



Dear Members of the Executive Committee of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition,

Every year, hundreds of thousands of women die in childbirth and from pregnancy-related causes. While excellent progress has been made in reducing maternal mortality rates in some countries, more remains to be done to achieve the targets set out in the Millennium Development Goals. Reproductive health supplies, including family planning, are essential to achieving these Goals. However, more than 215 million women in the developing world who wish to protect themselves from unintended pregnancy are not using modern contraception. With the announcement of the Secretary General's *Global Strategy for Women and Children's Health*, we see unprecedented momentum in the global development community to improve women's health.

Crown Agents is an international development company and a recognised leader in the provision of technical assistance, advice and training to support public sector modernisation. We work on the basis of long-term partnerships with our clients: governments, non-governmental service providers and international donors. We design practical solutions that improve access to healthcare by building sustainable institutions, organisations, systems and human capacity. Crown Agents provides integrated and secure supply chain solutions, delivering tailored, flexible responses that ensure essential medical supplies are delivered wherever they are needed, quickly and cost-effectively. Our health supply chain expertise and experience help our clients to build and sustain professional health systems and break out of the cycle of poverty.

Crown Agents has extensive experience in the purchase, quality assurance and delivery of all types of contraceptives, with particular expertise in procurement and inspection of male and female condoms. We have provided extensive input into efforts led by WHO, UNFPA and UNAIDS to develop specifications and guidelines for procurement and quality control of male condoms. We also provide extensive support to governments and NGOs in building sustainable in-country supply chains for contraceptives as well as other health commodities, including reform of central medical stores, procurement planning and forecasting, warehouse management and inventory control, and assistance in distribution planning and management.

Crown Agents has been an active member of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition since 2005 and has contributed to activities under the Systems Strengthening Working Group, including support to the Reproductive Health Interchange and technical support to the "People That Deliver" initiative, which advocates for professionalization of health sector supply chain managers. We fully support the **HANDtoHAND** Campaign to galvanise our community's contribution to the Secretary General's *Global Strategy* and endorse the Coalition's ambitious new goal of achieving 100 million new users of contraception in low-income countries by 2015. Success at meeting this challenge will address the family planning needs of 80% of women in these countries, and reduce by 110,000 the number of women who die giving birth.

To demonstrate our support to the **HANDtoHAND** Campaign, we in Crown Agents are proud to commit ourselves to:

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- Improving availability of high quality contraceptives through our procurement, quality assurance and delivery of male and female condoms and other reproductive health commodities for Ministries of Health, NGOs, and social marketing organisations in Africa and Asia..
- Strengthening the operations of reproductive health commodity logistics and supply chain systems to ensure the seamless, efficient, secure and sustainable supply of reproductive health commodities for all men and women. This will include institutional development of health ministries and organisations involved in provision of reproductive health services as well as capacity building and professionalization of health supply chain managers.

We see the successful achievement of our commitment as having a significant impact on the lives and well-being of women and families across the developing world.

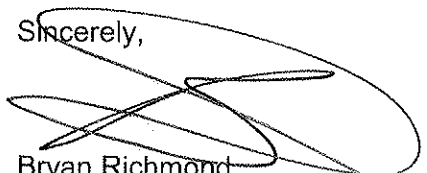
For example, Crown Agents has purchased over 3.2 billion male and female condoms over the past nineteen years. This has been funded by external donors, such as the European Commission, DFID, the Global Fund and the Dutch Government. As of May 2011 we have a further 253 million condoms in the pipeline.

Crown Agents' long term involvement with the supply of condoms and other contraceptives has enabled organizations such as Zimbabwe's National Family Planning Council to reduce stock out rates for reproductive health commodities in health centres from above 40% to below 5%. Zimbabwe now has one of the most successful family planning programmes in the whole of Africa, including near universal knowledge of family planning methods, a contraceptive prevalence rate of 65%, and declining fertility rate.

More recently, Crown Agents has developed a programme to improve understanding of commodity use and service availability at service delivery level through improved data collection. To this end, Crown Agents recruited ten data collectors who are responsible for collecting management information at all 1,600 health centres in Zimbabwe.

We applaud the Coalition for the **HANDtoHAND** Campaign and its effort to rally the family planning community in support of the Secretary General's *Global Strategy*, and we look forward to working with our Coalition partners in bringing family planning to 100 million new users by 2015.

Sincerely,



Bryan Richmond  
Director, Supply Chain Services  
Crown Agents