the various stakeholders to our action: our partner associations, health and social workers, parliamentarians, decision-makers and of course the populations of our target zones.



PARTNERSHIPS

Instead of expanding internally, Équilibres & Populations has chosen to develop the range and the quality of its actions through a strategy of alliances and multi-actor partnerships (CSOs, parliamentarians, journalists, researchers, civil servants, technical experts...). This structure relies on the complementary nature of our various know-hows and increases adaptability and reactivity.

For more than ten years now, we have maintained a continuous collaboration with West African associations with which we share a common vision. Building upon their subtle and thorough knowledge of the communities and of their dynamics, these partners promote change in their respective countries. Through the years, we have established trusting relationships based on these complementary assets that enable us to build and carry out together programs for the populations and advocacy activities that are adapted to local sociopolitical situations.



NETWORKING

Équilibres & Populations has also successfully created or joined synergies between development actors: international solidarity organizations (ISOs), research and academic institutions, public entities, corporations...

We collaborate with ISO networks in France, in Europe and in French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa. We are involved at different levels: collaborating to collective work and decisions, coordinating working groups, participating to collective organs (Boards).

Our mission and actions

Our organisation works towards the improvement of women's living conditions and social status, which is a crucial lever of fair and sustainable development.

In French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa, part of our action has progressively shifted to focus on girls, and more specifically on these girls and young women whom existing policies and programmes do not manage to reach.

Building on our specific expertise on sexual and reproductive health and rights, we have progressively developed a broader project that involves various action fields (health, education, economy) and systematically includes a gender-based approach.

In order to carry out our mission in French-speaking Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as in Europe and North America, we work with a number of actors, including:

- civil society organisations with which we maintain a close partnership bond;
- traditional leaders, women groups, youth clubs;
- NGO coalitions and platforms;
- health professionals;
- technical and administrative experts;
- researchers;
- academics;
- journalists;
- parliamentarians;
- political and administrative decision-makers.

Our action is threefold, and all three components are complementary:



Sparkling social

change dynamics at the very heart of the communities through creating and implementing pilot projects in collaboration with local partners



Mobilizing

leaders to create a more favourable institutional and legal environment



Empowering

development partners by strengthening their capacities

Expertise and know-how

Through the years, we have enriched our knowledge and know-how by drawing from diverse fields: political science, public health and medicine, sociology, anthropology, economy, demography. We make sure to systematically intertwine these various perspectives in order to promote as integrated an approach as possible, which is a significant asset in the comprehension of the logics of the various actors we work with: men or women from the communities in which we work, community leaders, partners, health professionals, decision-makers...

Our work is based on three main fields of expertise.

PUBLIC POLICIES AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

Équilibres & Populations has acquired a thorough experience of advocacy towards political actors in international cooperation. We rely on a solid knowledge of the actors and mechanisms that underline public policies and their implementation.

At the local, national and international levels, this enables us to inform, influence, and raise awareness amongst decision-makers (governments, ministry cabinets, high-level civil servants) so that they support specific programs, defend political reforms and make sure they are efficiently implemented. Our expertise is now acknowledged and sought-after by parliamentarians.

PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICINE

Équilibres & Populations has a renowned expertise in the field of public health. More specifically, our team has acquired transversal knowledge on the way health systems work in West Africa and in-depth expertise on specific issues such as family planning, emergency obstetric care, fistula, or female sexual mutilation.

The association uses knowledge to focus on prevention (health education, harm reduction, shifts in social norms...) but also on the way health services are organized (health personnel training, users' participation, HIV/AIDS and sexual and reproductive health integration).

SOCIAL SCIENCE AND GENDER

Équilibres & Populations draws its approach from the field of social science. We seek to meet the needs and interests of all members of the communities we work with, which is why we adopt a gender-based approach. This does not mean targeting women as an isolated group but rather focusing on the way individuals act, react and interact according to their gender and social position under the influence of dominant sexual and family models. Our analysis highlights the fact that being a man or a woman in a given society implies socially built roles that need to be understood and questioned if one is to trigger social change.

