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2017  
2018

# *Innovation*

*All new approaches and interventions targeted to specific situations*

- ▶ *engaging multiple civil-society, political, governmental, and research organizations and individuals*
- ▶ *finely-tuned to improve or solve societal problems following extensive situational and needs analyses*
- ▶ *carrying seeds of change toward an equitable and sustainable society*
- ▶ *dedicated to creating systemic change while assimilating into institutions, organizations and communities.*

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# Editorial

More than ever before, in recent months Équilibres & Populations has placed innovation at the heart of its thinking and actions, taking up new skills and approaches. It has created an internal Innovation and Support Unit and familiarized all employees with new methodologies such as design thinking. It has also created “Equipop Lab” to help its 21 West African partners design and execute political and social mobilization projects – actions that can make a difference. Going beyond expert speeches and demands for innovation, these efforts enable Équilibres & Populations and its partners to even more intelligently execute their mission: improving the living conditions and status of women and girls all over the world.

We think that innovation will arise as we reinvest in our core convictions: a greater value for social and human sciences; promoting interdisciplinarity; devising solutions that involve public, private, civil-society, and research organizations and individuals simultaneously; accounting for each territory’s resources and constraints; and linking different spatial scales – international, national, regional, and local. This vision of innovation requires that we reexamine the operating modes and funding channels of development, a complex universe with many actors. Partnership modalities will need revamping, as will the assignment of roles and resources – both those accorded to the populations in whose name we conduct policies, programs and projects, and those granted to local civil-society organizations working in communities. We now know that effective partnerships require flexibility; they must also enhance stakeholder capacities, take a long-term perspective, allow for collective work, and foster a climate of trust and mutual listening. They

must also allow for full contributions from women and youth. Thus, our vision sees innovation as a transformative path toward a more equitable and sustainable society and a way to generate new development models. Is the institutional environment ready for these changes, especially at the highest levels? If one can take the most recent Group of 7 summit meeting as an indicator, there are some positive signs. For the first time since its creation in 1975, the G7 opened up to women. A Gender Equality Advisory Council, composed of 20 women and one man, ensured the integration of gender equality across all themes, activities, and outcomes of Canada’s G7 Presidency. That gives us a reason to hope, even if we know that the path forward will be long and demanding.

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

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



# 2017 Highlights

## Sparking change

**Using television to promote social change:** Equipop worked with its partner RAES in **Senegal** on two education-through-entertainment projects, continuing production of the TV series “C’est la vie!” (That’s life!) and creating a new program about civic rights and responsibilities, “Bruits de Tambours” (Drumbeats).

**Promoting the end of female genital mutilation (FGM) and child marriage:** Equipop and AMSOPT, a Malian civil society organization (CSO), joined with SOS/JD, a Burkinabe CSO, on a new project, “Protect the Next Generations.” It has a two-fold aim: supporting youth in **Mali** who advocate for laws forbidding female excision and increasing awareness in villages in **Burkina Faso’s** East Region.

**Strengthening youth and adolescent leadership:** with the JADES Project (Jeunes et ADolescent-es En Santé [Healthy Youth and Adolescents]), Equipop trains and empowers young people in **Mali** and **Niger** so that they can fully participate in the fight against HIV and promote sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).

## Mobilizing

**Influencing French diplomatic policy:** Equipop’s international advocacy efforts have already had an impact on French foreign policy. When Marlène Schiappa, the French Secretary of State for Gender Equality, appeared at the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in **New York**, she announced new funding for sexual and reproductive rights and positioned France as a leading defender of women’s rights.

**Guiding official development aid allocation:** advocacy efforts by Equipop and its partners have led **France** to make health, gender equality, and education three of its five top development-policy priorities.

**Engaging towns and villages:** Equipop advocacy efforts brought 60 West African mayors together in **Burkina Faso** and prompted them to reaffirm a commitment to promote family planning in their respective towns and villages.

**Amplifying the voice of “FP Champions”:** as part of its “FP Generation” campaign, Equipop collected interviews from social activists who work daily to promote SRHR, especially access to contraception in **West Africa**. (See <http://generationpf.equipop.org> [in French])

## Empowering

**Encouraging innovation:** Equipop fine-tuned the “Equipop Lab,” an ideas-incubator workshop based on design thinking, to promote collaborative and innovative projects.

**Assisting West African CSOs in raising new funding:** during the “Mobilize for SRHR” project, Equipop helped 21 organizations dedicated to women and girls in West Africa – all members of Alliance Droits et Santé – raise more than €3 million, both individually and as groups.

**Collaborating with United Nations agencies:** in an effort to reinforce Muskoka Initiative projects for youth and adolescents, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) asked Equipop to share its expertise. They did so by publishing country and thematic factsheets, coproducing a multi-agency, multi-country symposium, and helping receptive countries operationalize recommendations and unearth potentially high-impact actions.

# 01

## Sparking change

Partnering with local stakeholders and working closely with targeted populations, Équilibres & Populations sparks social change dynamics.

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# 02

## Mobilizing

Équilibres & Populations 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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## Empowering

Équilibres & Populations helps its development partners by strengthening their capacities.

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# 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 Équilibres & Populations to empower women and improve their lives, thereby fostering equitable and sustainable development.

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# Women's empowerment and contraception: Taking action in West Africa!

## *Photographic exhibition*



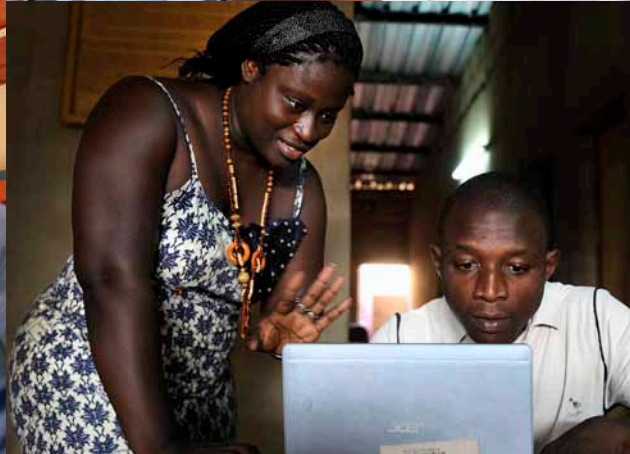
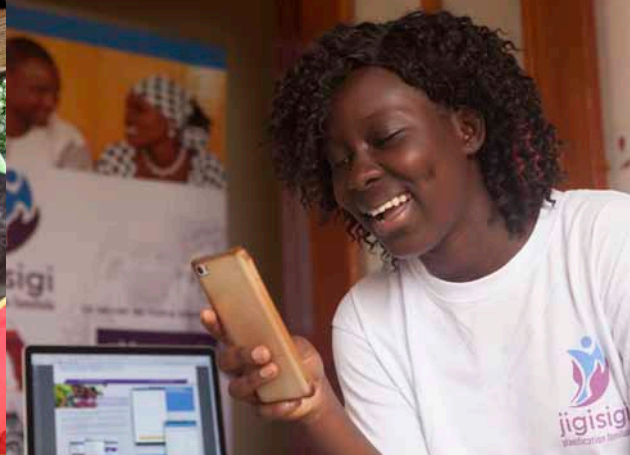
The ability to decide whether and when to have children (and how many) constitutes a fundamental right and key element of human life, especially for women and girls. Access to these options affects millions of individual destinies and society as a whole: they provide everyone with a better chance of obtaining education and jobs, of thriving and helping their families and communities to flourish.

West Africa has come to understand this equation. Despite some social barriers and still-modest funding, many actions have contributed to improved contraceptive access. More generally, we see broader promotion of sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to remain healthy, to live one's sexuality without abuse, to choose one's mate, and to build a family.

In West Africa, many initiatives in schools, healthcare facilities, villages and national administrations help promote women's empowerment, sexual and reproductive rights, and access to contraception. Many actions have progressively achieved change — from disseminating information, facilitating discussions, deconstructing stereotypes, and developing leadership capacities among adolescent girls, to combatting contraceptive stock-outs, training medical personnel, bolstering healthcare quality and affordability, promoting compliance with laws, and coordinating actions between various organizations. Équilibres & Populations is proud to be part of this SRHR ecosystem and to help with many of these initiatives!

*These photos come from a travelling exhibition that is available from Equipop upon request.*







01

# Sparkling change

Partnering with local stakeholders and working closely with targeted populations, Équilibres & Populations sparks social change dynamics.







## **Task shifting: an approach to solving Burkinabe women's contraceptive needs**

330 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births: Burkinabe women pay a heavy price for motherhood. Lacking sufficient qualified family-planning professionals to provide quality services, the country has a low contraceptive-prevalence rate (15%) and a high rate of unmet need for modern contraceptives (24%).<sup>1</sup> Since 2010, Equipop has promoted family-planning task shifting in Burkina Faso. Over the past two years, it has helped implement a pilot project in two Burkinabe districts.



## WHAT IS TASK SHIFTING?

Task shifting (TS) is a high-impact strategy to improve access to family planning (FP) and other healthcare services. Developed over the past thirty years or so, TS has produced encouraging outcomes. The World Health Organization (WHO)<sup>2</sup> recognizes it as an effective, safe, and acceptable approach in countries with both human resource-constrained healthcare systems and poor service access. In the field of family planning, TS means training supplemental healthcare workers to administer FP services and thus provide more women the contraceptive services they desire.

## EQUIPOP MOBILIZES POLICY-MAKERS AND RAISES FUNDING FOR FP TS

Since 2010, Equipop has assisted Burkinabe social activists who believe that FP TS can help lower maternal deaths, and has advocated government officials and healthcare decision-makers for their support in testing the TS approach. For four solid years, Equipop worked to convince Burkina Faso's Ministry of Health to sign a protocol with Equipop authorizing a FP TS trial in the country. In July 2015, following many group discussions and multi-actor workshops, Burkina Faso published a national notice and formalized a project to test this approach that would draw on Equipop support. The trial would provide specialized training to certified and auxiliary nurses, lay midwives, and itinerant healthcare workers – collectively known as front-line health workers – so that, working under supervision, they could administer FP procedures previously performed only by doctors, registered nurses, and certified midwives. In addition, community health workers would learn to administer injectable contraceptives.

## A CLEAR AND AMBITIOUS OBJECTIVE: A FP TASK SHIFTING TRIAL IN BURKINA FASO

The pilot Task Shifting Project, which ran from 2016 through 2018, involved 17 health and social-services facilities in the Tougan health district and eight in the Dandé health district. It took place under the aegis of the Burkina Faso Ministry of Health, through the Office of Health and Family. The trial featured a consortium of three dedicated organizations: Marie Stopes International-Burkina Faso (MSI-BF), who instructed front-line health workers in long-acting contraceptive use at dedicated training centers; the Association Burkinabé pour le Bien-Être Familial (ABBEF or Burkinabe Association for Familial Well-being), who taught community health workers how to initiate oral contraceptive regimes for new patients and how to administer injectables (including Sayana Press or DMPA-SC); and Equipop, who conducted advocacy efforts and helped participants capitalize on previous successful experiences. As a result, initial project evaluations by FHI360 show a sharp increase in the use of modern contraceptive methods – particularly by new users, many of them younger women. Furthermore, no major negative incidents related to the trial have been reported in either district.

## CAPITALIZING ON CHANGE MANAGEMENT TO BOLSTER PROGRAM QUALITY, SCALE, AND LEARNING-BY-DOING

Focus groups, semi-directed interviews, mental maps, role-playing, analysis of professional practices – the project deployed every means at every step to encourage speaking and discussion by every type of stakeholder: front-line and community health workers, doctors, supervisors, and contraceptive users. These means transformed FP TS workshops into genuine knowledge factories. *“Through the Equipop workshops, I learned from the experience of others and that also let me remember things from training sessions that I had forgotten”* (A front-line health worker, 2017).



Equipop set up a system to gather and analyze the workshop participant experiences, the better to capitalize on them and facilitate continuous learning; this meant identifying good practices and efforts whose pursuit could ensure high-quality services. *“I have perfectly mastered the way to insert intrauterine devices and contraceptive implants,”* boasted a front-line health worker. One community health worker emphasized her progress in providing counselling: *“Before, I did not really understand the steps involved in counselling, but I learned them through the Task Shifting Project.”* Another community health worker emphasized a shared concern for ensuring confidentiality, saying *“Even if a lady’s husband came up to ask me what she and I talked about, I would answer indirectly, just like the front-line workers in healthcare facilities do.”*



In addition to expanding the quality and scope of their FP services, workshop participants came up with strategies that can create an enabling environment for family planning, finding solutions for complicated situations. For example, a front-line health worker recounted how *“an angry husband came to see me after his wife had a contraceptive implant inserted. So I called the community health worker in the village where he lived, and she mobilized a village resource person – together they were able to convince the husband that contraception was a good idea.”*

#### • How does Equipop take action?

Equipop removes institutional barriers to task-shifting implementations; raises funding; helps the Burkinabe Office of Health and Family design projects, revise standards and write protocols; capitalizes on experience, and makes recommendations for converting a pilot project into a full-scale roll-out.

#### • Who are the beneficiaries?

230 lay community health workers and 80 certified nurses, registered midwives and auxiliary birth attendants, and numerous women and girls in the Dandé and Tougan health districts.

#### • What is the rationale?

Increasing access to modern contraceptive methods for women and girls who want to use them, no matter how far away they live from healthcare facilities, so that they can make essential choices for themselves and their families.

Civil society and health officials now unanimously agree: FP task shifting is a viable strategy in Burkina Faso. They have begun to revise policies, standards, and protocols in order to authorize a full-scale roll-out of the FP TS pilot project. Equipop will continue its contributions to future FP TS efforts, thus facilitating access to quality family-planning services in Burkina Faso for women and girls.

1. Burkina Faso population and health surveys, 2010.

2. See the 2012 WHO report, “Optimizing health worker roles to improve access to key maternal and newborn health interventions through task shifting ” at <http://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/77764>

## INTERVIEW

# Ky André Yoland, committed to a full-scale roll-out of FP task shifting in Burkina Faso

Ky André Yoland is the  
Director of the Office  
of Health and Family  
in the Burkina Faso  
Ministry of Health.



*You were a crucial partner in executing the Task Shifting Project. Why did you choose those two districts for the pilot? How did the Office of Health and Family contribute to project implementation?*

A few years ago, we drafted a national plan to relaunch family planning (2013-2015). The plan aimed to target regions where we had a high likelihood of recruiting new users of modern family-planning methods. Dandé and Tougan were identified as two high-potential districts – a fundamental reason why we chose them for the FP task shifting trial. This project had two special features: one, we gave front-line health workers the capacity to provide long-lasting methods such as intrauterine devices (IUDs) and contraceptive implants, and two, community health workers could offer oral contraceptives and administer Sayana Press. This made contraceptive methods available to populations in real time and space. As a technical arm of the Ministry of Health concerned with maternal and infant health issues, the Office of Health and Family takes the lead in initiating and approving standards and procedures and assisting those implementing the Task Shifting Project.

*Since the Ministry of Health has begun revising reproductive-health protocols, standards and policies, might this include a full roll-out of task shifting?*

We want to design a plan [to do this]. At the moment, we have begun by revising our reproductive health policies, standards and protocols document. This document sets out standardized procedures and will facilitate the task-shifting roll-out by aligning it with the existing FP roadmap.

*What would you like to say to family planning activists and civil society organizations in general, and particularly to those who have worked with you on the TS Project during the trial?*

I would like to congratulate the project implementation partners. Each had a mandate: MSI and ABBF supplied contraceptive methods and instruction on using them, Équilibres & Populations provided advocacy and guidance on good practices, and FHI360 evaluated the effort. These essential partners assisted the health ministry during the entire process. Since we do not want to change a winning team, we intend to continue working with them, reinforcing them where possible. I would like to encourage, congratulate, and thank them, tell them how satisfied we are and ask them to fulfil the objectives we have set for broad-scale implementation of TS.



## Using communication and culture to support social change

Supporting theatre-forums, organizing public debates and public-speaking competitions, using comic books and photographs, promoting village chats, producing online documentaries and community-radio shows: for many years, Equipop has placed communication for development (C4D) at the heart of its actions.



Since 2017, Equipop has given a new dimension to its communication and outreach activities by adding two new layers: (1) promoting the voices of its African partners online, and (2) supporting edutainment possibilities through a strategic partnership with a Senegalese nongovernmental organization (NGO), RAES (Réseau africain d'éducation pour la santé, or African Health and Education Network).

## C4D: WHAT IS IT?

The acronym C4D stands for Communication for Development and covers a variety of approaches. For Equipop, it is chiefly a powerful lever for social and political influence, one that aims to bolster the dissemination of truthful information, foster open discussion, and allow meaningful local-stakeholder participation and capacity development. C4D deploys tools and methods that range from promoting interpersonal communication to engaging with community-based media and deploying modern information technologies.

### *Communication for Development*

- Facilitates access to knowledge
- Fuels discussion and social dialogue
- Amplifies the voices of local activists and stakeholders
- Empowers individuals and communities

**Its goal is to influence society and policy.**

## C4D LIES AT THE HEART OF EQUIPOP AND PARTNER ACTIONS

Firmly believing that communication remains indispensable for long-term social change, Equipop has long promoted the C4D approach. In 2000, it published a comic book called “In the Shade of the Baobab Tree” (À l'ombre du Baobab) in collaboration with

about 30 Francophone African artists; it aimed to promote the right to education and health. Two years later, the comic was exhibited at the Angoulême International Comics Festival in France before going on a three-year travelling show to six African countries, a tour organized with the help of local artists and NGOs. In 2017, Equipop helped its African partners express their concerns and experiences online and worked alongside RAES to explore the potential of edutainment efforts.

## AMPLIFYING THE VOICES OF CHANGE AGENTS ONLINE

One objective of C4D is amplifying the voices of local individuals and encouraging their involvement in national dialogue. Equipop has worked toward this in recent months by interviewing those pushing the boundaries for contraceptive access and sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) in West Africa; videos of the interviews have appeared on its “FP Generation: Let's Choose the Future Together” campaign website and on social networks. Equipop also provided technical and financial support to members of the CSO network Alliance Droits et Santé (Rights and Health Alliance), helping them create or expand their presence on social networks. Several of the CSOs took up new tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, using them to spread their messages and increase visibility for their actions.

## THE POWER OF EDUCATION THROUGH ENTERTAINMENT

Education through entertainment (edutainment) rests on the power of mass-media programming to spark changes in behavior and fuel social dialogue. Millions of people may watch a television program that questions received wisdom and taboos while eliciting a powerful emotional response in viewers. Shows such as “Shuga” in Nigeria or “Soul City” in South Africa have had an impact on fighting HIV/AIDS. RAES, a Senegalese CSO, Equipop partner, and member of the Alliance Droits et Santé, has embarked on a similar path, producing a television program

called “C’est la vie!” (That’s life!) about health, education and rights. RAES will soon launch another TV series, “Bruits de Tambours” (Drumbeats) on the topic of civic rights and responsibilities. Equipop contributed to these projects by helping to develop scripts and sharing its expertise on featured subjects. The initiative aims to tell the most meaningful stories possible while mobilizing online resources for development from the entire web ecosystem, thereby creating relevant television programs and encouraging community ownership of their messages.



### **C’est la vie !**

Contraception, abortion, domestic abuse, child marriage, female genital mutilation: the stories that take place in a healthcare center in the imaginary neighborhood of Ratanga allow the screenwriters to take on many subjects, including the biggest taboos. RAES supplies the television program “C’est la vie!” (That’s life!) for free to national broadcasters in Francophone West Africa; the show also runs on an international French-language channel, TV5 Monde, capturing more than 44 million viewers.

### **• How does Equipop take action?**

Equipop teaches local CSOs how to use social networks and digital communication techniques; creates online messaging campaigns; mobilizes resources for edutainment projects; helps write radio and television scripts; assists local activists in creating and leading communication-for-development actions.

### **• Who are the beneficiaries?**

21 member-organizations of Alliance Droits et Santé have received training, along with RAES, a Senegalese CSO that jointly raises funding and creates scripts with Equipop. Ultimately, these efforts benefit all citizens, especially young people.

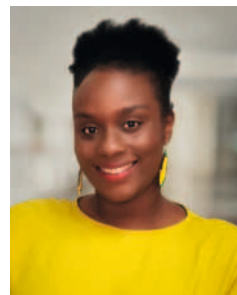
### **• What is the rationale?**

Facilitating access to information and knowledge, prompting discussions, questioning stereotypes, encouraging those with little media access to speak out, and mobilizing and inspiring individuals: all constitute powerful levers for improving the status and condition of women and girls in the world.

## INTERVIEW

# Mbathio Diaw Ndiaye, at the heart of communication for development

Committed to gender equality for years, Mbathio Diaw Ndiaye is the chief executive of RAES.



*Can you tell us about RAES, the Réseau Africain pour l'Éducation et la Santé (African Education and Health Network)?*

RAES is a Senegalese NGO created in 2004. It aims to use the media and information and communication technologies (ICT) to communicate and raise awareness about health questions. Since 2005, RAES has developed various approaches for the best use of such media, deploying tools and formulating messages that address and integrate the needs of communities. We work with civil society and government partners to strategize how to put messages across within a given region, or how to target specific groups and meet their expectations.

In the past, we created radio-shows with high-quality content and educated through entertainment. In 2012, we realized that television audiences outnumbered radio listeners in urban households. People were watching foreign television series that addressed none of our subjects. We therefore began using television as a medium, devising messaging campaigns and using education through communication on all media: radio, television, and online.

*How would you describe the partnership between RAES and Equipop?*

I think that our organizations complement one another: on the one hand, RAES has specialized in testing, in taking community needs into account, so it gives Equipop tools to conduct social and political mobilization actions. On the other hand, Equipop helps us valorize our skills and disseminate our tools.

Our partnership has evolved considerably over time: at first, we were partners within the Alliance Droits et Santé network, and now we jointly execute very large-scale projects.

*What value can Equipop and RAES jointly add to development in West Africa?*

By assembling projects and executing strategies that draw on both RAES experience in integrating community expectations, needs, and realities and Equipop expertise in social and political mobilization, we can guide communities toward better expression of their needs, particularly on social networks. We let them know how to communicate with the authorities, so that those with the power to change conditions understand community needs and interests. At the local level, we can guide people toward self-organizing, better information-sharing, and raised expectations. We can also teach public officials to take these expectations into account and mainstream them into policy. At the regional level and in general, the strong partnership between Equipop and RAES shows donors that alliances are feasible – ones that take needs into account and actually work. Development calls for funding complementary organizations so that they can work together directly in the field. By reinforcing Alliance Droits et Santé members on the ground, we show donors what it means to collaborate in West Africa.



A photograph of an elderly man with dark skin, wearing a grey patterned suit and a matching cap. He is sitting on a wooden chair made of sticks. He is looking towards the right, where a hand holds a black microphone towards him. He is holding a green mobile phone in his left hand. The background is a rough, textured wall made of mud or clay. There are some colorful bowls (green, blue, yellow) on a table in the background. The overall scene suggests a rural or semi-rural setting.

# O2

## Mobilizing

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







## Reaffirming the importance of SRHR within a new French government

The French political landscape shifted sharply with the presidential election in May 2017. During a year of advocacy in France, Equipop met the challenge of ensuring that topics supported by the previous administration did not disappear from the new government's agenda.

Equipop worked on two levels: lobbying the executive branch and, at a more technical level, contributing to institutional processes.



France's official development assistance and strong diplomatic voice have made it a key strategic partner for West African countries. Since its creation, Equipop has endeavored to carry its SRHR advocacy message to French politicians. A year ago, then-President François Holland ended his term with the so-called "Paris Oath" (*Serment de Paris*) to defend women's rights; it notably raised the visibility sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) even as his administration's *Gender and Development Strategy* came to an end.

In order to ensure continuity after the election, Equipop first worked to raise awareness among new cabinet members. At the beginning of September 2017, during President Emmanuel Macron's first meeting with NGOs, Equipop asked him about defending women's rights throughout the world. The French president affirmed that he would make it a priority – a general answer that needed further definition. Therefore, throughout the autumn Equipop pursued efforts to enhance the new administration's responsiveness on SRHR, drawing on a position paper entitled *Maximizing the Impact of French Engagement in the Sahel: SRHR as a Lever*.

### **FRANCE ESTABLISHES THREE PRIORITIES: GENDER, HEALTH AND EDUCATION**

On 28 November 2017 in Ouagadougou, President Macron gave his first major speech about France-Africa relations. Since he had created a polemic in July during a Group of 20 meeting, suggesting that West African women have too many children, both the Burkinabes and French development-aid specialists expected some problems. However, the president's November speech showed that the French vision had evolved toward a more individual-rights-centered approach, particularly in regard to young girls' freedom to choose their own destinies.

