

3<sup>rd</sup> World Congress on

# PUBLIC HEALTH AND NUTRITION

February 26-28, 2018 London, UK

## THE ATTITUDES AND ACTIVITIES OF PASTORS AND FAITH LEADERS IN ZIMBABWE ON THE USE OF FAMILY PLANNING METHODS AMONG THEIR MEMBERS

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Faith leaders are important gatekeepers in disseminating reproductive health messages and influencing positive behaviour change within communities. Faith leaders are seen as the most powerful, visible, and reachable form of authority, even trusted more than governments or non-profit organisations. In addition to providing counsel and advice aimed at enhancing health and wellbeing of the worshippers, faith leaders also play an important role in advocating and influencing what is taught in schools and what services are provided in healthcare facilities. Because of this influence, faith leaders often have an unparalleled opportunity—indeed, a moral obligation—to prioritise conversations about family planning, advocating, and closing the contraception gap. The overall objective of this study was to ascertain the attitude and activities of pastors and faith leaders in Zimbabwe on the use of family planning methods among their members. The result of this study revealed some faith leaders believed that spreading information about family planning education was the responsibility of the government and tended to avoid such responsibility. However, through training on family planning advocacy much can be achieved.

### Biography

Moses Alikali is a Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist with vast experience in HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Family Planning, OVC, Maternal and Child Health and Health System Strengthening projects. His educational background in Mathematics and Statistics has given him broad knowledge in research. He obtained certificates in Epidemiology and Public Health in Humanitarian Crises from Johns Hopkins University as well as certificate in Programme Monitoring and Evaluation from the University of Zimbabwe. Presently he has been working with the Global Ministries-Global Health in Zimbabwe as a Monitoring and Evaluation Officer (Global Mission Fellows).

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