

News from the Project RMA

Linking Civil Society Networks in Knowledge and Action

The Project Resource Mobilisation and Awareness (Project RMA) is holding its first RH Supplies Advocacy Meeting, entitled "Linking civil society networks in knowledge and action" on April 24th and 25th 2008 in Kampala, Uganda.

Civil society networks, Project RMA subgrantees and partners, as well as representatives from UNFPA and other technical experts have been invited to take part in this forum for action-oriented coordination. The purpose of the meeting is to learn from advocacy strategies undertaken in the area of RH supplies at the global, regional and national levels and to develop linkages between them, so that efforts mutually reinforce each other.

Additional goals of the meeting include:

Giving Networks newer to the RH supplies issue insight on how to effectively address it within their membership; Helping participants become aware of some of the strong linkages among advocacy efforts at the global, regional and national levels and identify and support these linkages in their own advocacy strategies; Introducing mechanisms for stakeholders to communicate and share ideas to sustain coordinated advocacy efforts.

The meeting, which is by invitation only, will also include a short site visit.

Moving Supplies Advocacy Forward in Tanzania

Project RMA work at country level is taking shape. During a recent visit to Tanzania, IPPF Central Office and IPPF Africa Regional Office met with IPPF Member Association in Tanzania (UMATI) to work with UMATI colleagues to integrate Project RMA with UMATI's existing advocacy work.

IPPF is using the [Country Global Pathways model](#) as the mechanism for driving forward the national level campaigns around reproductive health supplies. The visit provided an opportunity to gauge advocacy activity around supplies at national level, present Project RMA to external stakeholders and work with UMATI to develop a supplies component to their Country Global Pathways advocacy.

For more details, please [click here](#) and contact [Sarah Shaw](#) at IPPF.

In Brief

European Supply Advocates Strengthen Collaboration

Europe-based RH supplies stakeholders, including Project RMA, the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC), Countdown 2015 Europe and the UNFPA Global Programme met in mid March in Brussels to update each other on their work and explore ways to better collaborate. An immediate result of the meeting was a

brainstorming session on how to develop a global advocacy strategy for universal access to sexual and reproductive health services and supplies three weeks later. The group will continue to meet on a regular basis.

Supplies news

Supporting Integrated RH/HIV Proposals to the Global Fund

For millions of women in poor countries, sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services are the primary point of contact with the health care system. Thus, integrating SRH and HIV/AIDS programmes will be critical to increasing the number of women with access to comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care, including prevention of mother-to-child transmission.

This is why advocates and service providers are working to secure increased investments in SRH/HIV integration through the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria. With the launch of the "Round 8 Initiative" in February 2008, reinvigorated efforts are now under way to increase funding for integrated SRH/HIV proposals during the Global Fund's Round 8 grant cycle.

Specifically, this project seeks to support the Fund's Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs) to develop and submit high-quality, innovative Round 8 proposals that include SRH/HIV integration. The initiative is particularly timely because Round 8 proposals will recommend "dual track financing," which means that grants should be awarded to both government and civil-society implementers.

The Round 8 initiative was formally launched at a meeting in Addis Ababa, February 26-29, co-hosted by the Global AIDS Alliance, Interact Worldwide, International HIV/AIDS Alliance, International Planned Parenthood Federation and IPPF's Africa Regional Office, Friends of the Global Fund Africa, and Population Action International (PAI).

For more details on the Initiative, please visit the [Global AIDS Alliance web site](#) and contact Project Manager [Lisa Schechtman](#) at PAI.

Source: Global AIDS Alliance.

Countdown 2015 Europe Launches New Web Site

The Countdown 2015 Europe web site provides information on reproductive health supplies, introduces the main European stakeholders and the extent to which they promote and finance reproductive health supplies and further provides links to other initiatives working on this important issue, as well as announcements and reports of Countdown 2015 Europe activities and publications.

For more details, please visit the site here www.countdown2015europe.org.

Countdown 2015 Europe brings together a group of leading European non-governmental organisations working in the field of sexual and reproductive health and rights. The project

aims to achieve increased financial support of European donors for reproductive health supplies and to improve European coordination and coherence to narrow the gaps between the needs, demand and availability of reproductive health supplies.



RHSC Membership Meeting Update

Since its establishment in 2004, the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC) has held semi-annual meetings of its general membership. These events have enabled Coalition members and guests from around the world to renew ties, share ideas, work, and learn of new developments in the field of reproductive health commodity security.

The ninth membership meeting will take place in Brussels, Belgium on May 22nd to 23rd 2008. Hosted by the European Commission, the meeting will focus on four broad themes:

Europe's role in furthering the Coalition's strategic goals; Engaging the Coalition's growing membership; New findings from the Working Groups; Assuring the Coalition's financial sustainability.

On Friday morning the Resource Mobilization and Awareness Working Group (RMA WG) will provide an update on recent activities and new members. Prior to the membership meeting, members of the RMA WG will have an informal session between 2 - 5pm on Wednesday May 21st in Brussels to review the work plan of the RMA WG and discuss RMA WG members' expectations.

For more details, please visit the Coalition [web site](#).

Focus on ... Better Money

Shortages of sexual and reproductive health supplies are not only a case for increased financial resources. The Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition is also exploring how to better spend money on supplies.

Non-alignment of financing and procurement cycles, coupled with the failure to coordinate and/or consolidate procurement, means that governments and buyers

often end up buying contraceptives and condoms in small volumes at higher prices, engaging in costly emergency shipments, and facing longer supply lead times because suppliers cannot reliably plan production lines.

This, in turn impedes effective supply chain management, which can lead to stockouts and wastage, and ultimately deter decision-makers from scaling up country programmes.

A subgroup of the Coalition's Systems Strengthening Working Group is studying the inefficiencies in supply financing and procurement, and assessing the feasibility of a mechanism to redress them. Part of the mechanism is a global financing and Pledge Guarantee ("PG") that would improve funding flows by establishing a fund from which money could be advanced to a procurer, based on their projected/historical financing for commodities.

The other money-saving mechanism is a Minimum Volume Guarantee ("MVG") that would aggregate demand forecasts and enable organisations to better negotiate volume discounts and better terms and conditions from manufacturers.

For more information, please [click here](#).

Look out for ... Recommendations for EU Governments

The Countdown 2015 Europe has produced a paper entitled "Recommendations for EU governments and institutions in the run up to the High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra, Ghana, September 2008."

The paper urges the target group to take into account Millennium Development Goal related issues, such as sexual and reproductive health (SRH), in the upcoming aid effectiveness debate.

Read the [Countdown 2015 Europe aid effectiveness recommendations](#).

Contraceptive Trends in Developing Countries

The DHS Comparative Report, Contraceptive Trends in Developing Countries, examines trends and differentials in key family planning indicators for currently married women. The report provides information on the current status and direction of key family planning programme indicators in 35 developing countries, in which a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) was conducted during 2000 and 2005. The study investigates how knowledge and utilisation of contraception have changed; whether public/private, urban/rural, and other differentials in contraceptive use have narrowed; and whether women are making informed decisions about the use of contraception. It also examines discontinuation and switching rates and decisionmaking about family planning.

Download [Contraceptive Trends in Developing Countries](#).

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Project RMA is a joint effort of Population Action International (PAI), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) and the German Foundation for World Population (DSW) to increase political and financial support for reproductive health supplies at the global, regional and national levels. Project RMA works closely with the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition and its' Resource Mobilization and Awareness Working Group.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact [Caroline Jane Kent](#) at DSW.