When Somali women make decisions about their reproductive health, they do not think about their ideal family size because the number of children one has affects their quality of life and the financial well-being of the family. Some use this basic position to argue that Islam does not permit contraception. Any practice that prevents pregnancy is considered infanticide, which is repeatedly condemned in the Quran. It is believed that a Muslim must trust that God will provide for his family’s needs. Though reaching out to a religiously conservative community can be difficult, MIHV has been successful in delivering culturally appropriate family planning education through detailed planning in Muslim communities. In 2004, MIHV launched the Somali Child Spacing Project to address this need.

Challenges

Despite the challenges, MIHV has been successful in launching the Child Spacing Project. By understanding these elements and working closely with the community, MIHV has delivered culturally appropriate family planning education that is accepted. Hormonal methods are somewhat controversial. Some believe that since the Prophet used a natural contraceptive method, other natural and barrier methods are acceptable. MIHV has been effective in promoting these methods.

Sources: