

Annex 1: consolidated criteria for reporting qualitative studies (COREQ): 32-item checklist			
No	Item	Guide questions / description	
Domain 1: research team and reflexivity			
Personal characteristics			
1.	Interviewer/facilitator	Which author/s conducted the interview or focus group?	BA conducted the interview
2.	Credentials	What were the researcher's credentials? <i>E.g. PhD, MD</i>	BA: MSc NG: MSc, PhDc SD: PhD BN: MSc PY: MSc PH: MSc NP: PhD, MD
3.	Occupation	What was their occupation at the time of the study?	BA: research assistant NG: research assistant SD: researcher BN: research assistant PY: research assistant PH: research assistant NP: research coordinator
4.	Gender	Was the researcher male or female?	BA: female NG: male SD: male BN: male PY: male PH: male NP: male
5.	Experience and training	What experience or training did the researcher have?	BA: registered midwife, MSc and assistant researcher NG: registered nurse, PhDc and assistant researcher SD: registered nurse, PhD and senior researcher BN: registered midwife, MSc and assistant researcher PY: registered nurse, MSc and assistant researcher PH: registered nurse, MSc and assistant researcher NP: registered MD, PhD and senior researcher
Relationship with participants			
6.	Relationship established	Was a relationship established prior to study commencement?	No
7.	Participant knowledge of the interviewer	What did the participants know about the researcher? <i>e.g. personal goals, reasons for doing the research</i>	The study was presented to all participants before enrollment. All participants signed a consent form. The goal of the interview was explained to all participants before the interviews.
8.	Interviewer characteristics	What characteristics were reported about the interviewer/facilitator?	One research professionals (a female) conducted the interviews. She worked with the research team since the beginning of the study.

		e.g. <i>Bias, assumptions, reasons and interests in the research topic</i>	
Domain 2: study design			
Theoretical framework			
9.	Methodological orientation and Theory	What methodological orientation was stated to underpin the study? e.g. <i>grounded theory, discourse analysis, ethnography, phenomenology, content analysis</i>	Descriptive qualitative approach (close to content analysis) embedded in a randomized trial
Participant selection			
10.	Sampling	How were participants selected? e.g. <i>purposive, convenience, consecutive, snowball</i>	Maximum variability was targeted based on age, gender, socio-economic status, practices.
11.	Method of approach	How were participants approached? e.g. <i>face-to-face, telephone, mail, email</i>	The Union Fraternelle des Croyants (UFC) helped identify the different religious leaders spread across the five sectors of the urban municipality of the urban city Dori. Then letters of invitation were sent to all religious leaders in the urban commune of Dori. During this first meeting at UFC headquarters, the study plan and procedure were explained to the participants. The phone contacts of those interested in participating in the study were recorded. Finally, they were called to set the place, day, and time for the meeting for the individual interview.
12.	Sample size	How many participants were in the study?	21 accepted to participate. 8 Muslim 7 Catholic 6 Protestant
13.	Non-participation	How many people refused to participate or dropped out? Reasons?	All (21) religious leaders contacted accepted to participate.
Setting			
14.	Setting of data collection	Where was the data collected? e.g. <i>home, clinic, workplace</i>	At home
15.	Presence of non-participants	Was anyone else present besides the participants and researchers?	No
16.	Description of sample	What are the important characteristics of the sample? e.g. <i>demographic data, date</i>	The sample consisted of nine women and twelve men. Their ages ranged from 37 to 78 years old. Three of the participants had primary education, ten of the participants had secondary education, and eight had a high level of education. Nine participants were Muslims; seven were Roman Catholics and five Protestants, all spread across the five sectors of the Dori urban municipality.
Data collection			
17.	Interview guide	Were questions, prompts, guides provided by the authors? Was it pilot tested?	The interview guides included open questions relating the knowledge of religious leaders on modern contraception; the use of information on modern contraception by religious leaders in religious activities; existing relationships

			between religious leaders and reproductive health services. Interviews were in French. It was pretested and adjusted accordingly.
18.	Repeat interviews	Were repeat interviews carried out? If yes, how many?	Not with this design
19.	Audio/visual recording	Did the research use audio or visual recording to collect the data?	All interviews were audio-recorded
20.	Field notes	Were field notes made during and/or after the interview or focus group?	The interviewers took notes during and after the interviews.
21.	Duration	What was the duration of the interviews or focus group?	35 to 20 minutes
22.	Data saturation	Was data saturation discussed?	Yes
23.	Transcripts returned	Were transcripts returned to participants for comment and/or correction?	No
Domain 3: analysis and findings			
Data analysis			
24.	Number of data coders	How many data coders coded the data?	Two coders with regular validation with one of the authors (BA).
25.	Description of the coding tree	Did authors provide a description of the coding tree?	No
26.	Derivation of themes	Were themes identified in advance or derived from the data?	The first codes were based on interview guide. Many other codes derived from the data following an inductive approach combined with thematic analysis
27.	Software	What software, if applicable, was used to manage the data?	QDA Miner software from Provalis (version 4.1.3)
28.	Participant checking	Did participants provide feedback on the findings?	Not indicated (ref Sally Thorne, Interpretative Description: Qualitative Research for Applied Practice. 2016, Taylor and Francis)
Reporting			
29.	Quotations presented	Were participant quotations presented to illustrate the themes / findings? Was each quotation identified? <i>e.g. participant number</i>	Yes, in a separate table to simplify the reading. All quotes have been translated to English by a Professional Translator
30.	Data and findings consistent	Was there consistency between the data presented and the findings?	All findings are based on the collected and analyzed data.
31.	Clarity of major themes	Were major themes clearly presented in the findings?	Three major themes are described in the manuscript.
32.	Clarity of minor themes	Is there a description of diverse cases or discussion of minor themes?	No