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2019

# Movement

**Definition:** a campaign undertaken by a group of people working together for political, social and/or attitudinal change.  
(Larousse French Dictionary)

**Synonyms:** making waves, changing the way things are, creating relationships, building bridges.

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# Editorial

This fall, we celebrated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD), which was held in Cairo. That conference, having brought together a great variety of interests, may be understood in different ways. At Equipop, we especially remember the way feminist movements influenced the ICPD Programme of Action, emphasizing gender equality and raising questions about sex-based discrimination and its transmission mechanisms. The ability of individuals to “make decisions without discrimination, coercion or violence” constituted a governing principle of that programme. Reproductive health and rights were presented and broadly accepted; these rights included access to contraception and the prevention of sexual and reproductive ill-health and death. This progress, consolidated the following year in Beijing during the Fourth World Conference on Women, set the foundation for international recognition of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

As an organization born out of this history, promoting these rights constitutes one of Equipop’s core missions. After 25 years, what have we learned from our extensive fight? We must admit that the principles recognized in Cairo and Beijing are fragile and subject to complex power relations, religious conservatism, and ultra-liberal dogmas – compounding forces that jeopardize sexual and reproductive rights. While many individuals have seen their personal situation improve, huge challenges remain: sexist and sexual violence persists, many women and men do not receive reliable information or quality healthcare, adolescent women die because they cannot access safe abortion services, and child or forced marriage remains a reality for many girls and women.

Unfortunately, the solutions proposed for these challenges often stem from compartmentalized thinking that does not consider gender or include constituents’ voices: women’s and young people’s participation usually seems restricted to ritual incantations. That is why we are – more than ever – driven by two convictions: (1) a feminist approach must run through all policies and programmes, and (2) movements can power our ability to influence the path a society chooses to follow. In the past few months, these convictions have led us to work on putting women’s rights and feminist approaches on the 2019 Group of Seven (G7) agenda, which France chairs; our convictions have also led us to strengthen our partnerships with young feminists in West Africa. We believe the time is now to explore this feminist path with our partners and allies, no matter what position they hold in society – citizens, activists, politicians, researchers, businesspeople, healthcare professionals, journalists, or others. In this way, we can re-energize our efforts and invent alternatives at a critical time. By complementing and uniting our strengths, we can make a difference. Equipop is determined to do so, and we hope you are, too.

**Aurélie Gal-Régniez,**  
*Chief Executive*

**Alain Marié,**  
*Chairman of the Board of Directors*



# 2018 Highlights



## Sparkling change

- **Encouraging more democratic governance:**

Equipop, in partnership with the Siggil Jigéen Network, RAES (Réseau Africain d'Éducation pour la Santé, or African Health Education Network) and ONG 3D, expanded operations through a project called “Bruit de Tambours” (Drumbeats), a community-focused public-relations campaign that promotes women's and youths' political involvement and engagement in **Senegal**.

- **Promoting comprehensive sexuality**

**education:** Equipop works with its partners, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in order to make sexuality education acceptable and available in **West African** schools and communities. Equipop also supported civil society organizations (CSOs) working in seven countries in order to increase public awareness of and official support for comprehensive sexuality education classes and policies.

## Mobilizing

- **Amplifying the voice of young feminists:**

Equipop created strategic partnerships with young feminists in **West Africa**, indispensable allies in the fight to defend and promote women's rights at the international level, particularly during political meetings such as the G7.

- **Promoting a feminist approach in public**

**policy:** In advance of the G7 Summit that took place in **France** in 2019, Equipop intensified its advocacy for gender equality within public-policy design. Equipop also helped bring feminists together through “Women 7” (W7), a worldwide movement of activists.

## Empowering

- **Strengthening the social and political impact**

**of civil society:** Equipop offers technical and financial assistance to local civil society organizations that share its mission. It developed two new funding mechanisms that are flexible and tailored to its partners' needs: the Innovation Fund and the Organizational Development Fund.

# 01

## Sparking change

Partnering with local stakeholders, Equipop sparks social change dynamics at the grassroots level.

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# 02

## Mobilizing

Equipop mobilizes government officials and other decisionmakers to create institutions, policies, and laws that build human capital and empower women and girls

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## Empowering

Equipop helps its development partners by strengthening their capacities.

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## Learn more about us

In 1993, just prior to the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, a team of doctors and journalists created Equipop to empower women and improve their lives, thereby fostering equitable and sustainable development.

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# Ending female genital mutilation and child marriage in France: communities on the frontline

## *Photographic exhibition*

Since 2006, Equipop has carried out projects in order to end female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage, especially in Africa. Equipop's operations in Kayes Region, Mali, a center of emigration toward France, revealed the positive and negative impacts that migrants have on village life. **Therefore, since 2013, Equipop has pursued strategies that build bridges between African and European communities and, more specifically, focus on helping the diaspora abandon FGM and child-marriage practices.**

In order to end FGM in a lasting way, actions must be coordinated between communities in France and in West Africa, and between professionals and workers in various sectors of activity. Migrants living in France remain full members of their original communities; their social and economic power makes them influential. Other community members seek their crucial advice when making decisions. Migrants involved in the effort to end FGM serve as positive relays; at the very least, they can help neutralize negative influences that hinder change.

Equipop-trained change agents lead awareness-raising efforts within the diaspora, discussing the positive changes occurring in migrants' region of origin and providing information about the harms caused by FGM and the legal dangers of practicing it in France. Such efforts also gradually deconstruct ideas at the origin of violence against women, since female excision is part of the continuum of violence directed toward women in all societies.

Equipop is presently working with eight change agents and six trainers; all were born in Mali, Senegal, Guinea, Mauritania or Egypt. After completing training and mentoring sessions with experienced change agents, the newly-minted change agents produce and animate workshops to raise awareness among both newly-arrived and long-established immigrants in France. The change agents – all of whom come from communities prone to practicing FGM – are well-placed to spread messages about prevention; they can easily access such communities, exploit firsthand knowledge of essential social and cultural codes, and speak the same languages. Between 2016 and 2018, Equipop-trained change agents reached nearly 2000 people through workshops and outreach efforts.

This exhibition showcases these change agents.

***“FGM is a taboo subject. You have to show a great deal of sensitivity and learn to overcome resistance.”***

**Dieynaba**

Change agent since 2016







# 01

## Sparking change

Partnering with local stakeholders,  
Equipop sparks social change  
dynamics at the grassroots level.







## **Drumbeats: for a pro-woman, pro-youth participative and inclusive democracy**

In 2018, Equipop expanded its operations to promote women's and young people's civic and political participation through a project called "Bruits de Tambours" (Drumbeats).

In West Africa, 45% of the population is under age 15.<sup>1</sup> Women represent 51%-52% of the population. Relative to their share of the population, women and youth are under-represented in decision-making institutions and community-governing bodies. Public life is carried out with little or no input from women or young people; consequently their problems and specific realities are not taken into account. Despite some progress, this situation is caused in part by unequal or difficult access to financial and other resources, which in turn means that women's and young people's voices are not heard, even though they play a primordial role in their families' social and economic life.

“ The authorities do not take our needs as women into account! ”

#### Young woman

speaking during a women's group meeting,  
Saint Louis, Senegal

Following Senegal, which instituted a gender-parity law in 2010, many countries now use quota systems in order to improve women's political representation. However, the physical presence of women in government does not always mean that they actively and effectively participate in governance. To the detriment of their professional and political engagement, women remain subject to cultural biases and still bear great responsibility for their family and household. Patriarchal norms, sex discrimination in the public sphere, and especially violence toward women deprive them of liberty and safe access to public spaces; these factors also limit women's participation in politics. Sometimes men even co-opt women, choosing those they know full well will not bother them. Such actions discredit women and give fuel to the detractors of gender parity who argue that women lack the skills needed to govern.

Today, we need all societies to understand that women can and should occupy seats in decision-making bodies and that women can and should empower themselves. Only gender quotas and parity will permit women to hold sway in government, enable young women to envisage careers as politicians and leaders, and allow young men and women to accept the fact that a woman's place is also outside of the home.



“ If young people leave politics to old people, then older people will decide for them and make decisions that benefit old people! ”

#### A young man from Saint Louis, Senegal

Unlike gender parity, no law encourages youth participation in government. While political parties and community organizations have always had separate youth arms, such groups have primarily served to distance young people from decision-making bodies.

1. World Population Dashboard, UNFPA :  
[www.unfpa.org/data/world-population-dashboard](http://www.unfpa.org/data/world-population-dashboard)



In Senegal, young people, relegated to youth issues, face defiance from their elders.

Often there are two sides to the story: older people think that the young are not interested in politics and governance, while young people feel alienated and not called to participate. They prefer to work within the community on economic and social problems, finding success outside formal governance bodies.

Youth often create their own modes of communicating with and appealing to institutions, notably through art, culture, and social networks. Sometimes they follow avoidance strategies, discouraging efforts to create a climate of mutual consideration with the authorities. In other cases, youth often show a genuine willingness to get involved, but are constantly rebuffed because of their inexperience.

Like women, young people need to realize that they count and have power; they need to gear up in order to exercise their right to speak. Can we move toward effective gender and generational parity? That is Equipop's aim with Drumbeats!

## DRUMBEATS

RAES, in partnership with Equipop, ONG 3D, and the Siggil Jigéen Network, leads the Drumbeats Project, a social and community-outreach campaign. Designed to inspire stronger, more democratic governance in Senegal and West Africa, it promotes the notion that a participative and inclusive democracy can and should include women and youth. The project revolves around five components: a TV series, a radio show and related content to prompt social mobilization, community action to put more-inclusive governance modes into practice, and a monitoring and evaluation programme to share lessons learned.

### • How does Equipop take action?

Equipop supports local civil society organizations (CSOs) in mapmaking, incubating and executing social-mobilization actions, and capitalizing on change-oriented behavior that can be duplicated across the region.

### • Who are the beneficiaries?

Civil society organizations, the women and young people of Saint Louis (Senegal), and ultimately the entire region.

### • What is the rationale?

Making women's and young people's voices heard and having their needs and constraints taken into account will lead to enacting more inclusive governance modes that respect human rights; it will also ensure that the region's women and youth take their rightful place in institutional and community decision-making bodies.

### *How this relates to sexual and reproductive health and rights*

Working toward higher representation of women and young people in decision-making bodies improves consideration of their needs and problems, particularly their sexual and reproductive health and rights. These decision-making bodies may not be familiar with human rights and gender equality issues, resulting in policies that do not prioritize sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) for women and men.



## Thiaba Sembene, working so more women and young people participate in political decision-making

Thiaba Sembene is a  
Programme Manager  
for the Siggil Jigéen  
Network, a partner in  
the Drumbeats Project.



*What role does the Siggil Jigéen Network play in the Drumbeats Project?*

The Siggil Jigéen Network is an implementing partner. We are responsible for helping achieve the project's goal: promoting participative and inclusive democracy that benefits women and youth. We do this by drumming up questions and debate about individual behaviors and social norms, and by enabling our target groups to take direct political action. In this effort, I help coordinate these activities at our headquarters while another colleague works in the field in order to carry out activities in the community. Practically speaking, the Siggil Jigéen Network, in partnership with Equipop and ONG 3D, conduct the groundwork, which ranges from making maps that show the current participation of youth and women in Saint Louis, to teaching our target groups about the project's topics, and then assisting the groups with collective social-mobilization activities.

*What are the main obstacles preventing women's political engagement and civic participation?*

They are primarily cultural and informational. First, both prejudice and the perception of a woman's role, notably that she must bear the bulk of family responsibilities, curb women's ability to participate in civic matters. Second, women lack information about civic participation, rights, and governance; they also lack money and solidarity networks. Despite a gender-parity law enacted in 2010, Senegalese women remain under-represented in local governing bodies, such as neighborhood councils, health-development committees, and municipal boards or offices.

*What does the future look like for Drumbeats in Senegal and the region?*

The future looks promising for Drumbeats because the topic of governance draws attention from all segments of society – government officials, union organizers and members, civil society, and others. In addition, our chosen target – young people and women – count for more than half of the population, but don't fully participate in managing the city or their neighborhoods. The Drumbeats Project combines research, information, public relations, community outreach, and technical and financial assistance so that women and youth can fully participate in managing public resources. Its innovative and integrated approach can also be applied to social mobilization efforts in other localities and at other scales, even for other topics.



## Comprehensive sexuality education, a need and a right for all young people

**HAVING ACCESS TO RELIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS (SRHR) IS IMPORTANT EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD**

In some parts of the world, two out of three girls report having no idea what happened to them when they had their first period. Pregnancy and childbirth-related complications are the second leading cause of death among girls aged 15 to 19, and the leading cause in West and Central Africa. Only 34% of young people know about HIV and how it is transmitted. In France, 20% of youths aged 15 to 24 believed that they did not know enough about HIV and AIDS in 2018, a 24% increase

since 2007. As they move from childhood to adulthood, too many young people receive confusing and contradictory information about sex and sexuality. They are increasingly eager for reliable information: comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) meets this demand. It enables them to make informed decisions about their relationships, emotional lives, and their sexuality; it also helps them navigate a world where gender-based violence (including sexual violence), gender inequality, unintended and/or early pregnancy, and HIV and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) pose serious risks to their health and well-being.

## COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION, FOR HIGH IMPACT

In school and non-school settings, CSE is a way of teaching about sexuality and interpersonal relationships that is age-appropriate, culturally relevant, and gender-sensitive. Based on scientifically accurate information, it refrains from value judgments. Significant evidence proves that CSE contributes to positive impacts:

- ▶ Limiting false information and increase knowledge about sexual and reproductive health
- ▶ Promoting responsible sexuality, such as reducing the frequency of unprotected sex and postponing first sexual intercourse
- ▶ Increasing the use of contraceptives and means of HIV and STD prevention
- ▶ Strengthening positive values and attitudes about sexual and reproductive health
- ▶ Developing young people's ability to make informed decisions and comply with constraints
- ▶ Promoting communication about sexual and reproductive health between adults and young people

## PROMOTING AND PROVIDING COMPREHENSIVE SEXUALITY EDUCATION, A DUTY AROUND THE WORLD

An increasing number of organizations and individuals understand the importance of providing children and youth with accurate, high-quality SRHR information and the kind of knowledge that goes beyond biological and medical information; such knowledge enables young people to make informed personal choices that also show respect for their partner. In addition, promoting CSE helps achieve three of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): Goal 3 for health and well-being, Goal 4 for quality education, and Goal 5 for equality between men and women. However, CSE faces much resistance because of taboos and misunderstandings. It also most certainly faces resistance for its ability to transform societies; it can make them more egalitarian and inclusive, with less discrimination towards women, girls, and LGBTQIA+<sup>2</sup>

people. Equipop promotes CSE as a central goal in many of its actions, working with partners to create the conditions for CSE to be accepted and implemented, particularly in West and Central Africa, where 64% of the population is less than 24 years old, 43% of girls are married before age 18, and the contraceptive prevalence rate for young women aged 15 to 24 is less than 15%.

The work takes place at three levels:

### 1. Regional mobilization:

Equipop and its partners have mobilized for a regional CSE advocacy campaign aimed at persuading government ministries in West Africa to commit to providing CSE and sexual and reproductive health services tailored for young people. Equipop will help steer this multi-actor campaign, one led by UNESCO and the United Nations Population Fund (UNPFA). It will also work with Alliance Droits et Santé and the West African Feminist Youth Network to produce an advocacy and public-outreach campaign as part of the Change Lab Project (2018-2021).

### 2. Support for local advocacy actions:

In Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, Equipop has joined other CSOs as a partner in the multi-year Educasso Project (2018-2020). This advocacy project aims to use social communication tools to push for better CSE inclusion in school curricula and public policy.

### 3. Institutional support:

As part of its partnership with the UNPFA, Equipop provides technical support to Muskoka Initiative-funded UN agencies and their partners in order to help, for example, mobilize financing for Guinea's CSE roadmap.

2. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, ally, pansexual.

“ We are convinced that if we do not respond to young people’s demands for comprehensive, high-quality sexuality education, we will not achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that we set for 2030, nor will we deliver on our promise to leave no one behind. ”

**Audrey Azoulay**  
Director-General of UNESCO

• **How does Equipop take action?**

Equipop promotes CSE according to UNESCO’s revised guidance (see box) and creates the conditions for its implementation and acceptability. Equipop also supports those who assist with CSE implementation and dissemination: health and education ministries, technical and financial partners, teachers, and CSOs.

• **Who are the beneficiaries?**

Children, young people, tomorrow’s adults.

• **What is the rationale?**

Rights-based and gender-sensitive comprehensive sexuality education has strong, positive impacts, improving the well-being and SRHR of all, especially young people. It also contributes to the SDGs and advances gender equality by reducing gender- and sexual-orientation-based stereotypes and discrimination.

**International guidance for sexuality education**

UNESCO’s revised guidance presents sexuality in a positive way. It reaffirms that sexuality education has a place in the human-rights and gender-equality framework, and it recognizes that sexuality education helps achieve the SDGs. The guidance, intended for all professionals involved in the design, implementation, and evaluation of sex-education programs in schools and other settings, informs education and education ministries, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs); youth social workers, and other stakeholders working in quality control for education, sexual and reproductive health, adolescent health, and gender equality.

Original title: ‘*International technical guidance on sexuality education*.’ Published in 2018 by UNESCO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UN Women, WHO and the UNAIDS Secretariat. The document is available at the following address: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000260770>



## Xavier Hospital, committed to high-quality comprehensive sexuality education in West and Central Africa

Xavier Hospital is UNESCO's Regional Health Education Adviser in West and Central Africa.



*From UNESCO's perspective, what are the main challenges for comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) in West Africa?*

Let me begin by commending the efforts of countries that are actively strengthening their CSE programs. Next, we must recognize that many children and youth in the region do not yet have access to good-quality CSE, despite studies highlighting its benefits. There are several reasons for this, including resistance from some parents, teachers or decision-makers; such resistance is usually caused by misunderstandings about the nature, purpose, and effects of CSE. In addition, the education sector has gaps in analysis and planning, teaching and learning, and in cross-curriculum coordination. National governments need appropriate strategies for integrating CSE into education plans; governments must also create solutions for gender-based violence in schools. Teachers need better training. Finally, in order to ensure young people's access to appropriate services, collaboration between education and health officials, and other professionals, needs to improve.

*UNESCO and UNFPA are spurring a movement for CSE in West and Central Africa: can you tell us about that campaign?*

We meet an increasing number of national leaders who recognize how CSE can foster healthy citizens who are educated and able to contribute to the economic and social well-being of their society. These leaders need a supportive policy environment in order to expand good-quality CSE programs. For this reason UNESCO and UNFPA have begun

advocacy efforts to persuade education and health ministers to commit to providing CSE and SRHR in West and Central Africa. Representatives from several regional organizations have already met; they formed a technical working group to drive the engagement process. They represent UN agencies, regional economic communities, youth networks, bilateral donors and, of course, CSOs such as Equipop.

*In your opinion, what place do Equipop and other civil society organizations have in this regional dynamic?*

A large number of actors must be mobilized; organizations such as Equipop play a very important role in the region's engagement process. These organizations' knowledge of the field and local actors puts them in a good position to identify strategic partners, plus they can guide and conduct advocacy activities. They can also ensure that the voice of the civil society is truly heard during consultations and that important issues are not forgotten. At the national level, organizations such as Equipop can strengthen coordination among partners – a very important element for effective advocacy and equally important for conducting coherent CSE programs that operate under the auspices of national governments.



02

## Mobilizing

Equipop mobilizes government officials and other decision-makers to create institutions, policies, and laws that build human capital and empower women and girls.





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## **Women 7 2019: a feminist advocacy movement**

Seizing the opportunity presented by France's G7 presidency, Equipop stepped up its efforts to persuade government officials to put gender equality at the heart of public policies. The organization helped bring together several feminist movements through "Women 7" (W7), a network of feminist activists from France, other G7 countries, and West Africa. The W7 Summit was the highlight of this mobilization: 400 participants from around the world joined forces in Paris on May 9, 2019.



France chaired the G7 from 1 January to 31 December 2019. Equipop saw this as an opportunity for advocacy accompanied by a public outreach and communication campaign. At the same time, Equipop pursued a special goal: helping to set-up a network for feminist activists who had no way of working together.

## **ADVOCACY GOALS: THE G7 AND BEYOND**

During the summer of 2018, Equipop planned to make the upcoming French G7 presidency prioritize gender equality. In collaboration with CARE France, Equipop mobilized in France, beginning with a morning of discussion at the French National Assembly in October. Equipop brought legislators together with internationally-oriented development NGOs and feminist groups working in France. In turn, the following January, France announced that the 2019 G7 Summit would be dedicated to fighting inequalities, especially gender inequality. Having achieved their first goal, Equipop and CARE France went to work on the next one: leading a consistent effort so that high-minded G7 speeches would lead to actual commitments. In preparation for the summit that would take place with heads of state in Biarritz in August 2019, Equipop actively contributed to discussions with officials at so-called ministerial meetings, covering each of the topics to be addressed by the G7 – health, development, education, foreign affairs, and others.

These efforts, however, did not stop with the G7 Summit. Equipop and other organizations saw the 2019 French-chaired G7 Summit as a longer-term opportunity to foster feminist public policies. In addition, three other international conferences contributed to the dynamic: the Women Deliver Global Conference in Vancouver in June 2019, the Global Fund's Sixth Replenishment Conference in Lyon in October, and the Nairobi Summit in November 2019. The latter celebrated the 25th anniversary of the International Conference for Population and Development, which took place just before Equipop was created.

## **A FEMINIST PUBLIC OUTREACH CAMPAIGN**

In the spring of 2019, a Women 7 (W7) public outreach campaign was launched, in French and English, through the website [www.feministscount.org](http://www.feministscount.org) and social networks. This initiative, designed to raise awareness of gender-equality issues, made advocacy messages more visible during key moments of the 2019 G7 decision-making process. Every W7 member-organization conducted a public-relations campaign based on these messages in order to show the diversity of actions carried out by feminist movements in France and around the world.

This diversity, although a net positive in absolute terms, often dilutes the strength of messaging directed at public officials. The W7 campaign showed that, despite their diversity, the W7 members could rally around two demands: increased funding for women's groups, and full and effective participation of women and girls in decision-making bodies.

## **WEST AFRICA AT THE NEGOTIATING TABLE**

Throughout the year, Equipop worked to facilitate the participation of young West African feminist activists in all these meetings and communications campaigns. The first step was a speech given by Hadja Idrissa Bah, the founder and president of the Young Girl Leaders Club of Guinea, in front of the G7 "Sherpas"<sup>3</sup> in Lyon in February 2019.

**3.** The G7 Sherpas are the personal representatives of the heads of state and of government of the world's seven most industrially advanced countries.

“ In Guinea and throughout French-speaking West Africa, young girl feminists like me, victims of all this violence, are raising their voices. We are on the frontlines of the fight for young girls’ rights; we are the most affected. But our ambition is too great to fight alone. It’s not just about us, it’s about you and the society we want to live in. ”

**Hadja Idrissa Bah**

addressing the G7 Sherpas in Lyon, February 5, 2019

• **How does Equipop take action?**

Equipop is spurring feminist groups to join together in advocacy efforts aimed at the G7 and beyond.

• **Who are the beneficiaries?**

Women and girls who are currently excluded from decision-making processes, and societies that are unequal.

• **What is the rationale?**

There is a need to strengthen coordination between feminist activists around the world, and particularly in West Africa.

## THE SUCCESSFUL W7 SUMMIT IN PARIS

The Women 7 Summit was the highlight of these mobilizations. Held at UNESCO in Paris on May 9, 2019, the event brought together more than 400 feminist civil-society representatives from the G7 and developing countries. The day’s presentations highlighted priority challenges that must be addressed and resulted in significant media coverage. Most importantly, the day ended with two important meetings: one with the G7 Gender Equality Advisory Council, composed of 35 members, including three Nobel Peace Prize laureates, and the other with the G7 Gender Equality Ministers; they received W7’s official recommendations for a truly feminist G7 from about 15 feminists from 12 countries. The work will continue beyond 2019!

## INTERVIEW

# Hadja Idrissa Bah, ambassador to the G7 for young West African feminists

Hadja Idrissa Bah is the president of the Young Girl Leaders Club of Guinea and a member of the West African Young Feminists Network.



*Why did it make sense to get involved in the G7 this year?*

We, young feminists, are the subject of this year's G7, as its stated priority is equality between women and men. There are feminist groups all over the world and giving us the floor during the G7 is very important. It is essential to listen to us, the people affected; we know the issues and difficulties that we face and we are best placed to deliver the messages that decision-makers must hear. We were very happy to be among these great personalities from all over the world; we were delighted to speak on behalf of young feminists in West Africa, and we were especially pleased to convey our network's messages. We presented our members' priorities to G7 officials at the Women 7 Summit, telling them how to help young feminists, how to give us more consideration so that we can say what is wrong and suggest solutions.

*What does the Women 7 Movement facilitate or make possible for feminists like yourself?*

The W7 allows us to introduce ourselves and make contacts with people working in the same field all over the world. In this way, feminist groups everywhere know that, yes, we are carrying on the fight in West Africa. They know that there are some very committed young feminists who want to put an end to violence against women and that it is absolutely necessary to listen to them. This movement also helps amplify the voice of young feminists. At the W7 Summit, our speeches were cheered because we spoke from our hearts.

We talked about our experiences and our determination to take action. Let's act; everyone wants to conjugate the same verb. We no longer want talk – we want action.

*What messages do West African feminists want to convey?*

At the G7, we want to convey two important messages. The first is: give the floor to us, listen to us, and consider the recommendations made by young feminists from Francophone West Africa. The second message is: please provide funding for feminist groups like ours. We fight every day. We confront difficulties, lack resources, work for free, and so on. Everyone should think of the young feminists in West Africa. Today, we need financial and technical support so that this fight can be global.



## **Amplifying the voice of feminist movements in West Africa**

Equipop believes that fair and sustainable development for all can only be achieved through the fight for women's rights. For example, it saw an obvious need for collaboration with West Africa's feminist activists, so Equipop began a fruitful partnership in 2018 with representatives from West African women's movements.



YOUNG WEST AFRICAN FEMINISTS:  
KEY ACTORS

Every day in West Africa, feminist activists, groups, and committed movements work in their communities through social networks and national organizations to promote gender equality, fight gender-based violence, defend the right of women and girls to freely dispose of their bodies, and encourage young girls to demand their rights. Collaborating with these committed feminists and supporting them at different levels fits naturally with Equipop's approach, one that supports local initiatives and focuses on women's and young people's civic and political participation.

CREATING DISCUSSION SPACES  
FOR THESE ACTIVISTS

Equipop wanted to bring together several feminist activists from Francophone West Africa because the organization recognizes the importance of strengthening relationships and solidarity between activists who face similar issues even though they live in different places with different capabilities and situations. Therefore, Equipop held a meeting and workshop in Ouagadougou from November 27-30, 2018; it was attended by 28 feminist activists who hailed from Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal.

“ It's an opportunity to meet other feminist women, to learn from their experiences, and, especially, to jointly think about strategies that we can put in place to make our voices heard. ”

Irmine Ayinhouton

During the meeting, these young people shared their experiences and commitments; they also organized into a larger group.

The workshop enabled the activists to agree on the main messages that they would convey at the international level and in their countries. Attendees also participated in an Equipop Lab in order to design innovative and participatory mobilization actions, particularly around the 2019 G7.

The five main demands of young West African feminists

1. We, young feminists, want the power to freely dispose of one's body to be promoted	2. We, young feminists, want the power of women's knowledge to be promoted	3. We, young feminists, want the economic power of women to be promoted via a valorization of women's work and equal pay
4. We, young feminists, want the economic power of women's organizations to be enhanced with sufficient budget allocations in order to promote egalitarian societies	5. We, young feminists, want the political power of women to be promoted	

## INFLUENCING G7 POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES

After the resolutely feminist turn taken by the G7 in Canada, the G7 Summit held in France in 2019 presented an opportunity to make the voices of young women activists heard as they fight for their rights in their countries. Since November 2018, Equipop has helped these feminists carry out the action plan created during a workshop. Their social and political mobilization actions primarily aimed to persuade the representatives of G7 officials about the importance of women's rights. The young feminists also wanted to raise awareness in West African and international communities about the importance of elevating issues related to women's and girls' rights in international negotiations in order to gain more commitments and funding.

## PUTTING THE VOICE OF YOUNG FEMINISTS AT THE HEART OF DECISION MAKING

Including feminist voices in public-policy design and making political commitments at local, regional, and international levels drives political and social transformation. These people's voices, especially those from West Africa, are rarely taken into account and they are seldom invited to speak, even when the decisions made affect them.

“My voice counts and the voice of my sisters counts. Listen to us, we have something to say about policies that affect us.”

Néné Fatou Maricou

### • How does Equipop take action?

Equipop supports and assists a group of West African feminist activists in order to make their voices heard on the international scene and especially by G7 decision-makers.

### • Who are the beneficiaries?

A network of 28 West African feminist groups that aims to expand.

### • What is the rationale?

The ultimate goal is to place West Africa's young women, and more specifically its feminist activists, at the heart of decision-making, especially when decisions affect them directly.

One of Equipop's priorities centers on restoring the ability of West Africa's young feminists to speak about their experiences, needs, and demands during decision-making meetings and negotiations. During 2019, members of this group were able to speak at high-level events many times, such as during the Women 7 Summit in Paris in May 2019. They also met with key political figures; for instance, one member met with the G7 Sherpas in February. At each meeting, the young feminists conveyed messages for the group and spoke with one voice.

## INTERVIEW

# Cornélia Glèlè, feminist activist from Benin

Cornélia Glèlè is a member of the Young West African Feminist Network, the West African Young Women Leaders Network, and the founder of EcranBenin.



### *Can you tell us about the West African Young Feminists Network?*

The West African Young Feminists Network is a melting pot of young people from West African countries who are committed to women's rights. We met for the first time in November 2018 in Ouagadougou, thanks to Equipop. We decided to work together in order to improve the living conditions of women in our West African community; we also wanted to have our voices heard in the run-up to, during, and after the France-chaired 2019 G7 Summit. In order to achieve that, we set up four projects: a vlog [video blog], happenings, a Tweetathon, and a video of influencers.

### *How can this regional network articulate with your engagement at the national level?*

Our regional engagement allows us to assess where other countries stand in terms of women's rights; it also lets us carry out activities in our respective countries. For example, happenings will take place in several countries, including Benin (my country). They will feature slam poetry performances that aim to denounce the various forms of violence that women suffer. It is a regional project that directly affects each member country in our melting pot.

### *What are your main battles?*

Within the West African Young Feminists Network we are fighting for five main things. We want every woman to have the right to dispose of her body as she sees fit, including deciding when and how many children to have.

We want girls, wherever they live, to have access to good-quality education in a secure environment. We want the "equal pay for equal work" rule to be a reality, and we want work done by women to be remunerated at its fair value. We want the share of national budgets allocated to women to be reviewed. Finally, we want women to gain access to decision-making positions. Women know women's problems better than men do. We cannot continue letting men decide whether or not we have the right to have children or to work outside the home. We want to decide for ourselves and let these gentlemen who have always done the job take a rest because they have not managed to change much.

### *What does it mean for you to be a feminist in West Africa?*

Here, people unfortunately do not understand that a feminist is a person who wants the world to be a fairer place. As a feminist, I have to accept that I am at odds with the whole misogynist population. I am not ashamed of this; I just take it on myself. As much as men, women need to be fulfilled and not live for others or in a culture that does not allow them to advance – a culture that, for example, accepts excision or forced marriage. In fact, because all these inequalities must be corrected, we West African feminists have a legitimate reason to exist.

03

## Empowering

Equipop empowers  
its development partners  
by strengthening their  
intervention capacities.





## PROJECT

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*Change Lab: Building CSO capacity for more effective advocacy for Family Planning in West Africa*

## CALL FOR PROJECTS

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**Selection and financing of Priority Improvement Projects (PIP)**

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***Organizational Development Fund (ODF)***

## **Two new funds strengthen civil society's social and political impacts in West Africa**

Equipop believes in its civil society partners' collective power to accelerate social and political change in West Africa, so it recently developed two new flexible and innovative financing mechanisms: the Innovation Fund and the Organizational Development Fund.

These two complementary funds allow local organizations to increase their implementation capacities for relevant and innovative collective actions that can create social and political change; funding also serves to strengthen the organizations, improving the quality of their actions and their national and regional reputations. Equipop closely links the funds' financial support with constant technical support. For example, collective projects financed through the Innovation Fund are incubated in an Equipop Lab. Groups funded by the Organizational Development Fund have gone through a quality-assurance and organizational self-assessment exercise, using SCAN, a quality-assessment tool adapted and developed by Equipop using the European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) benchmark.

## THE INNOVATION FUND

The Innovation Fund gives Equipop partner organizations the flexibility and time needed to create a collective project by exchanging knowledge and having multi-stakeholder discussions. Funding lets organizations design projects and action plans according to a country's specific challenges; it also promotes a sense of ownership and facilitates implementation.

The Innovation Fund currently finances six projects as part of Equipop's Change Lab Project; all six aim to use social and political mobilization to improve young people's sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). With an €840,000 budget, the fund is currently financing collective projects in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger and Senegal for about 18 months, from 2019 to 2021. Each country project is supported by a consortium of national organizations. Following a call for applications in each eligible country, participating consortia were selected by a committee made up the SRHR specialists Alliance Droits et Santé, together with Equipop and members of youth and women's movements.

### Examples of projects financed by the Innovation Fund

- **Benin Project** will use the hashtag #OnDoitAgir (#We Must Act) and make the voices of young people heard through a photographic exhibition that shows the obstacles that prevent youth access to contraceptive information and services.
- **Project Senegal** will help direct domestic funding to sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and youth (SRHR/AY) by mobilizing the private sector through a hackathon.
- **Project Burkina** will set up a system for collecting testimonies from victims and witnesses of violations of the rights of young people to access reproductive health information and/or quality services.
- **Project Niger** will create a real citizens movement to overturn myths about birth and married life.
- **Project Mali** will develop and expand communication and advocacy actions by young people in vulnerable situations, with help from griots.
- **Project Côte d'Ivoire** will use video to highlight young people's realities so that society, policymakers, and healthcare workers become aware of the lives and needs of young people and understand the urgency of acting appropriately.

*Upstream administrative and financial support for projects via an audit that verifies CSO funding eligibility before the organization provides finalized financial statements.*

*Technical support for CSO consortia that promote sexual, reproductive, youth, and women's rights so they can draft social and political SRHR/AY advocacy projects.*

*Technical support during the project to facilitate monitoring and to capitalize on lessons learned.*

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## THE ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

The Organizational Development Fund (ODF) supports Equipop partner initiatives to structure, professionalize, and continuously improve their organizations. ODF governance is participatory; local CSOs and groups actively help determine which projects receive funding. The first award committee allocated more than €88,000 to 13 priority improvement projects. A second award committee will be organized in 2019.

Several types of projects received funding, including one to design a development plan, another to execute an outreach strategy, and another to support fund-raising efforts. Other funded projects will establish a human-resources management policy, develop an advocacy strategy, capitalize on lessons learned from activities, strengthen monitoring and evaluation systems, and purchase accounting software. All these actions are crucial for properly operating and developing an organization, but many CSOs cannot take on such improvements because they lack specific funding and enough time.

By deviating from the traditional CSO financing schemes used in West Africa, the ODF promotes and build stronger civil society organizations whose voices and actions can accelerate social and political change.

### • How does Equipop take action?

Equipop provides technical and financial assistance to CSOs in West Africa.

### • Who are the beneficiaries?

Members of Alliance Droits et Santé and any other Equipop partner that shares its values and mission.

### • What is the rationale?

By reinforcing civil society that is alive, solid, and capable of carrying out high-quality collective actions, Equipop fuels political and social progress.



## INTERVIEW

# Rolland Agbessi, improving governance of West African civil society

Rolland Agbessi is the Executive Director of Scoutisme Beninois (Beninese Scouts), an Alliance Droits et Santé member.



*How is specific support for organizational development valuable for Scoutisme Beninois?*

We set ourselves the challenge of making our organization one of the best in our region, specifically in terms of good governance and management. In order to achieve this, we realized that we might need to make deep institutional reforms, change our habits, and make other efforts. Beyond our commitment to raising funds and carrying out community projects like we do every day, organizational development, or OD, seemed to be a solution tailored to our need to know our strengths and to see how we could improve other points. Thanks to the OD process that we underwent, in August 2018, the SGS Society used the GSAT 2.0 tool – a comprehensive benchmarking tool that sets quality standards for the worldwide scouting movement – to certify Scoutisme Beninois as one of the best scouting organizations in the world for good governance – the first in Francophone Africa.

*So far, what have you managed to do with this OD support?*

To date, OD has allowed Scoutisme Beninois to complete five priority improvement projects. They, in turn, led us to create a 2016-2019 strategic and operational plan and a communication strategy. We have also been able to acquire accounting software and create an administrative- and financial-management manual.

*How do you see the rest of the process?*

We believe that the challenge centers on helping other Alliance Droits et Santé member organizations and individuals benefit from the OD process and the achievements and other experiences that can be drawn from each organization's commitment to it. Systematically capitalizing on lessons learned and sharing experiences can be a way forward. The future cannot be envisioned without organizational development because, as the wise man says, reaching the top is not the problem – being able to stay at the top is the challenge. Thus, we will meet this challenge with support from the Organizational Development Fund, the upcoming quality-certification process, ongoing assistance from Equipop during new self-assessments, and by executing priority improvement projects, among other efforts.

*How do you like civil society organizations' new role in the governance of the Organizational Development Fund?*

Our Alliance values transparency. Therefore, we welcome the ingenious idea of involving Alliance members – at every level – in allocating ODF funding.



## **Equipop Labs: equipping collective intelligence**

Equipop, convinced of the transformative potential that collective and multidisciplinary action represents, decided in 2017 to extend its range of support for changemakers. It now offers Equipop Labs, a new method of supporting project planning and development within the Equipop Innovation Fund.

## WHAT ARE EQUIPOP LABS?

Equipop Labs are project-incubation spaces that aim to enable CSOs, institutions, and anyone else working for the protection and respect of SRHR to take the time to strategize and plan collective actions.

Created in partnership with Design-Thinking specialists, Equipop Labs follow three main steps, as summarized in the diagram below:



### 1. Pre-Incubation



Context Analysis



Thinking about Synergies and Collective Action



### 2. Incubation Workshop



Agree About the Problem(s) the Project Addresses



Synergistic Creation



### 3. Writing



#### 1. Incubation preparation phase: fine-tuning a common understanding of the context and forces involved

Conducted by Equipop in collaboration with its partners, this contextual analysis takes stock of issues in each area, identifying gaps, possible synergies, and stakeholders whose know-how and positioning will be useful in designing projects.

#### 2. Incubation phase: equipping collective intelligence

In this phase, Equipop uses Design Thinking and brings together various experts during a one-week (on average) workshop in order to create joint actions. The incubation phase covers:

- 1 - the group identifying the key issue that must be acted on,
- 2 - thinking about how this issue can be addressed by the incubated project,
- 3 - prototyping and testing the selected solution, and then refining it in order to improve it.

#### 3. Writing phase

Once the incubation workshop has been completed, the organizations in charge of the future project finish writing a description of it up based on workshop discussions.





“ I would like to acknowledge how much Equipop’s support and collaboration has helped my organization become stronger technically and at the institutional level. Equipop has also helped us with fund-raising and with influencing national, local, and regional policies. We have never before experienced such high-quality assistance. I believe that the successful networking approach promoted by Equipop through Alliance Droits et Santé should be studied, capitalized on, and shared with the rest of the world. ”

**Mody Ndiaye**

Program Director for Jeunesse et Développement (Youth and Development)

### **AN APPROACH THAT REVISITS THE CONCEPT OF PARTNERSHIP**

Equipop has put in place a system that aims to separate project design, which requires time and consultation, from looking for funding because when those two phases are joined, they tend to hinder collective thinking and analysis, the keys to innovation. The key to this system is the Innovation Fund, which provides funding for incubated projects.

Thus, an Equipop Labs project incubation requires setting up the conditions for multiple actors and different types of experts to collaborate right from the beginning – the project-design phase. Equipop invites a variety of partners – government officials, CSO staff, lawmakers, young people, UN-system experts, academics, researchers, and journalists – to share their in-depth knowledge about an area and identify target-audience needs that call for action. Pooling such expertise facilitates the emergence of transformative solutions,

making it possible to take stock of existing initiatives and evaluate what works well and what does not; it also helps produce a project in a facilitating environment. Mobilization that begins with the design phase has another great advantage: it anchors the project in an area, creating new partnerships and ensuring that the stakeholders who will implement the project will take better ownership of it.

### **A CROSS-CUTTING APPROACH**

After two years of experience with Equipop Labs, a wealth of incubated projects covering a large range of subjects has confirmed the value of the method’s cross-cutting nature. Incubated projects in most countries combine supporting activities with youth-leadership development, targeted advocacy actions, and citizen mobilization through the arts and media.

These actions are intended to strengthen and ensure national commitments to respect and implement SRHR for young people. Equipop Labs have been applied to various contexts, from the simplest to the most complex, and to social and political community-mobilization actions and projects. Equipop has conducted about 15 Equipop Labs for projects run by youth groups, CSO consortia, and institutions such as UN agencies.

- **How does Equipop take action?**  
Equipop provides support for project-leader selection, institutional-context studies, inspiring-practices identification, research monitoring and reporting, incubation-workshop production, project formalization, technical implementation, training, project monitoring, and lessons-learned capitalization.
- **Who are the beneficiaries?**  
Groups of changemakers from national and international organizations, civil society, youth and women's groups, and others.
- **What is the rationale?**  
Helping SRHR CSOs and development partners innovate will bolster the rights and health of women and young people.



## INTERVIEW

# Mody Ndiaye, a firm believer in Equipop Labs

Mody Ndiaye is Program Director for Jeunesse et Développement (Youth and Development).



*In what ways was the Equipop Lab in Dakar that incubated the Change Lab Project participatory and adaptable?*

The method used to incubate the Change Lab Project in Senegal was participatory, adaptable, inclusive, democratic, and met all the criteria for mutual accountability. Designed by Equipop and Alliance Droits et Santé members, Equipop Labs aim to foster political, strategic, and structural changes favorable to SRHR on a regional basis. The Labs also work on a national level for each alliance member's country, according to its context, priorities, and specific challenges, all in perfect harmony. The Change Lab Project incubation in Senegal was preceded by an ideation session, where we tried to improve our understanding of the challenges facing reproductive health and family planning (SR/FP) for the well-being of adolescents and youth. All types of actors were involved: state and local officials, businesspeople, CSOs, community and opinion leaders, the otherwise excluded, and so on. Strengthening civil society's ability to raise domestic funding for SR/FP emerged as a priority. A call for a show of interest and a transparent mechanism were put in place in order to select one consortium of CSOs per country. The Lab mobilized everyone toward developing a country-specific project. This method, praised by almost all participants, is suitable because it promotes multiple forms of expression; it also ensures accountability between Equipop, Alliance Droits et Santé members, and stakeholders. Such an approach should serve as an inspiration to other consortia or networks that have the same challenges.