The gender approach is a decisive lever to promote new behaviours. It requires both women's empowerment and men's participation. Taking gender into account contributes to reaching a twofold objective. Firstly, a political objective: rebalance relationships between men and women for greater justice. Secondly, a socio-economical objective: build the foundations of a development that is truly sustainable because it involves both halves of the populations.

In order to implement our project, and in close collaboration with our partners, we mobilise three main types of know-how:

PROJECT ENGINEERING

As a leader organisation or within consortiums, Équilibres & Populations has developed planning, piloting and coordination capacities. Together with our partners, we identify needs, plan strategies of action, define collaborative and gender-sensitive methods, mobilise resources, manage technical and financial monitoring activities, carry out evaluation of the process and outcomes and capitalise our experience.

INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY

Équilibres & Populations facilitates the access to knowledge and the understanding of the issues related to our mission with a permanent will to make social demand more visible and to bring forward local capacities. We also have an influential role in the shaping and monitoring of public policies and programmes through activities such as: event planning; study tours; awareness campaigns; creation and edition of documentation materials; individual response to solicitations from journalists, parliamentarians or experts; collection and critical analysis of legal documents and public policies or programmes; shaping and diffusion of position papers; creation of or participation to institutional consultation mechanisms; facilitation of or participation to study groups.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Équilibres & Populations helps strengthening the capacities of the various development partners and facilitates experience sharing amongst them. We implement support and consulting activities, co-conduct joint diagnoses, facilitate meetings, supervise or support our partners on the field, participate to the elaboration of didactic tools and design and carry out training sessions.

Partnerships

Eef Wuyts, advocate for Sexual and Reproductive Rights in Europe

Eef Wuyts is in charge of the international advocacy within the European network of the International federation for family planning (IPPF EN). Based in Brussels, she notably pilots the European consortium Countdown 2030 Europe, of which Equipop has been a member from the start.



What has Countdown 2015 Europe done over the last 10 years?

Countdown 2015 Europe was established in 2004, several years after the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals, in order to advocate for family planning, to achieve Goals 4 and 5 in order to reduce child mortality and improve maternal health. Some 15 organizations based in 12 European countries formed the consortium. It has become the main European voice on issues related to unmet FP needs. Countdown 2015 Europe worked to make SRHR a development policy priority at the national and European level, but also to make European voices heard on these subjects. Our objective is to bring about policy change and to increase financing to better meet FP needs throughout the world. Each association leads its advocacy in its own country on a common basis, thus creating regional momentum for FP. This is closely linked to the advocacy being led with European institutions. Concretely, we create resource documents, formulate common recommendations, and organize various events... It's this work that has given France such a strong voice on the international scene.

Where is the consortium today?

We are collecting data on real engagement in our region with regard to FP in cooperation for development. We are then using this data to create resources and policy recommendations for decision-makers and civil society to strengthen our advocacy effectiveness. Recently, we have done a lot of work around negotiations linked with the Sustainable

Development Goals, in order to obtain real advances in terms of SRHR. We have also always been active before the Commission on the status of women and that of Population and Development at the UN. We have a watchdog role with governments: we ask for accountability regarding political and financial commitments made by States in these international forums. Equipop has been part of the consortium from day one. It is essential as amounts of public aid for development from France are very significant, and it is crucial to direct funds toward FP and reproductive health.

What is the future of the consortium?

We are going to change the name: Countdown 2030 Europe. We are entering the era of Sustainable Development Goals, and action is shifting to the fulfillment of these objectives for 2030. We are also collaborating with other European networks working on SRHR and/or development matters (EuroNGOs, Astra, CONCORD...) to increase the scope of our actions. In October 2016, we are launching a new phase of the project, always centered on the promotion of FP in European development policies, in which Equipop will have a special place in view of the positions expressed by France on the international stage!

