



Early Warning System for Contraceptives in West and Central Africa Improves Supply Availability

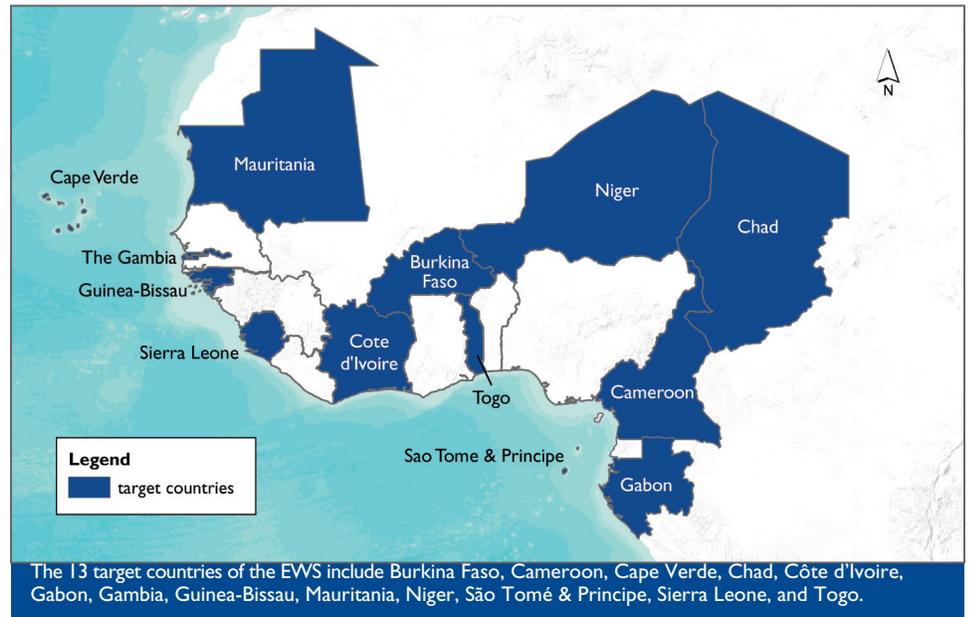
The Early Warning System (EWS) has been successful in improving visibility and monitoring of contraceptive stock status, as well as addressing critical contraceptive stock issues in the countries of the region.

Contraceptive Security in the Region

Contraceptive security exists when every person is able to *choose, obtain, and use* quality contraceptives and condoms whenever she/he needs them. The West and Central Africa region has some of the lowest contraceptive prevalence rates (CPR) in the world, and some of the highest unmet need for family planning. A major challenge to addressing unmet need and ensuring the success of family planning programs in the region is ensuring a continuous supply of quality contraceptives and continuous monitoring of contraceptive stocks at the country level.

The Early Warning System

The two components of the EWS are the *Procurement Planning and Monitoring Report (PPMR)* and the Coordinated Assistance for Reproductive Health Supplies (CARhs) group. In 2007, the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC) led the development of the PPMR which provides information on stock levels and shipments for contraceptives for the public sector, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and social marketing programs, in more than 30 countries. Participating countries report data to a central database;



the data are reviewed and analyzed to ensure the quality of the report, which is produced monthly. The CARhs group uses the data at the country and global-level to respond to supply issues. CARhs members include UNFPA, USAID, the West African Health Organization (WAHO), and the RHSC. The CARhs group meets monthly to review the PPMR, identify contraceptive stock imbalances, discuss potential solutions, and act within available resources to avoid or mitigate stock issues, including stockouts and overstocks.

Expanding the EWS to West and Central Africa

Beginning in August 2011, the EWS was extended to **13 countries** in the West and Central Africa region. The

Participation Leads to Better Supply Availability

Since the implementation of the EWS in the West and Central Africa region, the CARhs group has used the data to provide critical country support, including—

- creation of 30 emergency shipments to avoid or resolve stockouts in five countries in the region
- transferring Microgynon from Ghana to Togo to avoid expiration of the product in Ghana and to address a critical stock need in Togo
- coordination between donors to accelerate two shipments and to cancel or reduce the quantity of three shipments.