*What is your best memory from the Equipop Labs?*

My best memory centers on the prototyping and storyboarding phase, when we were designing the project using a change-oriented approach. I felt like I was in preschool during the incubation Lab. As a trainer, the approach inspired me to review and modify my tools. Such an approach makes a paradigm change possible; it also allows us to predict our actions' impact on various partners. For the record, prototyping has become a hobby for me when I am at home with my children: we will prototype our house together.

*How is the Change Lab Project innovative and promising for the Alliance in Senegal?*

The project touches on a complex and difficult area: the mobilization of domestic resources to finance RH/FP. We used a clearly defined vision of a desired future in order to design the project, which relies on tools and methods that are still not widely used in our environment, such as design thinking, e-campaigns on social networks, hackathons, and gala dinners. We aim to highlight private sector companies that champion RH/FP; we also want to incubate projects co-financed by the private sector and local authorities. The Change Lab Project, designed by all types of actors with Equipop's high-quality support, will add value to our efforts to raise funds for family planning.



# 04

## Learn more about us

In 1993, just prior to the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo, a team of doctors and journalists created Equipop to empower women and improve their lives, thereby fostering equitable and sustainable development.

Equipop is a growing structure with 25 employees and 58 members, with an annual budget of €2.24 million. The NGO has an office in Europe in Paris and an office in West Africa in Ouagadougou.

## Our vision and values

In Equipop's vision, achieving equitable and sustainable development requires achieving gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment.

We base our vision on these core values:



### **RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS**

Equipop calls for universal recognition of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. This must be achieved for everyone, everywhere, through political and social participation and people making such rights their own.



### **WELL-BEING, FREEDOM, AND RESPONSIBILITY**

Equipop believes that economic indicators alone cannot determine human well-being; it also depends on each individual's ability to make informed and autonomous choices, while also accepting his or her responsibility towards the groups to which he or she belongs.



### **EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE**

Equipop advocates for equitable, inclusive human development that provides equal social, political and economic opportunities to everyone, irrespective of age or gender. In today's world, success should not come at the expense of future generations, or of half the population. Strengthening social ties is a major challenge for us.

# Our guiding principles reflect our values



## ENABLING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Equipop systematically promotes and enables stakeholder participation, the better to ensure high-quality accountability, ownership, sustainability, integration, empowerment, and legitimacy. We do this through sustained dialogue that brings our actions close to our stakeholders: civil society partners, health and social workers, lawmakers, government officials, other decision-makers and, of course, everyone we aim to help.



## WORKING WITHIN NETWORKS

Equipop has also created or joined synergies among social change actors: international solidarity organizations (ISOs), feminist activists, research structures and universities, public institutions, companies... We collaborate with networks in France, Europe, French-speaking sub-Saharan Africa and around the world. We are involved at various levels – collaborating on projects, making joint decisions, coordinating working groups, or sitting on civil society organizations' boards of directors.



## COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS

Rather than expanding internally, Equipop has moved to increase its adaptability and responsiveness, and the range and quality of its actions, through alliances and partnerships with civil society, lawmakers, journalists, researchers, civil servants, technical experts, and many others. For over ten years, we have worked alongside Francophone West African civil-society organizations that share our vision. These partners use their finely-grained and thorough knowledge of their communities and cultural dynamics to promote change in their respective countries. Over the years, we have established trusting relationships with them; our complementary skills and assets allow us to jointly create programs for various publics, in particular women and young people, and to conduct social and political advocacy campaigns tailored to local situations.

# Our mission and actions

Our organization aims to empower women and improve their living conditions in the world.

Equipop carries out its mission in Francophone West Africa, Europe and in the world by working with:

In Francophone West Africa, we have gradually shifted some of our actions from women to benefit girls, particularly those that most policies and programs fail to reach. Building on our specific expertise in sexual and reproductive health and rights, we have progressively developed a broader project that spans health, education, and economics, always using a gender-based approach.

- civil society organizations with whom we have close partnerships
- traditional leaders, women's groups, and youth groups
- CSO coalitions and platforms
- healthcare workers
- technical and administrative experts
- researchers
- academics
- journalists
- lawmakers and other decision-makers
- administrators and government officials

## Three complementary activities underpin all our actions



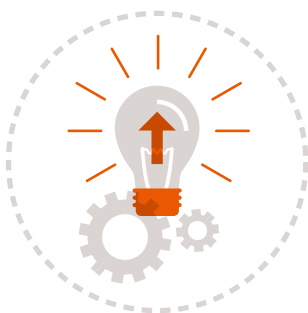
### Sparking change

as close as possible to the citizens, by creating and implementing pilot projects in collaboration with local partners



### Mobilizing

leaders to create more favorable institutional and legal environments



### Empowering

development partners by strengthening their capacities



# Our knowledge base and expertise

Through the years, we have enriched our knowledge base and expertise by drawing from fields as diverse as political science, public health, medicine, sociology, anthropology, economics, demography and management sciences. We systematically try to blend knowledge from these domains, crafting as comprehensive an approach as possible. Our knowledge base serves as a significant asset in helping us understand the communities in which we work, along with their leaders, healthcare professionals, government officials, and our partner organizations.

**We base our work on these three primary domains:**

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE AND PUBLIC POLICY**

Equipop has gained expertise in advocacy, targeting government officials responsible for international cooperation policy and implementation. We draw on a solid knowledge of the actors and mechanisms that underpin public policies; we also understand policy implementation. This means that we can inform, influence, and raise awareness among decision-making officials working at all levels of government – local, national and international; including mayors, high-level civil servants, ministers and presidents – pushing them to support specific programs. We also encourage policy reform and its effective implementation. In addition, we have developed expertise that lawmakers recognize and seek out.

## **PUBLIC HEALTH AND MEDICINE**

Equipop draws on its knowledge of public health issues. Our employees and partners have a cross-disciplinary understanding of the ways that healthcare systems operate, particularly in Francophone West Africa, and in-depth expertise in subjects such as family planning, emergency obstetric care, fistula injuries, and female genital mutilation. We use this expertise to focus on prevention: providing health education, reducing risks, and changing social norms, among other efforts. We also improve healthcare services delivery: training medical workers, soliciting patient opinion, integrating HIV/AIDS care, and mainstreaming reproductive health.

## **SOCIAL SCIENCES AND GENDER**

Equipop also draws upon the social sciences through a gender-based approach, the better to meet the diverse needs and interests of each public. This approach does not target women as a separate group; rather, it looks at how social position and dominant gender and family models influence the ways that individuals act, react, and interact. Our analysis emphasizes how gender status in any given society results in socially-constructed roles – roles that call for understanding and interrogation, if we hope to drive social change.

A critical tool for promoting new behaviors, the gender-based approach requires both the empowerment of women and the participation of men.

Positioning gender at the core of our actions achieves two objectives – one political, the other social and economic. It brings balance and fairness to male-female power relationships, while building a genuinely sustainable foundation for development, one engaging both halves of the communities we serve.

We collaborate closely with our partners to implement our projects, mobilizing three main types of expertise:

### **PROJECT PLANNING AND COORDINATION**

Equipop has developed project-planning, steering, and coordination capacities and can act either as the lead organization or within a consortium. We can jointly identify needs, plan intervention strategies, define gender-based participative methodologies, mobilize resources, manage technical and financial oversight, conduct project evaluations, assess outcomes, and capitalize on our experience.

### **INFORMATION AND ADVOCACY**

Equipop facilitates knowledge and understanding of the issues that motivate our mission. We take care to increase the visibility of social needs and to use the expertise and knowledge of local activists and other stakeholders. We influence and monitor public policies and programs by producing events, study tours, awareness-raising campaigns, and documentaries, while responding to enquiries from journalists, experts, lawmakers, and other decision-makers. In addition, we collect and critically analyze laws, programs, and policies, write and disseminate position papers, initiate and/or participate in institutional consultations, and lead or attend study groups.

### **CAPACITY-BUILDING**

Equipop strengthens capacities among our development partners and encourages them to share their experiences. We help to design, implement, and evaluate collective projects, using Design Thinking. We also support our partners' organizational development, strengthen their administrative and financial capacities, facilitate fund-raising, and conduct consulting and support activities. When our partners need to enhance their expertise, we jointly conduct assessment exercises, help create teaching tools, and design and provides training courses.

## Our partner networks

Equipop has always believed that collective efforts are powerful vectors of change. In 2018, we strengthened collaboration with several civil society organization networks in France, Europe, and Francophone West Africa, including:



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

### **Alliance Droits et Santé** **alliancedroitsetsante.org**

Alliance Droits et Santé (Rights and Health Alliance), a network of French and West African civil society organizations, works to improve the empowerment and health of women and girls in West Africa.



### **Collectif Prévenir & Protéger** **@PProtéger**

Collectif Prévenir & Protéger (Prevent and Protect Collective) is composed of 14 French NGOs dedicated to protecting infant rights and to promoting women's and adolescent girls' rights. The collective produces events and public-relations campaigns that inform the public about violence toward women and children, inspiring action.