Networks

Équilibres & Populations has always thought that collective efforts were a powerful lever for change. In 2015, the NGO strengthened its engagements within numerous networks in France, Europe, and sub-Saharan Francophone Africa. Among these:



Alliance Droits & Santé
Réseau d'ONG pour les femmes d'Afrique

Alliance Droits et Santé

www.alliancedroitsetsante.org

Alliance Droits et Santé, is a network of French and West African health civil society organizations whose aim is to improve the status and health of women and girls in West Africa.



Coordination Sud

www.coordinationsud.org

Coordination SUD is the national coordination of French NGOs for international solidarity, dedicated to the support and representation of their positions through dialog with public and private institutions in France, Europe, and the world.



Collectif Santé 2015

www.collectif-sante-mondiale.fr

Collectif Santé 2015 brings together 8 French development NGOs (Action Against Hunger, Équilibres & Populations, Global Health Advocates France, Médecins du Monde, Oxfam France, Family Planning, and Sidaction Solthis) who have come together to defend health in the face of successive decreases in French aid and the slow withdrawal of France from the field of international solidarity.



EFQM

www.efqm.org

EFQM (European Foundation for Quality Management) is a European organization dedicated to providing organizations with a common reference tool set to help them move towards excellence in their operations.



EndFGM

www.endfgm.eu

End FGM is a European NGO network promoting European action to bring an end to Female Genital Mutilation.



EuroNGOs

www.eurongos.org

EuroNGOs is a European network of NGOs and human rights experts on sexual and reproductive health.



Genre en action

www.genreenaction.net

Genre en Action is an international network that promotes awareness of inequality between women and men in policies and programs for development.



Excision, parlons-en !

Excision, parlons-en! is a secular and apolitical association declared under the law of July 1, 1901 that aims to contribute to unite all associations or other entities, as well as physical persons, on the theme of female genital mutilation in France and the world. Since 2015, Equipop has been part of the board of directors of Excision, parlons-en!



Girls Not Bride

www.girlsnotbrides.org

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of more than 500 organizations from civil society committed to ending child marriage and allowing girls to realize their potential.



F3E

<http://f3e.asso.fr>

F3E or the Fund for the Promotion of Cross-Section Studies, Preliminary Studies, and Evaluation, is a French network of NGOs and territorial collectives dedicated to improving the impact and quality of actions taken by stakeholders working in international solidarity.