USAID | DELIVER PROJECT conducted outreach to the country ministries of health (MOH) to raise awareness about the EWS, its benefits, and its expansion to the region. The project provided in-country technical assistance on how to report using the PPMR for the MOH data provider in several early adopter countries. In May 2012, MOH representatives from 12 target countries attended a regional meeting in Burkina Faso where they were trained to complete and submit data via the PPMR and to plan for participation in the EWS. After the meeting, all 13 target countries had committed to participate in the EWS by providing contraceptive stock data through the PPMR. As of September 2013, all 13 target countries had submitted quality data for review by the CARhs group.

To ensure the ongoing and timely submission of quality data, the project continues to provide remote support to the 13 countries, as well as providing in-person technical assistance in select countries.

Benefits of the EWS

Participation in the EWS enables countries to communicate up-to-date data and supply needs to in-country and global stakeholders. Countries may request that donors provide updated information about pending shipments, create emergency shipments, expedite existing shipments, or delay or cancel shipments to avoid overstocks or expiries. The CARhs group considers requests monthly and its members take actions based on donor involvement in countries and their ability to respond.

The implementation of the EWS in the region has led to—

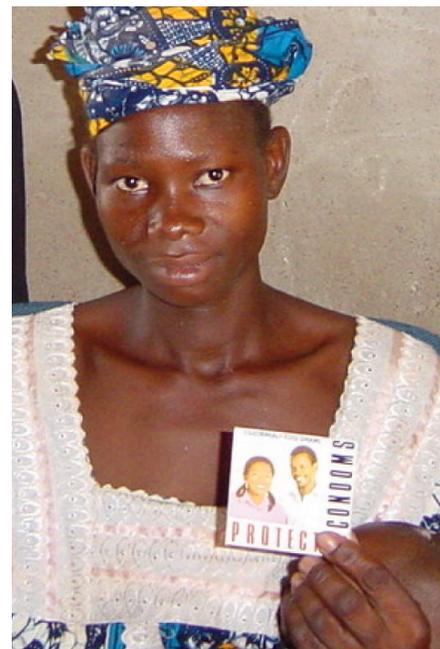
- improved in-country coordination among family planning stakeholders
- increased information sharing on shipments to countries

- increased visibility of country data and contraceptive needs
- greater awareness of donors and health authorities of the need for supply chain systems strengthening.

To increase the visibility of data, improve ease of reporting, and allow access to a country's historical data, the project developed an online system for the EWS. Registered users of the system can enter data, access country data, and run reports. The CARhs group is also using the online system to create the monthly meeting agenda and to follow the outcomes of identified issues. To learn more about the online system, please visit <http://ppmr.rhsupplies.org>.

Additional Activities in the Region

In addition to implementing the EWS in the region, the USAID | DELIVER PROJECT also provides targeted contraceptive security strengthening support to four focus countries: Burkina Faso, Mauritania, Niger, and Togo. Activities align with country-level plans and their Ouagadougou Partnership goals. Activities include conducting contraceptive security assessments, building country capacity in supply chain management, strengthening reproductive health commodity security (RHCS) committees and their use of data for decisionmaking, and supporting efforts to increase investments in supply chain and contraceptives. To date, the project has completed contraceptive security assessments in the four focus countries and is now working to develop and implement country workplans that respond to recommendations from the assessments. These activities are managed out of the project's regional office in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso with support from project headquarters in Washington, D.C.



A client holds a packet of condoms that she just received in Mali.

World Education 2004

Funding

USAID | West Africa, based in Accra, Ghana, funds the EWS in West and Central Africa as well as the contraceptive security strengthening activities in the four focus countries.

For more information, please contact:

Dr. Jovith Ndahinyuka
 web: jovith_ndahinyuka@jsi.com
 tel: +226 5033 33 15

USAID | DELIVER PROJECT
 Regional Office,
 Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso