



## LAPTOP

### Connects supply chain managers to a world of opportunities

It is an unfortunate irony of life that those who shoulder great responsibility should bear it without the recognition they deserve. Within the health sector, few illustrate this fate more clearly than supply chain managers—dedicated professionals who manage the very products that make programs possible; who wield millions of dollars in the procurement of those products; and yet who, all too often, sit among the lowest rungs of the health system hierarchy.

Supply chain managers often find themselves isolated in their field—an isolation reinforced by their limited numbers, but also by limited access to opportunities for further education and professional growth. With little more than word of mouth or occasional tips to rely on, supply chain managers have long struggled to identify the educational and training opportunities that make most sense to them: at prices they can afford, in languages they understand, in subjects that meet their needs, and in locations that are accessible.

In less than three years, LAPTOP has begun to change this once ubiquitous reality. A comprehensive online course-finder aimed specifically at supply chain managers from the Global South, LAPTOP is a database listing more than 250 training opportunities in supply chain management in English, French, and Spanish. More than 65 course providers are listed and courses are offered in more than 30 countries.

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### LAPTOP in the Community: Scholarships

The Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition makes available stipends to potential scholars from developing countries to help defray costs of any course listed in LAPTOP.

- **Dr. Kossivi Afanvi** from Togo is a physician, public health economist, and manager specializing in maternal and child health. His duties as health district manager give him jurisdiction over 26 health centres. He is studying towards a Certification in Supply Chain Management and is directing all his newly-acquired knowledge into the medical classes he teaches at the University of Lomé.
  - **Simplice Kamdem** from Cameroon used his scholarship to part-fund a Master programme in Humanitarian Logistics and Management at the Università della Svizzera Italiana in Lugano, Switzerland. Previously USAID / PEPFAR's Commodities and Logistics Advisor in Abidjan, Simplicie was recently promoted to Senior Supply Chain Advisor and now oversees a US\$40M per year project to ensure a continuous supply of HIV medications to 130,000 people on antiretroviral treatment. He credits his newly-acquired skills and knowledge for this career move.
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## INNOVATION FUND – INTUITIVE RISK-TAKING

LAPTOP may never have got off the ground without its original support from the Coalition’s Innovation Fund, a funding mechanism driven by imaginative thinking and courage to take risks within a relatively new landscape. The “gamble” appears to have reaped dividends: LAPTOP has consistently received the highest amount of web traffic for any tool or resource on the Coalition website. The webpage attracted nearly 7000 unique pageviews in 2013, 20 times more than the second most popular tool hosted on the Coalition’s website. A key reason behind this success lies, perhaps, in the ultimate flexibility and breadth afforded by the database. Courses can be searched by any of the current fields:

- Location
- Institution
- Language
- Commodity
- Accrediting Organization
- Costs
- Courses with Discounts

## LAPTOP POISED TO SPREAD ITS INFLUENCE

LAPTOP will see ongoing updates of current course listings as well as outreach to course providers not currently listed in the database. There is also the intention to explore commercial possibilities such as advertisements for courses. The LAPTOP scholarship scheme has proved so successful in terms of profile and returns that plans are underway for its expansion.

“It can get very discouraging when you visit warehouses and see the mountains of expired drugs - useless and wasted. In my view, the increases we see in maternal deaths can be directly attributed to chronic stockouts.”

~ Simplice Kamdem, LAPTOP Scholar, and Senior Supply Chain Advisor at USAID/PEPFAR in Côte d’Ivoire.

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## Award

**Recipient: John Snow, Inc.**

**Amount: US\$67,007 (January 2009) US\$121,979 (February 2010)**

**Partners: The International Association of Public Health Logisticians, People That Deliver**

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### What is the Innovation Fund?

The Innovation Fund is the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition’s flagship initiative for inspiring and financing new activities that further the Coalition’s strategic goals and those of its working groups, caucuses and regional forums.

Established in 2008, through a generous grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Innovation Fund now counts on financial support from multiple donors including the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad). Managed by the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition Secretariat, the Innovation Fund has to date made available more than US\$2.2M in small grants to Coalition partners. The grants—more than 20 altogether to date—have yielded new tools, supported advocacy and research, leveraged millions of dollars in subsequent program funding, and launched a host of new initiatives across the Global South.

### The Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition

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