General Membership Meeting, just days to go

With just days to go, members from across the Coalition are ironing out the final details for what promises to be the largest and most ambitious membership meeting ever. Co-hosted by the Mexican Ministry of Health, the meeting will celebrate a decade of service to the reproductive health community and set the stage for a strategic approach to the next. All meeting information is available online. For those unable to attend in person, a free livestream of all plenary proceedings is available at event.worktankseattle.com/el/RHSC-2014Meeting-2384 with closed captioning in English, Spanish and French.

New online tool provides instant access to supply promises

The Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition has launched a compendium of commitments on behalf of reproductive health commodity security. Hosted on its own dedicated website, www.supplypromises.org, the Commitments Compendium provides access to more than 137 commitments referencing RH supplies, from national governments as well as development partners from the private, philanthropic and non-governmental sectors.

The tool, developed under the Coalition’s Commitments Initiative, will go a long way towards understanding and increasing the transparency of supply-related commitments made under the banners of Maputo, Every Women Every Child, Ouagadougou, HANDtoHAND, and more recently FP2020. It provides an at-a-glance repository for researchers, activists, civil society, indeed anybody interested in tracing promises made by governments on reproductive health supplies. Search fields include committing agency, host initiative, and the year and type of commitment. For more information, please read more or contact Commitments Officer, Lou Compernolle at lcompernolle@rhsupplies.org.

Coalition welcomes Bangladesh as 300th member!

The Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has joined the Coalition family as its 300th member. Bangladesh has achieved significant successes in family planning programs against a backdrop of low literacy rates, gender inequities, and the low income of women. Now, the concept of family planning has become part of the lifestyle of Bangladeshi people. But population issues continue to pose a pressing challenge to development. Early marriage and motherhood are common: Two in three women marry before the legal age of 18 and one in three women starts childbearing before age 19. “Free access to a broad range of contraceptive methods is crucial in Bangladesh,” said Mr. Nur Hossain Talukder, Director-General of the Ministry’s Directorate General of Family Planning. We have much to gain by becoming part of a global movement like the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, with its resources, and opportunities. I am delighted at the welcome we have received from the Coalition and look forward to many years of collaboration for a common cause.”

Chinese manufacturers eye opportunities in FP2020

At $85M per annum, China’s domestic market for contraceptives is so large that many domestic manufacturers struggle to see the business case in taking risks to penetrate international markets. But delivering the supplies needed to meet the contraceptive needs of an additional 120M women and girls in the world’s 69 poorest countries—the goal of FP2020—could make such investment both rewarding and profitable. That was the message delivered last month by Coalition Director, John Skibliak, in his opening remarks at last month’s 7th China Reproductive Health Expo. Hosted by the China Reproductive Health Industry Association, the three-day event is the largest gathering of its kind in China, providing exhibition space for more than 160 pharmaceutical manufacturers and attracting some 10,000 visitors.

Using demand projections for selected contraceptives, the Director highlighted the opportunities and benefits to be derived from greater engagement in the global market. But he also offered no false hopes, cautioning that the international market, while growing, is also becoming more competitive— with buyers looking not just for affordability, but assured quality. For more information contact John Skibliak at jskibiak@rhsupplies.org.
Calvert Foundation and PGH announce $10M credit facility

Pledge Guarantee for Health (PGH) and the Calvert Social Investment Foundation recently announced a $10M credit facility to accelerate the delivery of lifesaving health supplies in the developing world. This credit facility offers unprecedented financial access to borrowers in the not-for-profit sector and can be used in nearly any country in the world. PGH unlocks private sector financing to maximize the impact of each dollar of donor funding. It does so by extending short-term loans on the basis of approved donor funds, thereby allowing aid recipients to accelerate the purchase, delivery, and impact of critical health supplies. For more information on the new Calvert deal, click here or contact Paige Robson.

Manufacturers and procurers meet to address common concerns

The Coalition and UNFPA co-hosted three panel sessions at a joint WHO-UNICEF-UNFPA meeting of manufacturers and suppliers which took place from September 22 to 25 at the offices of UNFPA/Copenhagen. The panelists—CHAI, USAID, UNFPA, i+solutions, and the Coalition—described how better access to market intelligence strategies can improve RH/FP procurement practices. They also described plans to develop a market intelligence algorithm and tool that can help manufacturers prioritize which products to register at the country level and when. For more information, please contact the Coalition’s Market Shaping Officer, Anita Deshpande at adeshpande@rhsupplies.org.

Coalition membership reaches 309 with 10 new members

- Apoyos a Programas de Poblacion (APROPO) Through partnerships with the public and private sectors, this Peruvian NGO has been offering access to SRH information, products and services since 1983.
- Asociacion Proteccion a la Salud (PROSALUD) is a Bolivian network of clinics providing low-cost and free services to more than 700,000 people per year.
- Bangladesh Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- Bioceptive is a US women’s health company currently developing an IUD inserter for low-resource settings that promises to make IUD the insertions simpler and safer.
- Kangu is an online platform that invites individuals to crowdfund safe births for expectant mothers in developing countries. Based in the United States, Kangu is working with the Pledge Guarantee for Health under a grant from the Innovation Fund.
- Le Conseil Burkinabé des ONG / OBC et Association de Lutte contre les IST et le VIH / SIDA (BURCASO) is a 13-year-old network of more than 200 member organizations developing community health.
- London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine is a United Kingdom-based institute with a strong interdisciplinary approach to research, including the evaluation of maternal health programs using epidemiological, health, economic, and anthropological approaches.
- Miles-Chile is a Chilean NGO that fosters public debate to improve public policy around sexual and reproductive health and rights for vulnerable people.
- Population Foundation of India has promoted gender-sensitive population and development policies, strategies and programs since 1970, when it was founded by a group of socially committed industrialists under the leadership of the late JRD Tata.
- Programme de Marketing social et de communication pour la santé (PROMACO). A member of the PSI family, PROMACO is a key player in Burkina Faso’s National Recovery Plan by addressing unmet need with communications campaigns, advocacy and social marketing.
20-24 October  15th RHSC General Membership Meeting, Mexico City, Mexico
17-19 November  7th Global Health Supply Chain Summit, Accra, Ghana
25-26 November  11th PPD Inter-ministerial conference on Population and Development, New Delhi, India
5 December  ICRH Meeting on “Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights”, Ghent, Belgium

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