“ I want a young girl to have the choice to continue her education if she wants to [...], to not marry at age 13 or 14 and begin having babies [...]. We must have a responsible, strong debate about freedom of choice, which goes with democracy. ”

**Emmanuel Macron**

President of France

At the beginning of 2018, through its seat at the Conseil National du Développement et de la Solidarité Internationale (CND SI or National Council for Development and International Solidarity) Equipop worked with civil society to ensure that this presidential impetus carried through into clear institutional procedures. On 8 February 2018, France's Comité Interministériel de la Coopération Internationale et du Développement (CICID or International Committee for International Cooperation and Development) met for the first time during the president's first term, and decided that health, gender equality, and education would account for three of the government's top five priorities. In the preface to its concluding statement, the committee noted the importance of mobilizing youth in France and Africa, achieving the main objective of Equipop's first year of political advocacy.

Obviously, Equipop's political advocacy objectives for the next four years of Macron's term will center on ways of putting these priorities into effect. As early as the end of 2017, Equipop emphasized this issue, initiating a large civil-society movement at a conference held at the Conseil Economique, Social et Environnemental (CESE or French Economic, Social and Environmental Council) and issuing a call signed by 250 organizations: *"France must invest in sexual and reproductive rights to make progress with gender equality."* At the beginning of 2018, Equipop also participated in three hearings conducted by a parliamentary information mission. The hearings resulted in 100 recommendations for "feminist diplomacy" presented to the government.

Finally, after advocating for a renewal of France's 2013-2017 *Gender and Development Strategy*, Equipop contributed to the third one in the series: *France's International Strategy for Gender Equality (2018-2022)*. Presented on 8 March 2018, it contains several improvements to previous strategies, more sharply defining the French vision, deploying more concrete indicators, and extending beyond development to include all French foreign policy.

#### • How does Equipop take action?

Equipop monitors political and financial commitments, participates in constructing governmental policies and programmes, and contributes to United Nations processes.

#### • Who are the beneficiaries?

Officials in France, Europe, and elsewhere, and ultimately all girls and women who benefit from national and international development programmes.

#### • What is the rationale?

Providing policy guidance and ensuring funding allows women to choose how to live their lives, one of the keys to societal development.



## SRHR in French strategies and publications

### • France's International Strategy for Gender Equality (2018-2022)

France is working toward universal access to quality healthcare and sexual and reproductive rights, which determine and reinforce the ability to exercise other fundamental rights and prevent women from falling into the cycle of poverty. This strategy articulates with France's 2016-2020 Population and Sexual and Reproductive Rights Strategy, aiming to improve normative frameworks for sexual and reproductive rights, contraceptive prevalence rates, strengthen youth and adolescent access to suitable sexual and reproductive health services, while eliminating harmful practices, including child marriage.

### • Concluding statement of France's International Committee for International Cooperation and Development (CICID), 8 February 2018

1. France is fully committed to realizing all of the United Nations Sustainable Development Objectives and the Paris Agreement on the climate. It will expand actions in some sectors where it can add high value – crisis zones, education, climate, gender equality, and health – in a manner coherent with the guidance set by the French president.

4.5. Giving systematic priority to the empowerment of girls and women, by supporting their access to education, employment, and entrepreneurship, and by improving school and workplace safety.

### • White paper on the place of women's rights in French diplomacy, published by the French National Assembly Foreign Affairs Commission following informational hearings, 4 April 2018.

#### Sexual and Reproductive Rights: Do Not Retreat

Universal access to sexual and reproductive rights is a key factor in stability and women's empowerment, and an essential condition for the drastic reduction of gender inequalities.

It should emerge from the following actions:

- [...] adopting and promoting programmes dedicated to young adolescents and sexuality education in schools;
- supporting civil society movements, actions, and demands to facilitate access to sexual and reproductive rights when governments oppose such access;
- increasing and renewing French funding to international organizations and programmes that fight violence against women and that promote universal and equal sexual and reproductive rights (AFD, UNICEF, UNFPA);
- [...] supporting public policies and local implementations that combat child marriage and maternal and infant mortality related to early pregnancy in certain countries;
- supporting public awareness campaigns about men's role in family planning, contraception, and prenatal and maternal health;
- acting against excision and caring for victims.





## **West Africa: advocacy centered on youth and decentralization**

In 2017, Equipop advocacy efforts aimed to tie local, regional, and global levels together, focusing on two priorities: taking the concerns of young people into account, and decentralizing the locus of policy-making.

In six West African countries, Equipop and its civil society partners mobilized to protect significant funding and to orient policy-makers toward the health and rights of women and girls. Teamwork undeniably moved the needle: for example, at the FP2020 London summit, Professor Nicolas Meda, the Burkinabe health minister, helped secure additional commitments for the member-states of the Ouagadougou Partnership for Family Planning.

“ We have made three main commitments: a policy that affirms that family planning is a human right (...) a promise to increase family-planning programme funding by 10% per year per country until 2020, and a program that features (...) a roll-out of task shifting and higher-quality services in the countries. ”

**Professeur Nicolas Meda**  
Burkina Faso health minister

Equipop advocacy efforts in West Africa both push policy-makers to make commitments and monitor whether officials honor them.

Such advocacy work needs to cover many subjects in order to ensure coherence; it also draws on subjects whose leveraging can lead to more rapid initiation of needed changes. This past year, Equipop emphasized the concerns of young people and decentralization of policy-making – the how and why of involving officials in towns and villages.

### **YOUTH SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND HEALTH - A WEIGHTY REGIONAL CHALLENGE**

All six West African members of the Ouagadougou Partnership and London FP2020 participants have majority youth populations (on average, 67% of the population is under age 25, and nearly 50% under age 15) and very limited access to SRHR services. Confronted with this situation and prompted by advocacy efforts, national authorities have taken strong steps and developed SRHR programmes for their young people through the following steps:

- addressing the needs of youth in plans to accelerate the adoption of family planning in each country;
- developing programmes for free family planning services for young people;
- introducing comprehensive sexuality education in schools;
- creating national frameworks; and
- participating in youth-focused international consultative bodies.

The main challenge now: turning these programmes into actions and producing genuine change. For this reason, Equipop specifically supports the work of CSOs and youth movements West Africa.

## INVOLVING TOWN AND VILLAGE AUTHORITIES

After observing that town and village officials did not take part in efforts to promote family planning, Equipop began advocacy efforts directed at local authorities, in collaboration with other civil society organizations and individuals. The goal: to convince local policy-makers to become involved in and support family planning alongside national authorities. The advocacy efforts have paid off, and today, in Burkina Faso for example, many mayors have become FP supporters, giving it priority in their municipal development plans. In fact, between 2014 and 2017, 33 mayors allocated CFA 1.36 billion (about USD 2.4 million) to FP services for women of child-bearing age in their towns!

Beyond these funding increases – which, although indispensable, remain modest – advocacy work with the mayors allowed a pool of “FP Champions” to develop. These advocates will raise awareness about the importance of FP issues among citizens of their communities as well as influential people in their local and national circles. This initial success means that Equipop and its partners will pursue this type of awareness-raising work with mayors. It also means bolstering such work by raising funds for programmes spearheaded by local officials, and by defining and conducting specific pro-FP actions, and pro-women’s health and rights actions in general.

### • How does Equipop take action?

Equipop makes research findings understandable by the layman, analyses policies and programmes, builds case statements, animates networks, organizes events and campaigns, leads training sessions, meets with elected officials, helps with public policy design, and provides support for fundraising and project steering.

### • Who are the beneficiaries?

Elected officials, civil society organizations, and citizens.

### • What is the rationale?

Because young people represent an extremely important demographic and because municipal policies have the most direct effect on populations.

Of course, decentralization must not simply move the problem from a higher to a lower level. For this reason, Equipop alters its approach to fit every level. The Alliance Droits et Santé network of FP Champions serves as the primordial link between public-official and citizen mobilization. Furthermore, regional advocacy efforts enhanced lobbying efforts conducted in each of the six countries. Equipop also supported its West African civil society partners by fostering their participation in crucial United Nations processes that address the health and rights issues of women and girls.



## INTERVIEW

# Kougouyam Moukailou Ouedraogo, a youth-health activist

President of the Réseau des Jeunes Ambassadeurs pour la Santé de la Reproduction (SR) et la Planification Familiale (FP)\* in Burkina Faso, and Vice President of the Alliance Régionale des Jeunes Ambassadeurs pour la SR/FP en l'Afrique de l'Ouest Francophone\*\*.



*How do you see implementation of sexual and reproductive health and rights for adolescents and youth (SRHR/AY) evolving in West Africa?*

While realities differ from one country to another, such as the extent of SRHR/AY implementation, generally speaking, we see the latter evolving in a positive direction in West Africa. We observe that young people progressively encounter fewer obstacles when accessing modern contraceptive methods, and that cost-related barriers are coming down. In addition, an increasing number of health workers now try to properly welcome and accommodate youth in healthcare facilities, offering family-planning services adapted to their needs. The government, CSOs, and technical and funding partners use mass media for messaging campaigns and youth outreach.

*Why do the authorities care about youth SRHR concerns? How do they translate their caring into action?*

Young people constitute a majority of the population in West Africa and all countries aspire to reap a demographic dividend. The authorities understand that to attain it, they must make more room for young people, improving their living conditions in terms of health, education, and employability. That first translates into official commitments, such as those made during regional pro-SRHR/AY meetings. It also means effective involvement of youth in designing and executing national policies and programmes, thereby contributing to development.

We also note efforts to facilitate youth access to contraceptive products. For example, Burkina Faso provides contraceptive methods free of cost. Furthermore, in addition to mass-media campaigns designed to bolster youth access to information, we have seen courses developed to mainstream comprehensive sexuality education in schools. Now is the time to accelerate their broad-scale implementation so that young people can have better access to better information!

*How do you think youth can become more involved and why is that important?*

We must take young people's opinions into account when designing family-planning policies and programmes, but we must go further by delegating certain tasks so that young people carry out activities specifically designed for them. At the same time, these activities will not materialize unless we strengthen youth capacities in the fields of family planning, leadership, advocacy, and fundraising.

\*Young Ambassadors for Health and Reproduction (HR) and Family Planning (FP) Network

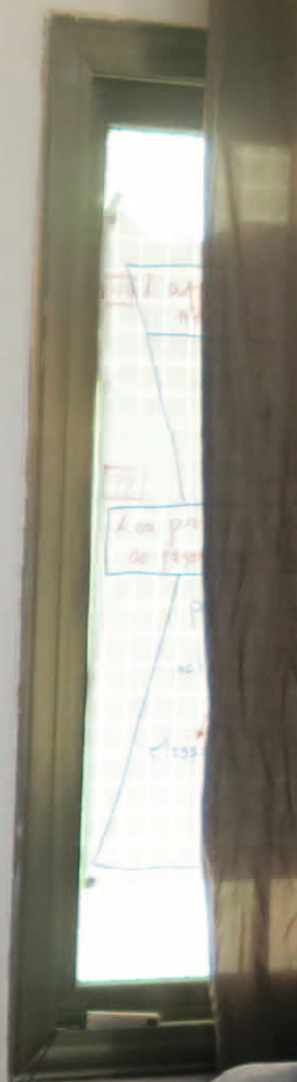
\*\*Regional Alliance of Young Ambassadors for HR/FP in Francophone West Africa

# 03

## Empowering

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









## Helping local CSOs develop: our strategic objective reaffirmed

Since the 2000s and the beginning of its operations in West Africa, Equipop has sought to work alongside local civil society organizations. In 2013, it realized that effective building of local CSO capacity and support for their collective actions required specific approaches and suitable means. Thus in tandem with its historical CSO partners, Equipop created the Alliance Droits et Santé network; it also tailored its expert assistance to Alliance-member needs. Five years later, Equipop presents its achievements and reveals its plans.

Equipop has come a long way since April 2013, when it united with its historical partners to increase the power of pro-women and -girls African civil society organizations. In any event, that was the chief subject of conversation at the annual Alliance Droits et Santé reunion, which took place in February 2018 in Ouagadougou. The Alliance's 21 members, representing six Francophone West African countries, highlighted their collective achievements:

- **USD 4,800,000 raised** with the help of Equipop and autonomously managed by each recipient;
- **a commitment from each member-organization** to develop its capacities in concrete ways, such as by revising governance modes, consolidating financial-management activities, setting up human-resources policies, and so forth;
- **a multi-channel campaign** to improve access to desired contraception for women, youth, and couples, led by a network of about one hundred family-planning champions;
- **solid political progress** on key items such as family-planning services task shifting, youth SRHR, and commitments from mayors and other decentralized authorities;
- and not to forget: **the construction of a common culture and a greater ability to collaborate**, because effective multi-partner projects take practice.

## MANY ACHIEVEMENTS, BUT ALSO MANY CHALLENGES AHEAD

While the list of achievements is long, some obstacles still limit local CSOs' ability to act. The first barrier: access to funding. Often, financial instruments are inflexible and poorly adapted to jointly-conducted projects. The latter require upstream consensus-building and access to knowledge and case studies, as well as knowledge of how to use them. Moreover, since social change does not happen in just a few months, jointly-conducted projects must take place over long periods of time. In addition, traditional project-monitoring and evaluation frameworks often prove inadequate for understanding the repercussions of political and social mobilization projects. The format of many calls for proposals exacerbate these issues. The second barrier: relatively weak organizational capacities. Local CSOs must dedicate resources to operations and fundraising in order to realize innovation and high performance; in light of their business models, investments in these CSOs constitute a rather risky bet. The third barrier: the need to consolidate regional voices. West African women's health and rights organizations have not yet constructed a regional approach to advocacy and lobbying because they lack forums and spaces for dialogue and consensus-building.

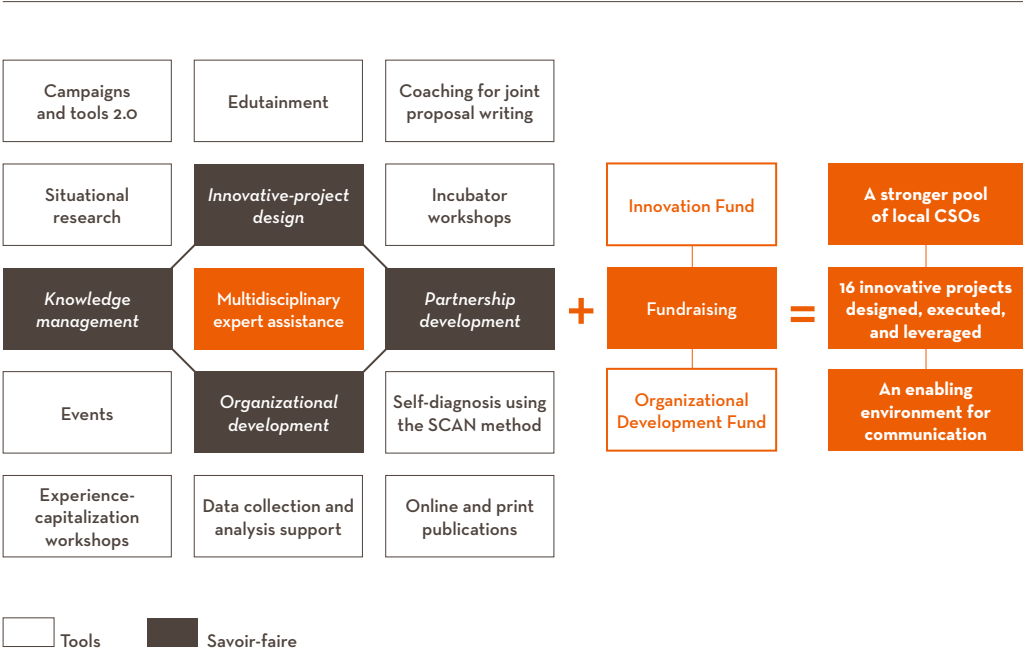


# A NEW PHASE FOR EXPERT ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL CSOs

By building on its achievements while adapting to the above challenges, Equipop will pursue a new approach in its engagement with local CSOs. First, it will make two funds available to local associations. The Innovation Fund will finance collective projects and provide expert assistance, particularly methodologies, knowledge, and spaces for collaboration. (cf. *Equipop Lab in the next article*). The Organizational Development Fund will provide capital that will allow CSOs to consolidate their organizations according to their specific needs. Second, Equipop may also assist with organizational capacity-building, having developed the tools to do so in recent years. Third, Equipop will help local CSOs develop a single voice through which they can address regional decision-makers.

- **How does Equipop take action?**  
Equipop provides comprehensive expertise and assistance to CSOs, including fundraising, coaching, and technical and strategic support.
- **Who are the beneficiaries?**  
The 21 member-organizations of Alliance Droits et Santé, and new feminist organizations.
- **What is the rationale?**  
Because local CSOs and nonprofit associations, indispensable for improving the health and rights of girls and women, must have the means to invent innovative collective projects, advocacy public authorities, and inform and mobilize citizens over the long term.

Equipop Support for CSOs





## INTERVIEW

# Ibrahima Gueye, avid promoter of collective action sponsored by Alliance Droits et Santé

Ibrahima Gueye is the director of Jeunesse et Développement (JED or Youth and Development), a Senegalese youth movement that joined Alliance Droits et Santé two years ago.



### *What do you like about this partnership?*

Everything! We were enchanted by this international alliance, with its member-organizations having varied backgrounds from different countries, including French international organizations. It addresses topics essential for us: JED has worked on reproductive health and family planning for a long time. Joining this network has allowed us to strengthen our municipal and national advocacy efforts; it has also let us interact with regional, national, and international authorities and peers. As a member of the Alliance, we have been able to gain institutional capacity. We found this aspect very well conceived and executed for administration, accounting, and communication, to mention just a few functions. The partnership style also interested us: members see one another, move about; communication between members is constant, as are follow-up and support for donor relationships.

### *How have you benefitted from membership in Alliance Droits et Santé so far?*

We have gained institutional benefits, building our capacities through webinars and in-person consulting. We also benefitted from the valuable support that programme managers provided. For example, we created both a website and paper-based communications! We have received concrete benefits in terms of our administration, finances, and work quality. With the Alliance, we have solidified our national and international positioning.

We have also enlarged our lists of contacts and actions, as well as our competencies. In the end, everything we do in the field has improved through our membership in Alliance Droits et Santé.

### *What to you think you can bring to the network?*

As a youth movement, we have special expertise in taking care of youth FP and reproductive health. We have brought this expertise, along with our national and international networking expertise. Our organization is essentially dynamic, and we work hard to be a creative, proactive force at every meeting – dynamic in our discussions, workshops, and everywhere we are invited to participate!

### *What do you find most interesting in the plans mentioned so far?*

We are eager to explore project incubation methodologies and interested in strengthening the Alliance. We also care about how we can jointly raise more resources and further enlarge our field of action. And we are interested in the mentoring already begun with Equipop and other Alliance members; we think that dynamic will grow stronger.



## **Equipop Lab: full steam ahead on innovation!**

Convinced that civil society organization (CSO) engagement constitutes a decisive element for durable improvements in sexual and reproductive rights and health (SRHR), in 2017, Equipop expanded its offer of expert assistance to CSOs through a new project-incubation methodology: Equipop Lab.

CSOs play a central role in advancing public policy: they identify the needs of populations and relay their findings to decision-makers. They also play the role of watchdog, keeping close tabs on the implementation of national commitments and the quality of programmes. Thus they constitute precious partners in the effort to change social norms and realize governmental plans and programmes. However, to fulfil these roles, West African CSOs must rise to a major challenge: innovation!

As they juggle the technical demands of fundraising with operational constraints, CSOs must avoid many pitfalls, such as reproducing interventions of limited effectiveness, inadequately exploiting research findings and lessons learned, or missing opportunities for synergy with existing initiatives. A new project-incubation methodology dubbed “Equipop Lab” aims to lift some of these constraints. Equipop uses the Labs to benefit various projects and partnerships, such as the one with FONDEMSAN presented below.

“ It’s the very first time that I have participated in a workshop where we created the situation analyses and proposed courses of action. ”

Workshop participant

“ The method is innovative, less tiring, and very productive. ”

Workshop participant



## What is an Equipop Lab?

Inspired by design thinking, an Equipop Lab is a workshop-style approach that focuses on lifting some of the constraints that CSOs encounter in the project-conception phase. The Labs provide participants with human-centered methodologies and tools. The Equipop Lab methodology was developed with the help of design-thinking specialists, aiming to create a collective space for CSOs and their partners to think about and create innovative and relevant projects.

Equipop developed a workshop format that encourages knowledge-sharing and finely-grained analyses of the youth and adolescent SRHR context in which CSOs work. Such detailed context analysis serves as the basis for innovation. The workshop has participants go through eight iterative phases and periods of agreement and disagreement.





FONDEMSAN: BETTING ON INNOVATION FOR GROUND-BREAKING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOBILIZATION PROJECTS

The West African Health Organization (WAHO) supports the Equipop Lab approach. WAHO has wagered on innovation by launching a new funding programme, FONDEMSAN, for its Demography, Sexual and Reproductive Health (DEMSAN) project. Destined for consortia of national midsize CSOs, FONDEMSAN combines funding with technical assistance; it chiefly aims to foster the emergence of ground-breaking SRHR/YA social and political mobilization projects. WAHO has given Equipop a mandate to support technical aspects of the fund through two kinds of interventions: helping to incubate innovative projects via Equipop Labs, and supporting new monitoring, evaluation, and experience-capitalization mechanisms that measure changes among the project's target beneficiaries and/or participating CSOs. Equipop also provides administrative and financial expertise by conducting organizational assessments of FONDEMSAN-funded CSOs during the project-selection process and at project completion.

“ Yes, it’s very useful and interesting, a method that can be more or less easily adapted, depending on the situation. It was a useful experience for me because I do a lot of activities with young people and it’s a good way to guide them in their plans.”

Stéphanie Kimou  
Outside expert hired for workshops

Equipop Labs and the FONDEMSAN Project in 2018

	<p>3 PROJECTS FOR SOCIAL AND POLITICAL MOBILIZATION INCUBATED</p>
<p>BURKINA FASO, NIGER &amp; MALI</p>	<p>EACH PROJECT €256,000</p>

The first phase of the FONDEMSAN project took place 2017-2018. It provided an opportunity for Equipop to deploy its new project-incubator system in Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali. In each country, Equipop helped a consortium of CSOs with various mandates (health, sexual and reproductive health, women's rights, youth) conceive social and political mobilization projects that aimed to bolster compliance with and implementation of national commitments to improve SRHR for women and youth. Aiming to strengthen and align with efforts to reposition family planning in three countries and the West Africa sub-region, the projects combined support for youth leadership with targeted advocacy and promoted alliances with artists, celebrities, and the media in order to mobilize citizens.

- **How does Equipop take action?**

Equipop helps select project sponsors, researches institutional contexts, inventories practices to emulate, reviews new research, makes research findings accessible to laymen, produces and leads incubator workshops, assists in formalizing projects, and provides technical assistance for implementation, training and experience-capitalization.

- **Who are the beneficiaries?**

Groups of change actors dedicated to a variety of causes.

- **What is the rationale?**

Helping CSOs and their development partners innovate on behalf of the rights and health of girls and women.

“The workshop is already very innovative in the way it draws on new ways of creating projects and precise analyses of national contexts. It breaks new ground by exploring new paths and action modes, compared to what we are used to doing. I think that through this workshop, which puts participants into action, the CSOs will better understand the role they can play and gain confidence in themselves, because during the workshop they realize that they can set up projects on their own, or very nearly.”

**Jean-Pierre Guengant**

Outside expert hired for workshops

## Fatima Kandine, proponent of innovation in the service of SRHR

Fatima Kandine is the  
DEMSAN programme  
coordinator at West  
African Health  
Organization (WAHO).



### *What is the DEMSAN programme?*

DEMSAN stands for “DEMographie, SANTé Sexuelle et de la Reproduction” (Demography, Sexual and Reproductive Health). It is a regional project that aims to accelerate demographic transitions in Francophone member-countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). WAHO implements the programme with funding from the French development agency, AFD (Agence Française de Développement). All ECOWAS countries can benefit from DEMSAN, although it concentrates its investments in Mali, Niger, Burkina Faso and Benin.

### *What are its main components?*

The DEMSAN project has three components: (1) strengthening the WAHO watch post by supporting regional events and national sexual and reproductive health (SRH) strategies, (2) promoting demographic and SRH research, and (3) developing digital health technologies in the ECOWAS region. The project also aims to bolster political advocacy for sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and to encourage the emergence of civil society in ECOWAS member-states through the implementation of SRHR policies and strategies. One of the project components aims to strengthen a regional funding mechanism that subsidizes contraceptive products in eligible Francophone West African countries (Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, Mali).

### *Why did WAHO prioritize working with civil society?*

As genuinely grassroots associations, CSOs have a unique ability to make the needs of populations heard and understood. This calls for them to take a major role in developing and improving public policies. By allocating €2 million to FONDEMSAN, WAHO hopes to bolster CSO capacity for social and political mobilization in Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali and Benin, and to encourage groundbreaking projects that will significantly improve youth and adolescent SRHR. The fund will also support the development of a more structured civil-society voice, one that can take part in discussions on SRHR issues and opportunities.

### *What do you think of Equipop's collaboration through the FONDEMSAN project?*

WAHO called on Equipop for its expertise in assisting West African CSOs. Equipop brings FONDEMSAN both administrative and technical support. For example, Equipop conducted an organizational assessment of the lead CSOs within consortia that receive funding. It also provided technical support during the project-drafting phase and helped to implement a monitoring and evaluation system. Equipop also supports WAHO in steering the fund and with its overall monitoring. We are satisfied so far with Equipop's very important work. We very sincerely thank its employees for all their efforts and for agreeing to work with WAHO on implementing FONDEMSAN.



# O4

## 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 Équilibres & Populations to empower women and improve their lives, thereby fostering equitable and sustainable development.

Équilibres & Populations currently has 23 employees, 58 members, an annual budget of €2.12 million, a head office in Paris, and a regional office in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso.

## Our vision and values

Équilibres & Populations firmly believes that sustainable development cannot be achieved as long as women – half of humanity – are left behind. Empowering women and improving their lives – especially ensuring stronger sexual and reproductive health and rights – both herald and contribute to development.

We base our vision on these core values:



### RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Équilibres & Populations 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

Équilibres & Populations 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 society.



### EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Équilibres & Populations 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.

# Our guiding principles reflect our values



## ENABLING STAKEHOLDER PARTICIPATION

Équilibres & Populations 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, our target populations.



## COLLABORATING WITH PARTNERS

Rather than expanding internally, Équilibres & Populations 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 local populations, and to conduct social and political advocacy campaigns tailored to local situations.



## WORKING WITHIN NETWORKS

Équilibres & Populations has also successfully created or joined synergistic development-oriented networks made up of international solidarity organizations (ISOs), research and academic institutions, public agencies and offices, corporations, and other stakeholders in France, Europe and Francophone West Africa.

We are involved at various levels – collaborating on projects, making joint decisions, coordinating working groups, or sitting on civil society organizations' boards of directors.



# Our mission and actions

Our organization aims to empower women and improve their lives, thereby fostering equitable and sustainable development.

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.

Équilibres & Populations carries out its mission in Francophone West Africa, Europe and North America by working with:

- 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



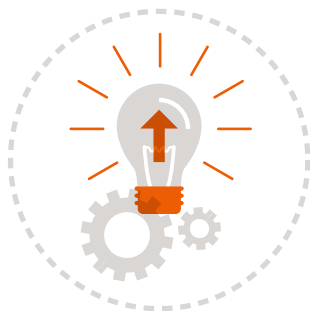
### Sparking change

at the very heart of communities, 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, and demography. 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**

Équilibres & Populations 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**

Équilibres & Populations 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**

Équilibres & Populations also draws upon the social sciences through a gender-based approach, the better to meet the diverse needs and interests of the populations we serve. 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**

Équilibres & Populations 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**

Équilibres & Populations 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**

Équilibres & Populations strengthens capacities among our development partners and encourages them to share their experiences. We provide consulting services and technical support – conducting joint assessments, leading meetings, supervising and assisting fieldwork, creating innovative pedagogical materials, and designing and presenting training sessions.



## Our partner networks

Équilibres & Populations has always believed that collective efforts are powerful vectors of change. In 2017, we strengthened collaboration with several civil society organization networks in France, Europe, and Francophone West Africa, including:



### **Alliance Droits et Santé**

**[www.alliancedroitsetsante.org](http://www.alliancedroitsetsante.org)**

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



### **Coordination Sud**

**[www.coordinationsud.org](http://www.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.



### **Collectif Santé 2015**

**[www.collectif-sante-mondiale.fr](http://www.collectif-sante-mondiale.fr)**

Collectif Santé 2015 brings together nine French CSOs: Action Against Hunger, Équilibres & Populations, Global Health Advocates France, Médecins du Monde, One, Oxfam France, Family Planning France, Sidaction, and Solthis. These groups have joined forces to counter successive decreases in France's health-aid budget and its gradual withdrawal from international solidarity activities.



### **EFQM**

**[www.efqm.org](http://www.efqm.org)**

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



### **EndFGM**

**[www.endfgm.eu](http://www.endfgm.eu)**

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



### EuroNGOs

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

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



*Agir en réseau pour mettre fin à l'excision*

### Excision, parlons-en !

“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 Cross-sectoral 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

[www.genreenaction.net](http://www.genreenaction.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

[www.girlsnotbrides.org](http://www.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

[www.ibpinitiative.org](http://www.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.



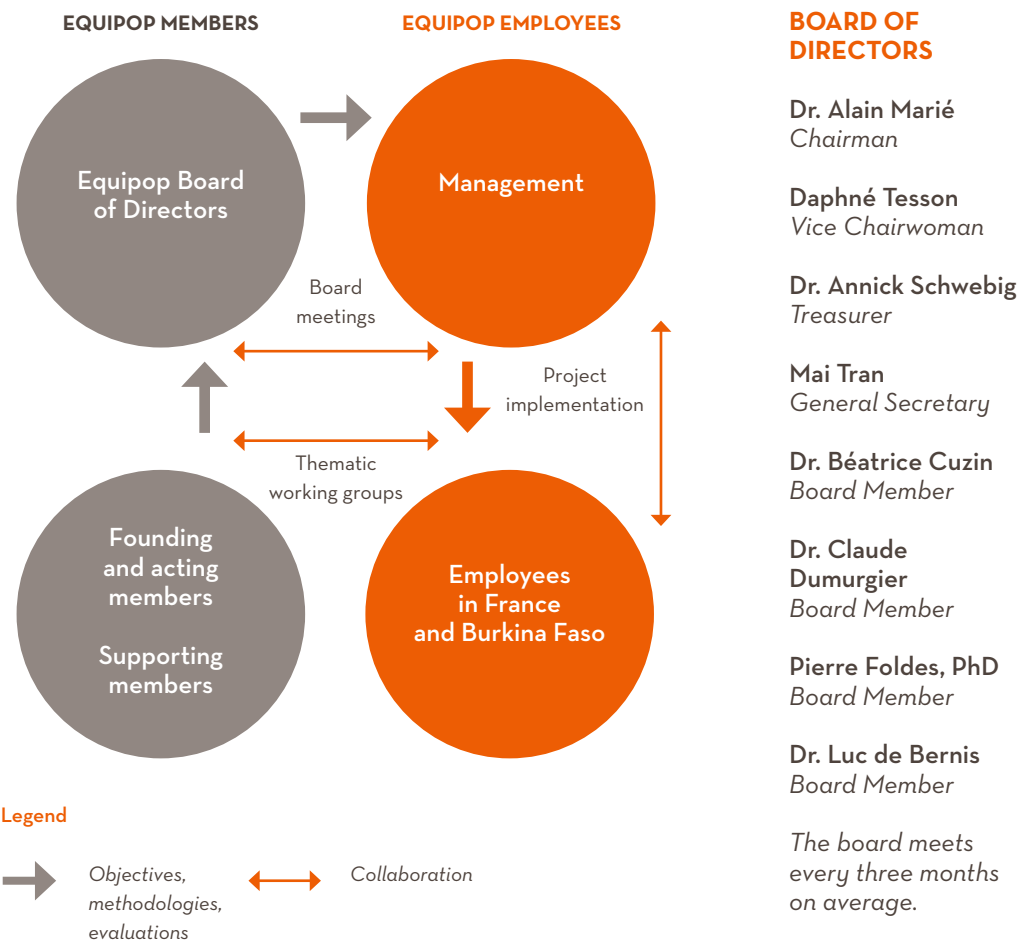
**Reproductive Health  
Supplies Coalition**

### 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.

# Citizen engagement and professional involvement

Equipop draws on a seven-person board and a multidisciplinary team of more than 20 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.



