

SUCCESS STORY: COMMUNITY AND RELIGIOUS LEADER CHANGES HIS BEHAVIOR, ADVOCATES FOR FAMILY PLANNING AND SANITATION IN THE CLC OF MOLIPIHA (DISTRICT OF MECUBÚRI).

João Roieque, married, 46 years old, father of 6 children (4 daughters and 2 sons) is the president of the Community Leader Council (CLC) of Molipiha, President of the Local Population Council, President of the water committee, and the secretary of the neighborhood of Molipiha in the district of Mecubúri. In the religious community, João is the Rátibo and leads the prayer session on Fridays at his mosque.

Before the Hot Topics discussions in sexual and reproductive health in Molipiha, Mr. Roieque knew little about healthy hygiene practices or the benefits of family planning. For example, he often ate meals without washing his hands, and many people in his household would wash their hands in the same basin without using soap. João did not use Certeza to treat the drinking water for his family. As João did not use condoms, his wife became pregnant unintentionally – the two of them were unfamiliar with and poorly understood family planning.

In March 2012, 30 community leaders of the Molipiha CLC participated in the Hot Topics discussions on sexual and reproductive health, facilitated by the MCH nurse and Naida Gaio, director of the Mecubúri Health Center. The combined activities of the work of the community health network (volunteers, animadoras and the community health supervisor), the interactive performances of the Mopoli theatre group and the discussions in Hot Topics empowered and brought a new vision to the family and community of Mr. João Roieque, as he fully understands the different methods of family planning, such as the IUD, the injectible contraceptive Depo-provera, female sterilization, contraceptive pills, male and female condoms, and male tubal ligation.



João understood that the condom, apart from preventing STI transmission, reinfection and HIV infection, can also be used as a method of family planning. As he is a community leader, he realized that it was up to him to set the example for others in his community to follow.

It was following the discussions on Hot Topics that Mr. Roieque really understood the importance of family planning to space pregnancies. As such, his wife chose

the injectible contraceptive (Depo-Provera) family planning method and he distributes condoms – making the neighborhood of Molipiha the highest consuming neighborhood for condoms.

In terms of hygiene and sanitation, the signs of behavior change are obvious in the life and family of Mr. João Roieque. The changes were small at first, but grew into sustained behavior change: the product of the tireless work in education and community health mobilization carried out by volunteers, animadoras and the supervisor of the community health group and the theatre group Mopoli. João has a latrine, a Tip Tap, he always has soap and water in the bathroom, a place to air dry clean dishes and Certeza to treat drinking water.



Mr. Roieque is an active and effective participant in the discussions of the Co-Management Committee of the Health Centre of Mecubúri. His community is becoming a model community and his reputation has improved/increased in the community.

Now, João Roieque will support the community health animadora in community-based distribution of contraceptive pills through the creation of a subcommittee of family planning within the CLC of Molipiha.