



FAMILY HEALTH AND AIDS/ WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA PROGRAM (FHA/WCA)

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
Population, Health, and Nutrition Briefing Sheet

Regional Profile

The West and Central African (WCA) Region comprises 24 countries in sub-Saharan Africa with a population of over 307 million. Following years of economic decline, political failure, and widespread civil conflict, the WCA Region is making progress toward political pluralism, economic liberalization, and sustainable growth. However, this progress is fragile. Composed of distinct francophone, anglophone, and lusophone countries, the WCA region has perhaps the most mobile population in the world. Both people and problems cross borders with ease—including diseases such as AIDS, polio, and tuberculosis. In addition to high levels of poverty the region is also vulnerable to drought. Thus, mobility, poverty, and vulnerability pose specific challenges for development in this region.

USAID Strategy

Launched in 1995, USAID's Family Health and AIDS/West and Central Africa (FHA/WCA) program addresses key transnational health and population problems through U.S. private voluntary organizations (PVOs) and cooperating agencies and key regional African organizations and targets approximately 40 million people. The goal of the FHA/WCA project is to achieve regional impact through country and regional health and population programming based on the replication of effective practices in USAID limited or non-presence countries (i.e., those countries where USAID does not operate a program).

The FHA/WCA is working to:

- Increase the use of sustainable, regional, and selected Reproductive Health (RH); HIV/AIDS/Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), and Child Survival (CS) interventions in West and Central Africa;

- Increase access to and demand for quality RH, HIV/AIDS/STI, and child survival (CS) interventions;
- Improve regional capacity for program development and implementation; and
- Improve the efficient use of regional resources.

Major Program Areas

The FHA/WCA program employs an innovative model to achieve its goals. The model is built on strategic partnerships with four U.S. PVOs working to achieve results in service delivery; information, education, and communications (IEC); training; and operations research. The strategic partners have in turn developed partnerships with African organizations to jointly achieve results, build capacity, and transfer technology.

Reproductive Health, HIV/AIDS/STI, and CS service delivery. Through model clinic sites in the focus countries and through its partnership with ministries of health, nongovernmental organizations and other donors, the project promotes access to a wider choice of contraceptive methods and a sustainable supply of oral rehydration solution (ORS) packets. The program uses social marketing programs and strengthened contraceptive logistics management information systems to achieve positive results in these areas.

Regional capacity. FHA/WCA has developed critical IEC and training materials for further adaptation at country levels. The project is reinforcing the institutional capability of 14 regional partners and developing regional networking around "best practices."

Efficient use of regional resources. Leveraging of donor resources and joint programming are emphasized under this activity. Activities are



Bureau for Africa

U.S. Agency for
International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC
20523-3600

Tel: 202-712-0540
Fax: 202-216-3046

E-mail:
africawb@rrs.cdiie.org
Website:
www.info.usaid.gov/regions/af

planned and implemented in consultation with host governments and in accordance with their national strategies and action plans.

Results

- Sales of condoms increased by 17.6 percent from the previous year; use of condoms as a means to prevent the spread of HIV is increasing throughout the region at a level of about 10 percent and 30 percent among all men, and unmarried men, respectively in Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Ghana.
- In one year, sales of ORS packets increased from about 1 million packets to approximately 2.3 million, an increase of more than 100 percent—a doubling of the 50 percent target.
- FHA/WCA distributed more than 1,600 regional IEC kits developed by one of its partners, the Center for Research in Communications (CERCOM). This is the first time that an African institution has been completely in charge of developing, testing, disseminating, and evaluating IEC materials on a regional scale.
- The FHA/WCA partners mobilized over \$3.4 million from other donors, representing 17.6 percent additional funding and exceeding the 15 percent target. Certain African partner institutions are also receiving significant funding from other sources, thereby reducing dependence on the FHA/WCA.

Reproductive Health (CEFOREP), which is now meeting the demands for clinical training in Senegal.

In addition to continuing to focus on stabilizing population growth and preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in the region, FHA/WCA plans to increase the level of activities in the areas of child survival and infectious diseases in the coming year, focusing on malaria, disease surveillance, and malnutrition as additional funding becomes available.



Bureau for Africa

U.S. Agency for
International Development

1300 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, DC
20523-3600

Tel: 202-712-0540
Fax: 202-216-3046

E-mail:
africawb@rrs.cdie.org

Website:
www.info.usaid.gov/regions/af

Continuing Challenges

The regional FHA program will continue to strengthen the health programs of other USAID missions as well as with other non-presence, non-FHA target countries. Since program inception, USAID/Benin has participated in regional social marketing and preservice training initiatives. Senegal collaborated with FHA in the capacity building of a regional partner, the Center for Training and Research in