### **Collectif Santé Mondiale** **collectif-sante-mondiale.fr**

Collectif Santé Mondiale (Worldwide Health Collective) brings together nine French CSOs: Action Against Hunger, Equipop, Global Health Advocates France, Médecins du Monde, One, Oxfam France, Family Planning France, Sidaction, and Solthis. These groups have joined forces to defend health-aid.



### **Coordination Sud** **coordinationsud.org**

Coordination SUD serves as the national coordinator for French international solidarity organizations, supporting and representing them through dialogue with public and private institutions worldwide.



### **Countdown 2030 Europe** **countdown2030europe.org**

The Countdown 2030 Europe Network is composed of 15 European NGOs that work to prioritize sexual and reproductive health and rights in European Union policies.



### **EFQM** **efqm.org**

The European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM) is dedicated to providing common benchmarks for organizations, helping them move towards operational excellence.



### **EndFGM** **endfgm.eu**

End FGM, a network of European CSOs, promotes European actions to end female genital mutilation.



### **Inspire**

**[inspire-partnership.org](http://inspire-partnership.org)**

Inspire is a group of European nongovernmental organizations specializing in sexual and reproductive health and rights.



### **Excision, parlons-en !**

**[excisionparlonsen.org](http://excisionparlonsen.org)**

"Excision, parlons-en !" (Let's talk about excision!) is a not-for-profit secular and apolitical civil society organization that promotes dialogue and unity among stakeholder organizations and individuals; their common aim is to end female genital mutilation. Since 2015, Equipop has served on its board of directors.



### **F3E**

**<http://f3e.asso.fr>**

F3E (Fonds pour la Promotion des Etudes Transversales, des Etudes Préalables et de l'Evaluation, or Fund to Promote Crosssectoral Research, Preliminary Studies, and Evaluations) is a French network of local government and nongovernmental organizations dedicated to improving the impact and quality of international solidarity actions.



### **Genre en Action**

**[greenaction.net](http://greenaction.net)**

Genre en Action (Gender in Action) is an international network that promotes awareness of gender inequality within development policies and programs.



### **Girls Not Brides**

**[girlsnotbrides.org](http://girlsnotbrides.org)**

Girls Not Brides is a global partnership of more than 500 civil society organizations committed to ending child marriage and encouraging girls.



**IBP Initiative**

*Scaling up what works in family planning/reproductive health*

### **IBP Initiative**

**[ibpinitiative.org](http://ibpinitiative.org)**

The IBP Initiative (Implementing Best Practices), a global partnership, aims for broad-scale implementation of family planning and reproductive-health practices that genuinely work. Created in 1999 by the World Health Organization (WHO), US Agency for International Development (USAID), and nine development-cooperation agencies, the initiative now counts more than 45 members worldwide, including donors, international technical-assistance organizations, and national and regional partners.



**Reproductive Health  
Supplies Coalition**

### **Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition / SECONAF**

Sécurité Contraceptive en Afrique Francophone (SECONAF or Contraceptive Security in Francophone Africa), a global partnership of public, private, and civil society organizations, works to improve sexual and reproductive health in low and middle-income countries by ensuring access to affordable and high-quality contraceptives.



### **West African Young Feminists Network**

Le Réseau des Jeunes Feminists d'Afrique de l'Ouest (West African Young Feminists Network) is composed of women activists who work in West Africa and who want their voices heard when national, regional, and international decisions are made, particularly about the rights of women and girls.



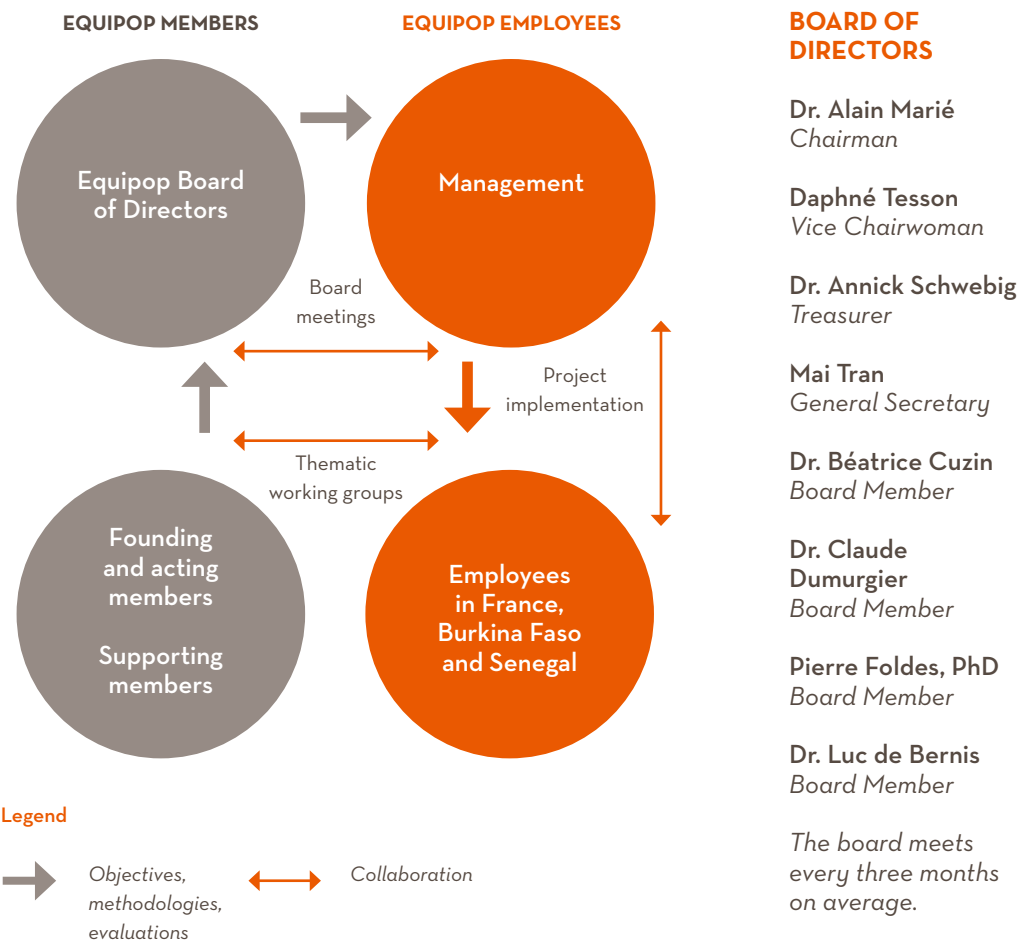
### **Women 7 Movement [feministscount.org](http://feministscount.org)**

The W7 Movement brings together groups that defend women's and girls' rights in the G7 countries and all over the world; they take action to make sure that G7 officials adopt financial and political measures in favor of gender equality.



# Citizen engagement and professional involvement

Equipop draws on a seven-person board and a multidisciplinary team about 30 employees to define and execute its mission. About 60 Equipop Members who provide financial and other support meet once a year at a general assembly.



