

RHCS Update:

The Global
Programme
to Enhance
Reproductive
Health
Commodity
Security





UNFPA



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C. Ishikawa / UNFPA

Cover photo: Mother and child survive a risky birth in Chad. UNFPA/M.Albert.

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FOREWORD

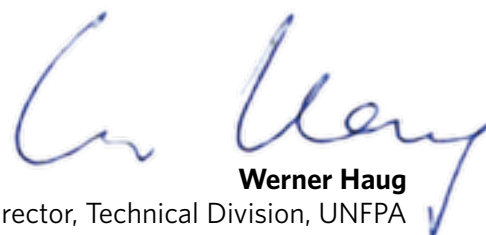
The adequate provision of contraceptives, condoms and other reproductive health supplies has been hampered by funding shortages and a tendency to look at reproductive health commodities in isolation from other issues. But without supplies, individuals cannot exercise their reproductive rights. UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, strives to help individuals everywhere exercise their right to sexual and reproductive health.

Since 1990, UNFPA has been considered to be the largest multilateral supplier of contraceptives and condoms, and the lead United Nations agency for reproductive health commodity security (RHCS). Building on substantial but ad-hoc support in the area, in 2007 UNFPA introduced a more strategic approach with the launch of the Global Programme to Enhance Reproductive Health Commodity Security.

Countries supported by the Global Programme to Enhance RHCS are reporting significant progress and measurable impact. Those reporting the most dramatic progress have received the most support. While the procurement of supplies is a key part of this support, the Global Programme seeks to build know-how for sustainable national systems.

The best results emerge from a collaborative process in which governments work closely with UNFPA to reach isolated and vulnerable populations. In Ethiopia, the use of modern contraceptives has more than doubled in recent years. In Lao People's Democratic Republic, community-based distribution agents are expanding access to family planning information and services for indigenous peoples in remote areas. In Sierra Leone, deaths due to pregnancy and childbirth have been dramatically reduced.

UNFPA has contributed to this progress through a wide range of efforts to advance voluntary family planning and maternal and newborn health. The Global Programme to Enhance RHCS adds an intensified, structured and strategic dimension that in only a few years is already yielding measureable results. Through this publication, I am pleased to share an update on the Global Programme's progress.



Werner Haug
Director, Technical Division, UNFPA

GOAL OF THE PROGRAMME

The UNFPA Global Programme to Enhance Reproductive Health Commodity Security is a framework for assisting countries in planning for their own needs. At the request of governments, UNFPA provides sustained multi-year support as well as more targeted and emergency support through the Global Programme, working to:

- Integrate RHCS in national policies, plans and programmes through advocacy with policy makers, parliamentarians and partners in government;
- Strengthen the delivery system to ensure reliable supply and the management of logistics information;
- Procure contraceptives and other essential RH supplies and promote their use through various mechanisms such as community-based distribution;
- Provide training to build skills at every step — from forecasting needs, to providing quality information and services in family planning, maternal health and the prevention of STIs, including HIV.

1. ABOUT THE GLOBAL PROGRAMME

Without the right products, the best health programmes can't succeed. Three white pills can slow the bleeding in a birth gone wrong. Condoms prevent infection and unintended pregnancy. Sutures, gauze and gloves make Cesareans safer.

Access to a reliable supply of contraceptives, condoms, medicines and equipment is fundamental to all sexual and reproductive health programming and to achievement of the ICPD Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals.

UNFPA launched the Global Programme to Enhance Reproductive Health Commodity Security in 2007 with the goal of increasing the availability, access and use of reproductive health commodities for voluntary family planning, HIV/STI prevention and maternal health services. The Global Programme supports the procurement of essential supplies and works closely with governments to develop capacities to improve planning and logistics management, including monitoring supplies and forecasting needs.

Flexible in response to each country's situation, the Global Programme's key activities include:

- Establishing a comprehensive approach to supplies for the country, with a stronger overall system;
- Fostering national leadership through national coordination teams;
- Developing national plans and strategies for RHCS;
- Incorporating RHCS in national budget lines, and finding innovative financing solutions;
- Conducting situation analysis to determine the needs of the population, in particular rural and marginalized groups;
- Raising awareness of the benefits of RHCS and contraceptive use through information, education and communication;
- Advocating inclusion of reproductive health supplies in the national essential drug list;
- Increasing country capacity to forecast need for supplies by developing a user-friendly computer software tool and providing training for its use;
- Monitoring and evaluating progress towards specific RHCS results.

The Global Programme to Enhance RHCS provides multi-year support to countries selected on the basis of need (Stream One), and also provides targeted and emergency assistance to many other countries (Streams Two and Three).

The Global Programme to Enhance Reproductive Health Commodity Security				
Summary	A framework for assisting countries in planning their own needs for essential reproductive health supplies			
Duration	2007-2013			
Donors	Netherlands, United Kingdom, Spain, Canada, Luxembourg, Spain/Catalonia			
Budget	\$750,000,000 needed over five years			
Allocation	80% commodities provision, 20% capacity development for Stream One countries			
	2007	2008	2009	2010
Purchase of commodities	\$13 million	\$16 million	\$71 million	\$55 million
Capacity development and advocacy	\$4 million	\$4 million	\$16 million	\$28 million*
Countries	Stream One countries receive comprehensive multi-year support; Stream Two receive specific shorter-term assistance; Stream Three receive emergency support.			
Stream One	The Global Programme started with five Stream One countries. In 2010, there were 11 Stream One countries, plus 34 Stream Two and 32 Stream Three countries.	11		11
Stream Two		30		34
Stream Three		32		32
Total		73		77

*This is total amount distributed to countries for activities being implemented.

Reproductive health commodity security means that all individuals can obtain and use affordable, quality reproductive health supplies of their choice whenever they need them.

Countries in which the Global Programme to Enhance RHCS procured commodities in 2009:

Africa			
Angola	Congo (Brazaville)	Kenya	Sao Tome Principe
Benin	Cote d' Ivoire	Lesotho	Seychelles
Burkina Faso	Democratic Republic of Congo	Liberia	Sierra Leone
Burundi	Djibouti	Madagascar	Sudan
Botswana	Eritrea	Mali	Rwanda
Cameroon	Ethiopia	Mauritania	Swaziland
Cape Verde	Gabon	Mauritius	Tanzania
Central African Republic	Ghana	Mozambique	Togo
Chad	Guinea	Niger	Uganda
Comoros	Guinea-Bissau	Nigeria	Zambia
			Zimbabwe
Asia and the Pacific			
Bangladesh	Papua New Guinea		
Cambodia	Sri Lanka		
Lao PDR	Suriname		
Mongolia	Timor Leste		
Myanmar	Viet Nam		
Pacific Islands			
Eastern Europe and the Middle East			
Georgia	Pakistan		
Kyrgyzstan	Tajikistan		
Lebanon	Turkmenistan		
Palestine	Uzbekistan		

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