## 2017 STAFF

### MANAGEMENT

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**Aurélie Gal-Régniez**

*Executive Director*

### COMMUNICATIONS UNIT

---

**Nathalie Perrotin**

*Communications Manager*

**Augustin Assaba**

*Communications Assistant*

**Marion Lambert**

*Communications Trainee*

**Kristy Romain**

*Communications Trainee*

### ADVOCACY UNIT

---

**Nicolas Rainaud**

*Advocacy Manager  
France & International*

**Marguerite Bannwarth**

*Advocacy Officer*

**Garance Dauchy**

*Advocacy Trainee*

**Julia Heres Garcia**

*Advocacy Trainee*

**Brigitte Syan**

*Advocacy Manager  
West Africa*

**Remi Minoungou**

*Advocacy Officer*

**Oum Kouloum Sawadogo**

*Advocacy Officer*

### PROGRAMMES & DEVELOPMENT UNIT

---

**Dominique Pobel**

*Programme &  
Development Manager*

**Sokhna Ba**

*Programme Officer*

**Isma Benboulbahr**

*Programme Assistant*

**Elisa Blin**

*Experience  
Capitalization Officer*

**Elise Fouillet**

*Innovation & Support Officer*

**Aurélie Hamelin-Desrumaux**

*Programme &  
Development Officer*

**Juliette Manaud**

*Programme Assistant*

### 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*

### 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**

*IT Officer*

**Nicolas Schlegel**

*Accounting Officer*

**Caroline Traoré**

*Organizational  
Development Advisor*

**Julie Van der Smissen**

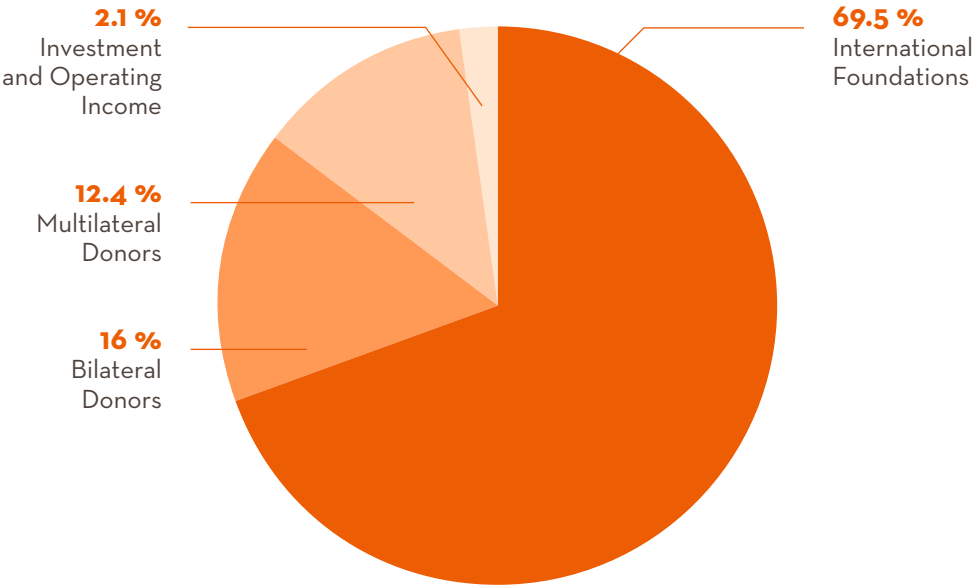
*Administrative & Financial  
Support Officer*



# Équilibres & Populations

## 2017 Budget

In 2017, we spent 90% of our funding on programme-related and mission-fulfilling expenses. Overall, revenue increased by 39% over last year, and we ended the year with a cash surplus.



Équilibres & Populations Funding Sources (2017)

## REVENUES

Équilibres & Populations revenue reached €2,256,341 in 2017, a 39% increase over 2016 (€1,662,009). The increase came primarily from accelerating implementation of the Alliance Droits et Santé project and actions (begun previously), from annual renewal of the UNFPA partnership, and from the realization of new partnerships with RAES and the West Africa Health Organization (WAHO).

Nearly 69% of our revenue comes from international foundations, chiefly American ones, including the Hewlett Foundation and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Institutional sources of funding accounted for 28% of revenue this year, 16% of which came from the bilateral French development agency, AFD (Agence Française de Développement), and 12% from multilateral donors (United Nations agencies and WAHO).

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

## EXPENDITURES

Équilibres & Populations allocated 90% of its funding to program- and mission-related expenses. Administrative and overhead expenses remain stable and controlled. In 2017, Equipop expenditures reached €2,122,208, a notable 42% increase over 2016.

The increase in expenses stems from the acceleration of the Alliance Droits et Santé project, initiated in 2015, and its extension to Côte d'Ivoire. Compared with the previous year, expenditures generated by this project rose nearly 45% in 2017. At the same time, we maintained our support for African civil society organizations by mobilizing resources for them and raising funds from new donors. We also pursued new partnerships with institutional donors (West African Health Organization, Mayor's Office of the City of Paris, AFD) while maintaining those initiated in 2016 with UNFPA, Palladium, Pathfinder, Solthis, and Marie Stopes International. Our human resources budget increased 25.7% over 2016, due to higher levels of project activity and recruitment.

At fiscal year-end, we had a €134,133 surplus. This result mainly derives from increased funding activity and controlled overhead costs.

The surplus will help augment our capital reserves. We have a medium-term objective to increase our intervention capacity for ground-breaking activities; we also seek to augment our investment capacity, in aid of professionalizing our administrative functions. In addition, we wish to have the ability to cover possible financing gaps while preserving internal expertise.

Équilibres & Populations' annual accounts are audited by Mazars SPCC, certified public accountants. The annual accounts for 2017 and the accountants' report appear in their entirety (in French) on [equipop.org](http://equipop.org).

## INTERVIEW

# Brigitte Syan, head of the West Africa Advocacy Unit

Equipop employee for four years, Brigitte Syan heads its West Africa Advocacy Unit



*Brigitte, you have been working for Equipop for four years. Can you briefly tell us about your previous positions in the organization and your current role?*

I was hired as a project manager in 2014, for an advocacy project that led to the family-planning task shifting trial in Burkina Faso. I now head the West Africa Advocacy Unit, based in Ouagadougou at Equipop's West Africa office.

*What are the main changes you have seen since you joined the organization?*

Many changes have occurred during the past four years. First, important organizational changes: Equipop has grown and the number of employees has increased considerably. It has managed to divide work well internally while coping with important institutional changes to its governance.

*What makes you proud to work for Equipop?*

I like to work for Equipop because it sponsors and defends topics that motivate me. I like being surrounded by engaged coworkers; they get through a lot of work every day to improve the status and rights of women, particularly in West Africa.

*How would you like to see the organization evolve over the next five years?*

In a few years, I would like Equipop to enlarge its footprint in the nine Ouagadougou Partnership countries, but also in France and internationally, while maintaining its quality and rigor. The 2018 restructuring of operations into work units is a real plus for the future and demonstrates the organization's desire to continue growing!

*What advice would you give to new hires?*

What I appreciate about Equipop is that each employee counts and can propose new ideas. I would advise new recruits to get involved in the life of the organization, to make Equipop even more radiant for the benefit of women worldwide, particularly those in West Africa!

# Acknowledgements

Équilibres & Populations 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:*





# Follow Équilibres & Populations daily news



## **On the Internet**

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

To learn more and  
take action.



## **On Twitter**

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

For real-time news  
about us and SRHR.



## **Through our newsletter**

For a periodic summary  
of our news highlights.



## **On Facebook**

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

For exclusive content and for  
sharing with our community.



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For behind-the-scenes  
photos of Equipop.



## **On Youtube**

[Equilibres & Populations](https://www.youtube.com/Equilibres%20Populations)

For videos about  
us and SRHR.



## **On LinkedIn**

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

For Equipop news and  
innovations related to SRHR.

# Annual Report

Équilibres & Populations 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.

## Credits

This report is also available online:  
[www.equipop.org](http://www.equipop.org)

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