

# Social Norms Exploration: Identifying hindrances to MNCH services' uptake in Manicaland

Patience Panganai and Tonderai Muzire – FHI 360 Mhuri / Imuli project; Agnes Mugumbate – MOHCC Manicaland Province

## Background

Social norms represent a group's shared beliefs and expectations about what people should and should not do, and can help to explain health seeking behavior.

Addressing norms that impede the uptake of maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) services will contribute to improved MNCH outcomes.

The Mhuri / Imuli project seeks to understand the nuanced cultural beliefs about FP, giving birth and child care among apostolic and Church of Zion communities, using a Social Norms Exploration process developed by FHI 360 and partners

## Method and Process

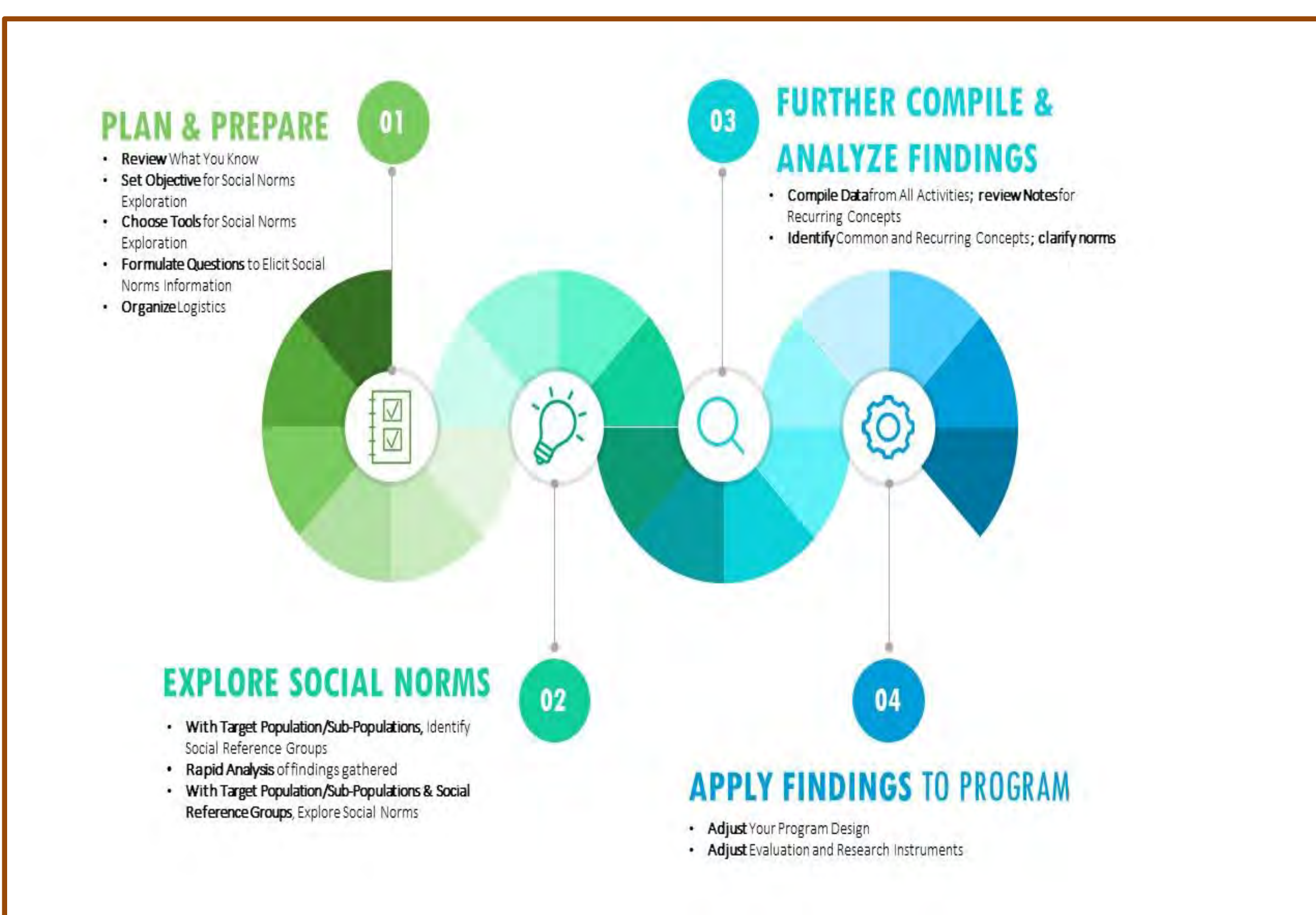


PHOTO CREDIT (12 PT CAPS) outside upper right of photo

Social Norms Exploration with Women of Child Bearing Age from the apostolic community at Zvipiripiri Clinic  
Photo credit:

## Results from preliminary SNE

WCBA	Men	Recurring concepts
“Better let the children die than losing your marriage. Children are like bricks we will just mold more”.	Children die because of witchcraft	Child deaths cannot be prevented
Cultural or family customs for the family you married into must be followed.	“Kureurura” cultural norm that one must confess e.g. if a baby is not feeding	Strong patriarchal cultural beliefs strongly hinged on religion.
It is normal to deliver with the TBA; who may be a mother/grandmother with deep experience.	Cases of home deliveries are among the members of the Johanne Marange apostolic church	It is typical behavior to deliver at home.
GBV and sanctions will occur to a woman who goes against church/community beliefs.	Religion does not allow people to take contraception or seek medical services	Belief in consulting the prophets/n’angas /church elders for problems in life
Women who seek health services will face isolation from their male spouses and church	Religion does not allow people to take contraception or seek medical services	Fear of the church is a great hinderance to using health facilities.
Women cannot do anything without their husbands knowing. There will be extreme consequences (divorce/death).	Men don’t want their women to get new information when married	A married woman has limited information and no decision-making power and

## Lessons Learnt

- During SNE youths and adolescents easily open up in separate groups
- The presence of the young female church leaders in the groups hinders free expression. There is need to verify the participants and understand their communal roles
- There is need for the church involvement in addressing SGBV, with involvement of all the churches other than one church.

## Next Steps

- Engagement of CSO to conduct wider SNE with multiple community groups and address identified norms through community dialogue