

TOP STORY



Timely contraceptive orders are critical, especially in these troubled times

Last month, the RHSC's Latin America and Caribbean Forum (ForoLAC) received a desperate call. A country in the region was nearly stocked out of two-rod contraceptive implants and needed 100,000 units urgently. The scramble that followed raised the curtain on an ominous reality: lead production times for many contraceptive products are at an all-time high.

[Read more](#)

IN THE NEWS

VAN brings together the best of both worlds

Last month the Global FP VAN took under its wing the functionalities once housed within the RH Interchange (RHI). A new tool, RH Viz, builds on where the RHI left-off, making it possible to see RH data like never before and combining historical procurement data with live shipment data from the VAN. As with the RHI, RH Viz users can download data and use the dashboards to make better-informed supply decisions.

This merger would not have been possible without the support of UNFPA. For more than a decade, UNFPA has ensured the timely flow of shipment data into the RHI, overseen its functionality, and financed all associated costs. UNFPA's legacy has enabled the RH community to unite in a sustainable manner all these resources under the VAN. [Use this new portal](#) to navigate the collection of data resources at the VAN.

Innovation Fund to address the quality of menstrual products

Worldwide, the market size for sanitary pads is growing in low- and middle-income countries; in India, this growth is driven largely by adolescent girls and young women. Existing quality standards do not always include criteria for hygiene and safety; and often the standards themselves simply unenforceable. As a result, adolescent girls and young women cannot be confident that the menstrual pads they are using are safe and effective, and that the product they choose will serve their needs. To ensure better access to menstrual hygiene, RHSC has awarded an Innovation Fund grant to [Development Solutions](#), Inc to document how manufacturers are adopting quality standards, what barriers they are facing, and how policy recommendations can be set up to enforce standards. For more information, please contact Charlotte Soulary at csoulary@rhsupplies.org.

Grant dispensation is a testament to flexibility in COVID-19 times

There was celebration when IPPF Member Association, [Association Congolaise pour le Bien-Être Familial](#) (ACBEF), received the inaugural FondsSECONAF grant—money to help them reduce stockouts in 20 last mile health facilities. But when COVID-19 reared its head and effectively prevented ACBEF from carrying out the activities they had initially proposed, they asked for permission to sharpen the project's focus on pandemic-related supply issues. In line with the flexibility being shown by donors across the development space, the amended project will now use mobile phone technology — CATI system (computer assisted telephone interviewing) — to explore the impact of COVID-19 on supply chain distribution and contraceptive access. The findings will help mobilize MoH and National Procurement Agency officials and other regional health authorities to include RH supplies in their COVID-19 emergency response interventions. For more information, please contact Laurd Divin

(divin.laurd@gmail.com) or Charlotte Soulary (csoulary@rhsupplies.org).

Regional leaders join voices, call for timely COVID response

On World Contraception Day, Regional Forum Chairs Nene Fofana-Cissé and Nora Quesada, as well as AAWG Co-chair Sara Stratton and Advocacy Officer Charlotte Soulary, jointly published an **op-ed** insisting that RH supplies and services, and contraceptive access be prioritized through supportive policies, well-functioning supply chains, and adequate financing. The piece warns of crippling setbacks if timely action is not taken.

RHSC to occupy seat on UNFPA Supplies Steering Committee

At its September 24th meeting, the UNFPA Supplies Steering Committee announced that the RHSC would occupy the seat dedicated to a Family Planning Coordinating Body. The term will be for three years, after which the seat will pass to the successor of FP2020. In March of this year, a new governance model for Phase III of the UNFPA Supplies programme was adopted. That model sees Steering Committee members grouped into constituencies, each represented by a focal point. The Family Planning Coordinating Body is a non-voting member, representing the perspectives of the family planning and broader reproductive health commodity security community. For more information, contact RHSC Director, John Skibiak at jskibiak@rhsupplies.org.



New – and familiar – faces join the RHSC VAN team

Four new staff members have joined the RHSC. After a hiatus of seven years, Bonnie Keith returns home as the new VAN Member Relations Manager whose job it will be to scale-up VAN membership. Previously at the Coalition, she supported many Implementing Mechanisms, including establishing the Maternal Health Supplies Caucus and chairing the New and Underused Reproductive Health Technologies Caucus. New staff also include three control tower data analysts: Chiedu Ezeadum, Tamah Kamlem, and Michael Metzger. Mr.

Ezeadum and Mr. Kamlem were previously Procurement Planning Monitoring Report (PPMR) Administrators at GHSC-PSM, while Mr. Metzger oversaw master data management and the data feed between GHSC-PSM and the VAN. Please join us in welcoming on board our new colleagues.

Strong attendance for menstrual cup quality webinar

While menstrual cups are growing in popularity in developed countries and have been introduced in low- and middle-income countries, the quality standards for these products are not universally applied. Over 140 registrants attended a [recent webinar](#) to learn about this emerging product category and to explore pathways for creating relevant quality standards.

New partnership promises to reduce critical supply constraints

[DKT WomanCare](#) has signed an agreement with [Incepta Pharmaceuticals](#) to introduce and commercialize their WHO prequalified injectable in 40 countries. This welcome news signals the prospect of increased choice and availability in a time when contraceptive products, and injectables in particular, face serious supply constraints (see lead story for more context). Read DKT WomanCare's [public announcement](#) in full.

IN THE CALENDAR

18th International Dialogue on Population and Sustainable Development

28-29 October 2020
Virtual Event

China Reproductive Health Industry Association
Reproductive Health EXPO

10-13 December 2020
Jinan City, China

Universal Health Coverage Day 2020

12 December 2020

European Development Days 2021

15-16 June 2021
Brussels, Belgium

16th European Society of Contraception Congress

1-4 September 2021
Ghent, Belgium

General Membership Meeting of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition

27-30 September 2021
Accra, Ghana

International Conference on Family Planning 2021

8-11 November 2021
Pattaya City, Thailand

FIGO World Congress 2021

13-15 December 2021

Kigali, Rwanda



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