## 2018 STAFF

### MANAGEMENT

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**Aurélie Gal-Régniez**

*Executive Director*

### COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

---

**Nathalie Perrotin**

*Communications Manager*

**Augustin Assaba**

*Communications Assistant*

**Marion Lambert**

*Communications Assistant*

### ADVOCACY UNIT FRANCE & INTERNATIONAL

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**Nicolas Rainaud**

*Advocacy Manager*

**Marguerite Bannwarth**

*Advocacy Officer*

**Lucie Daniel**

*Advocacy Expert*

**Julia Heres Garcia**

*Advocacy Trainee*

### ADVOCACY UNIT WEST AFRICA

---

**Brigitte Syan**

*Advocacy Manager*

**Abdoulaye Banse**

*Advocacy Officer*

### PROGRAMMES & DEVELOPMENT UNIT

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**Dominique Pobel**

*Programme &  
Development Manager*

**Sokhna Ba**

*Programme Officer*

**Elisa Blin**

*Experience Capitalization  
Officer*

**Elise Fouillet**

*Innovation & Support Officer*

**Aurélie Desrumaux**

*Programme &  
Development Officer*

**Geneviève Némouthé**

*Project and Evaluation  
Coordinator*

**Laura Delcamp**

*Programme Trainee*

### INNOVATION & SUPPORT UNIT

---

**Nora Le Jean**

*Innovation & Support Manager*

**Elsa Burzynski**

*Advocacy Officer*

**Erell Chardon-Ouedraogo**

*Innovation & Support Officer*

**Claire Pasquato**

*Resource Mobilization Officer*

**Elise Petitpas**

*Innovation & Advocacy Expert*

**Jeanne Fournier**

*Innovation & Support Officer*

**Maïfoux Nassirou**

*Innovation & Support Officer*

**Fatim Tambadou Diallo**

*Innovation & Support Officer*

### ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE UNIT

---

**Benjamin Sitbon**

*Administrative &  
Financial Manager*

**Annaëlle Gateau**

*Administrative &  
Financial Officer*

**Pascal Ilboudo**

*Organizational  
Development Advisor*

**Moumouni Komi**

*Finance & Administrative  
Coordinator/  
Security Focal Point*

**Sibiri Koné**

*Liaison Officer*

**Aurore Moynot**

*Administrative & Financial  
Support Officer*

**Kadidia Rabo**

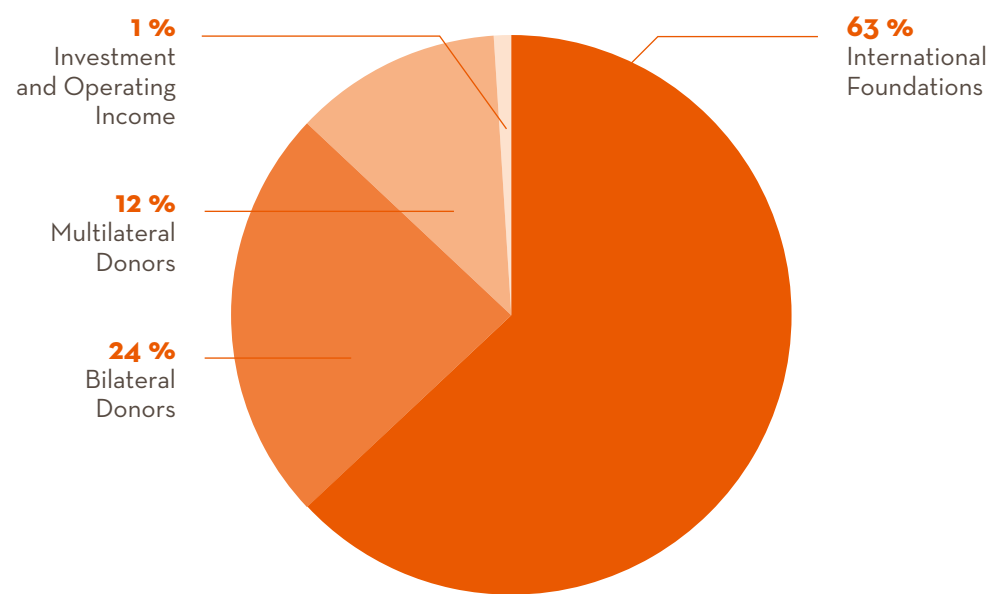
*Administrative, accounting  
and IT officer*

**Nicolas Schlegel**

*Accounting Officer*

# Equipop 2018 Budget

In 2018, we spent 90% of our funding on programme-related and mission-fulfilling expenses. Equipop contained costs compared with the prior year and ended the year with a surplus.



*Equipop Funding Sources in 2018*

## REVENUES

Equipop revenue reached €2.24 million in 2018, stabilizing at 2017's high level (€2.25 million), which was a 39% increase over 2016.

The year 2018 was marked by new project phases launched by Change Lab (formerly Alliance Droits and Santé), Protect the Next Generation, and Let's Change (formerly Change Plus). Our financiers showed confidence in Equipop by committing more than €3.7 million in multi-year financing for these projects.

Equipop also renewed annual partnerships with the Paris Mayor's Office and UNFPA. It signed new partnership agreements with RAES in order to finance three projects: "C'est la vie+", Educasso, and "Bruits de Tambour" (Drumbeats).

Equipop received 63% of its funding from international foundations, principally the Hewlett Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Public institutions provided 36% of all funding, of which 24% was drawn from bilateral French cooperation agencies, principally AFD (Agence Française de Développement), and 12% drawn from multilateral cooperation agencies, including the West African Health Organization and United Nations agencies.

Équilibres & Populations continues to strengthen and develop new technical and financial partnerships, encouraging the collaborations crucial to project success.

## EXPENDITURES

Equipop allocated 90% of its funding to program- and mission-related expenses. In 2018, administrative expenses remained controlled and overhead expenses stabilized after rising over the two previous years. Total 2018 Equipop expenditures reached €2.06 million, a slight decrease from 2017.

This level of expenses reflects faster implementation of DEMSAN, a project initiated in 2017 with the West African Health Organization, and the launch of new project phases for Change Lab (formerly Alliance Droits et Santé), Protéger la Prochaine Génération (Protect the Next Generation), and Let's Change (formerly Change Plus). We plan to greatly scale-up these projects' activities in 2019, thereby increasing related expenditure commitments.

In 2018, Equipop maintained its support for African civil society organizations by mobilizing resources for them and raising funds from new donors.

Personnel expenses increased 13.6% over 2017, due to increased staffing for project implementation.

At fiscal year-end, Equipop had a €188,205 surplus. This result mainly derives from keeping overhead costs controlled and in line with the volume of project activity. The surplus will augment our capital reserves. We have a medium-term objective to increase our intervention capacity for groundbreaking activities; we also seek to augment our investment capacity in order to professionalize our administrative functions. In addition, we want to have the ability to cover possible financing gaps while preserving internal expertise.

Equipop's annual accounts are audited by Mazars SPCC, certified public accountants. The annual accounts for 2018 and the accountants' report appear in their entirety (in French) on equipop.org.



## INTERVIEW

# Lucie Daniel, Advocacy Expert

Hired by Equipop one year ago, Lucie Daniel works in the France and International Advocacy Unit.



*Lucie, you have worked for Equipop for a year now. Can you tell us about your current role? How did your first few months working at Equipop go?*

I joined Equipop in September 2018 as an Advocacy Expert in the Advocacy Unit; it was composed of men and women who worked in Paris and Ouagadougou. My colleagues and I carry out Equipop's advocacy strategy. We work to persuade public officials and decision-makers in the French government, European Union, and United Nations agencies to prioritize SRHR – sexual and reproductive health and rights – in French official development aid, specifically for West Africa. More generally, we also push for public policies that embrace feminist goals. Our advocacy efforts consist of meeting decision-makers in order to increase their awareness and understanding of feminist issues, and calling on them to take action. Equipop programs directly inform our efforts. We work in close collaboration with our partners, especially feminist activists and civil society organizations in West Africa.

*What do you think makes Equipop special?*

I think that Equipop stands out for its stance toward SRHR; it combines an approach drawn from the world of international solidarity with one based on feminist activism, engagement, and dissent.

*What about Equipop's advocacy motivates you?*

Equipop's advocacy is a long-term endeavor. We aim to make societal and structural changes, the effects of which will not be seen until after many years of work. I am motivated by seeing that, slowly but surely, our tenacity pays off. For example, one of the tangible results that came out of our G7 advocacy efforts is that young West African feminists were able to attend high-level meetings with French policymakers. Of course, much remains to be done, but we are shaking up the old way of doing politics and changing the shape of things.

*How would you like to see the organization evolve?*

Equipop is already evolving! In co-organizing the Women 7 Movement this year, we removed the silos that compartmentalized our advocacy work and took a decidedly feminist turn. I think that in the future, Equipop will have a role to play in shaping the new "feminist diplomacy" that France is calling for. Equipop will also create links between development NGOs that work on gender issues and French feminist groups. Through our positions and our programmes in France and West Africa, we have one foot in each camp. We can very well see that the subject is finding greater interest in France, at both the domestic and international levels. Now is the time to take the plunge!

# Acknowledgements

Equipop draws on the support of many people and organizations who share its convictions and support its actions in order to achieve its mission. We offer our warmest thanks to all of them for the trust they have placed in us: volunteers and Equipop Members who work for the association; donors and financial partners, whose support makes

projects into reality; our CSO partners, with whom we enjoy close-knit, solid and lasting relationships; experts and civil servants who help us co-design policies and programs; journalists and Internet users who relay our messages and news – thank you! This report aims to update you about the impact of our work.

*We especially wish to thank:*



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



FONDATION  
CHANEL



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## **On the Internet**

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To learn more and  
take action.



## **On Twitter**

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For real-time news  
about us and SRHR.



## **Through our newsletter**

For a periodic summary  
of our news highlights.



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[facebook.com/Equilibres.](https://facebook.com/Equilibres.Populations)

*Populations*

For exclusive content and for  
sharing with our community.



## **On Instagram**

[@Equipop\\_Ong](https://www.instagram.com/Equipop_Ong)

For behind-the-scenes  
photos of Equipop.



## **On Youtube**

*Equilibres & Populations*

For videos about  
us and SRHR.



## **On LinkedIn**

[linkedin.com/company/](https://linkedin.com/company/equilibres-populations/)

*equilibres-populations/*

For Equipop news and  
innovations related to SRHR.

# Annual Report

Equipop works to empower women and improve their lives, thereby fostering equitable and sustainable development. Three complementary activities underpin our mission: sparking change, mobilizing, and empowering.

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Nathalie Perrotin-Milla

& Marion Lambert

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Nicolas Rainaud & Lucie Daniel

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[www.equipop.org](http://www.equipop.org)

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