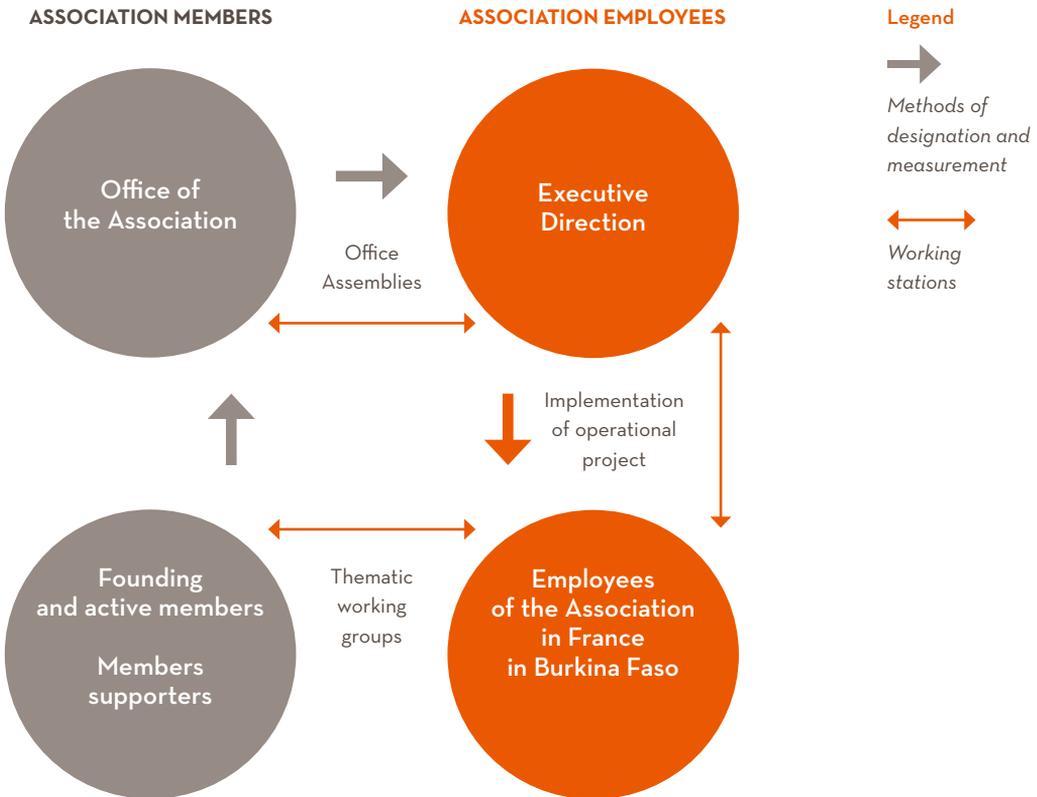


Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition / SECONAF

SECONAF, or Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, is a global partnership of public and private stakeholders and civil society organizations, aiming to ensure access to persons living in low or middle revenue countries to affordable and high quality means of contraception in order to improve their sexual and reproductive health.

Citizen engagement and professional involvement

Équilibres & Populations has 55 members as of 2015: doctors, journalists, professionals in communication and development, who meet by general assembly at least once a year. A team of 17 salaried employees implemented the association project in 2015.



THE OFFICE

Dr. Alain Marié
President

Dr. Claude Dumurgier
Member

Mai Tran
Member

Dr. Annick Schwebig
Treasurer

Prof. Pierre Foldes
Member

The office meets on average once every 3 months.

Prof. Jacques Milliez
Secretary General

Prof. Claude Sureau
Member

THE SALARIED TEAM

Director

Aurélie Gal-Régniez
Executive Director
(since June 2015)

Serge Rabier
Executive Director
(until June 2015)

The Team*

Marguerite Bannwarth
Advocacy and
Communications officer

Sibiri Koné
Liaison officer

Nicolas Schlegel
Accountant

Elsa Burzynski
Advocacy officer

Rémi Minoungou
Project officer

Brigitte Syan
Advocacy officer

Aurélie Desrumaux
Project officer

Nathalie Perrotin
Communications officer

Caroline Traoré
Organizational
Accompaniment officer

Sanije Hoxha
Administrative and Financial
Monitoring of Projects officer

Dominique Pobel
Program officer

Julie Van der Smissen
Administrative and Financial
Accompaniment officer
for partners

Caroline Kientz
Intern in Advocacy and
Communication

Nicolas Rainaud
Advocacy officer

Claire Veyriras
Resource Mobilization officer

Adama Kaboré
Resource Mobilization officer

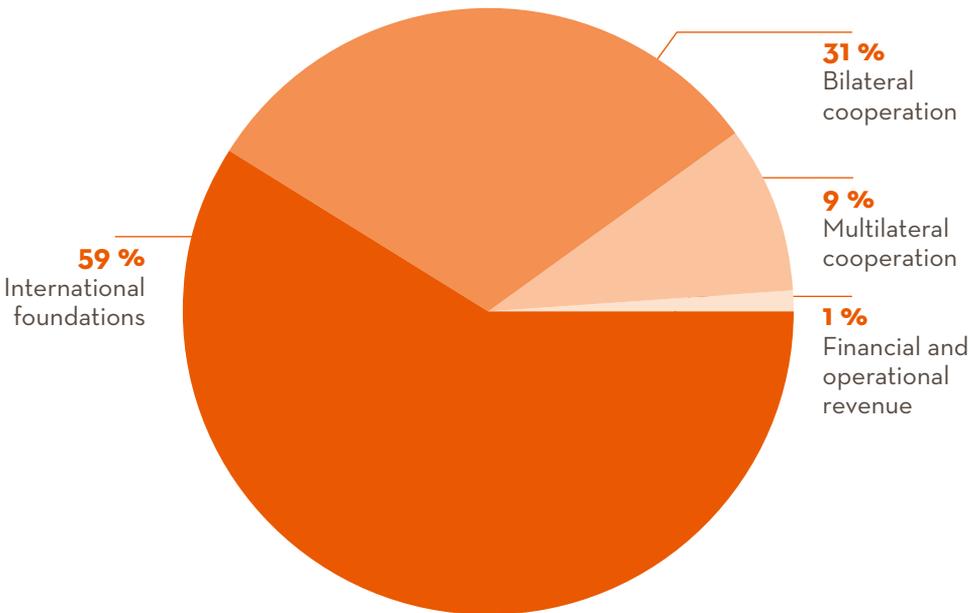
Aurélie Rosado
Intern in Advocacy and
Communication

TO CONTACT US: INFO@EQUIPOP.ORG

* In alphabetical order

The Budget for Équilibres & Populations

In 2015, 86% of our resources were devoted to our social missions. Despite a decrease in the level of financing received at the start of the year, Équilibres & Populations succeeded in tapping into new resources during the third and fourth quarters to develop its perimeter of operation in West Africa



Resources of Équilibres & Populations in 2015

RESOURCES

The financial resources of Équilibres & Populations in 2015 were 1,081,581 euros, representing a decrease of 26% compared to 2014 (1,470,116 euros). This decrease is mainly explained by a period of 8 months between the end of the first phase of the "Health & Rights Alliance" project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the launch of the second phase of the project relying on a joint funding effort between that same foundation and the French Development Agency (AFD). This second phase, set to last 30 months, involves 15 partner associations in West Africa.

The funding for the association originates as follows: 59% of it comes from private funds donated by international foundations, essentially American ones, including the Hewlett Foundation, a historical partner of Équilibres & Populations. The institutionally-sourced financing this year has reached 40%: 31% is from bilateral cooperation institutions (French Development Agency, Institute of Research for Development) and 9% is from multi-lateral cooperation institutions (UN agencies).

Équilibres & Populations continues to strengthen and develop new technical and financial partnerships as well as focusing on collaborative efforts, which are indispensable to the success of its projects.

EXPENSES

The fall in the level of expenditures is related to the difference between the first and second phases of the "Health and Rights Alliance" project, where the spending volume will be moved forward, largely to the year 2016, and which will take into account the involvement of 5 new associations within the Alliance. During this transition period, our support for organizations throughout African civil society has been maintained through an important effort toward mobilizing resources for the latter, towards finding new sponsors (such as Amplify Change), as well as through the continuation of the mobilization of actions against female genital mutilation and early marriage in Mali, but also through the development of new partnerships in the sub-region (UNFPA, Palladium, Pathfinder).

The human resources budget has slightly decreased since 2014. Nevertheless, a slight increase at the end of the year is to be noted, subsequent to the start of the second phase of the "Health and Rights Alliance" project.

The fiscal year's financial results showed a surplus of 35,736 euros. This surplus allows us to increase the association's reserves. The creation of a reserve fund is a medium-term objective intended to strengthen our capacity to respond to innovative projects by having the investment capacity to professionalize the support functions of the structure and the ability to deal with project financing contingencies while maintaining in-house expertise.

Équilibres & Populations prepares annual accounts audited by Mazars SPCC, its auditor. The 2015 annual accounts as well as the auditors' reports are available in their entirety on www.equipop.org.

INTERVIEW

Mai Tran, new member hired at the office of Équilibres & Populations

Mai Tran is a member of the global corporate communications team at Sanofi. She joined the office of Equipop in 2015.



What motivated you to join the office of Equipop?

All my life, it has been important to me to devote my time to worthwhile causes and which help move things forward. I like to create associations and lead activities. I also like to support ideas and commitments. Marie-Claude Tesson was my first employer, at the creation of Quotidien du Pharmacien. Like many, her charisma, conviction, and her sense of success have really influenced my life. When she created Équilibres & Populations, I did not understand this initiative right away...

Life then taught me to understand the importance of education and the place of women in certain regions of the world. Having worked for the program For Women in Science and having lived many years in Asia, I know that many solutions come from the education of women and the ending of their suffering.

Upon the death of Marie-Claude, Alain Marié, with whom I shared an office for a long time, told me he would like for Équilibres & Populations to continue. Having always admired Marie-Claude and Alain, I wanted to help them by becoming a member of Equipop's bureau in 2015.

Équilibres & Populations is working to improve the living conditions and the status of women: it is a cause that must be supported. It's a serious and recognized association, and it's why I am proud to be involved in the office in order to support the operational teams, even if I am not devoting enough time to the association.

What does your actual involvement in the bureau look like?

Concretely, we validate the overall orientations taken by the direction of the association, by meeting regularly. In addition to the bureau meetings, working groups have been created to support the initiatives and in-depth work, bringing together the members and employees of the office. Personally, I don't find it interesting for the bureau to be solely a control center. These working groups are an example of what an involved bureau can bring to help the association through active participation.

Can you tell us about an Equipop working group?

In 2015, Équilibres & Populations initiated a research study with some major individual donors. A working group was then formed around this initiative, of which I am a member. We brought together the bureau members, salaried employees, and Equipop members in order to work together to bring the work to life and support the operations of the association. I am delighted to be involved in this work. And 2015 was just the beginning! Beyond fundraising, we are moved to think about what is special about the association, its sustainability, and its development; why should a donor be interested in Équilibres & Populations and what would be his or her motivation to support the association?

Acknowledgments

To implement its mission, Équilibres & Populations relies on many people and organizations who share its convictions and support its operations. Members and volunteers who support the associations, financial partners, and donors, without whose support the project could not be implemented, NGO counterparts with whom we have forged solid and ongoing relationships, experts and civil

servants with whom we co-construct policies and programs, journalists and web surfers who relay our information and messages.... we would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you warmly for the confidence you have placed in us. This report has the objective of demonstrating to you the impact of the work we have done together.

We would like to thank in particular:



Follow current events at Équilibres & Populations daily



On our Internet site

equipop.org

To be informed and take action.



On Twitter

@Equipop_Ong

To follow our current events and news in our sector in real time.



Via our newsletter

To regularly receive a summary of the important moments that highlight our current events.



On Facebook

*facebook.com/Équilibres.
Populations*

To discover exclusive content and share with our community.



On Instagram

@Equipop_Ong

To discover Equipop's news in images.

Credits

The activity report
is also available online:
www.equipop.org

Conception**Coordination:**

Aurélie Gal-Régniez

Editor in chief:

Marguerite Bannwarth

Editorial board: Aurélie Hamelin-

Desrumaux, Aurélie Gal-Régniez,

Sanije Hoxha, Nathalie Perrotin,

Dominiq Pobel, Nicolas Rainaud,

Brigitte Syan, Claire Veyriras

Editorial supervision:

Estelle Breton, Juliette Manaud,

Elise Fouillet, Nathalie Perrotin

et Nicolas Rainaud

Design: Jean-Luc Gehres

www.welcomedesign.fr

Photos:

UN PhotoCia Pak, Equipop,

Imageo, © 2014 by Jonathan

Torgovnik/Reportage by Getty

Image, Mathieu Delmestre,

UNPhoto_EvanSchneider,

WHO

Printing:

Simon Graphic, Ornans

This document is printed
on certified paper.



Équilibres & Populations

www.equipop.org
info@equipop.org

Headquarters

22 rue du Sergent Bauchat
75012 Paris - France
Tel: +33 (0)1 74 01 71 24
Fax: +33 (0)1 74 01 71 25

West Africa Office

09 BP 1660 Ouagadougou 09
Burkina Faso
Tel / Fax: + 226 25 36 73 73