



Policy Update

Global Fund in Rwanda Agrees to Finance Contraceptives



Clients visit a pharmacy in Rwanda. In recent years, Rwanda has seen a significant increase in demand for modern contraceptives.

In Rwanda, integration of family planning and HIV services is a national priority.

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In a significant step for both contraceptive security and HIV prevention in Rwanda, local Global Fund stakeholders have decided to fund contraceptives by providing a three-year commitment worth more than US\$2.4 million from Round 7 Funds. Global Fund financing has been used in the past to finance condoms in a number of countries, but Rwanda is believed to be the first country to fund contraceptives as part of its efforts to fight HIV and AIDS.

The commitment from Rwanda is for funding of around US\$800,000 a year for three years starting in 2008. The funds will be channeled through the Ministry of Health in Rwanda, and the decision on which contraceptives to procure will be made locally based on program needs. The contraceptives financed will be distributed as part of the national family planning program and will be integrated with HIV services; they will not be “ring-fenced” for specific HIV programs.

This funding is additional to the support already provided by a number of partners in Rwanda, including the government of Rwanda, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the Department for International Development, *Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau*, and the United Nations Population Fund. The financing from the Global Fund is equivalent to about 20 percent of the total funds required for public sector contraceptives for 2006–2008. Existing partners are increasing their financial support in addition to this new funding.

In recent years, Rwanda has seen a significant increase in demand for modern contraceptives. The use of modern contraceptive methods has increased almost threefold in just three years—from 10 percent in 2005 to 27 percent in 2008 (according to the Demographic and Health Survey). This success has meant a significant increase in the funding required, but it has also opened up opportunities to extend HIV services through the family planning program.

Integration of family planning and HIV services is a national priority. The Ministry of Health recognizes the importance to HIV prevention of providing contraceptives and family planning services to all Rwandans, including those already infected with HIV.

This action is the fruit of advocacy at both the international level and the national level in Rwanda. Internationally, reproductive health advocates have long argued for this type of support. Beginning in 2006, the Global Fund in Geneva has issued clear recommendations that countries put a priority on integrating reproductive health and HIV services. Specifically, the Global Fund is open to countries including contraceptive financing in their procurement and supply management plans. At the national level, support for this financing came from the highest levels in the Ministry of Health. Integration of family planning and HIV was included in Rwanda's successful Round 7 proposal to the Global Fund. The ministry—with support from the USAID | DELIVER PROJECT—has reliable estimates of financing needs for contraceptives, and this clearly identified a future funding gap, thus making the support of the Global Fund vital. Drawing on those data, program managers in the ministry advocated strongly for this new funding.

Now that Rwanda has taken this first step, it is hoped that other countries—where financing for contraceptives is uncertain—will follow their example.

For more information, please contact the USAID | DELIVER PROJECT at askdeliver@jsi.com.

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USAID | DELIVER PROJECT

John Snow, Inc.

1616 Fort Myer Drive, 11th Floor

Arlington, VA 22209 USA

Tel: 703-528-7474

Fax: 703-528-7480

www.deliver.jsi.com

askdeliver@jsi.com