



ICEC Worldwide Case Studies: Sri Lanka

Ensuring Program Sustainability

Innovative marketing approaches and a tiered pricing system have brought women in Sri Lanka reliable, convenient, and low-cost access to emergency contraception.

Sri Lanka has one of the most successful family planning programs in South Asia. Despite a contraceptive prevalence rate of 67 percent, women in Sri Lanka undergo a high number of illegal abortions country-wide. There may be as many as 750 illegal abortions per day. In the "Free Trade Zone" areas of Colombo and Katunayake, where over 100,000 young people are employed in industrial factories, unintended pregnancy rates are particularly high.

In September 1997, the Sri Lanka Consortium, coordinated by the Family Planning Association of Sri Lanka (FPASL), initiated a project to make a dedicated emergency contraception product available through pharmacists, general practitioners, youth groups, and community health workers.

After Consortium members met with local regulatory authorities, Postinor-2 received final approval in April 1998 for sale in both the private and public sectors. During this process, Gedeon Richter, the manufacturer, donated 2,000 Postinor-2 units to the Consortium for their demonstration activities, followed up by a subsequent 5,000 unit donation.

Once distribution rights for Postinor-2 had been granted, FPASL and PATH developed a detailed promotional plan designed to increase community awareness of emergency contraception. A central component of this plan was a telephone hotline that provides key information about emergency contraception issues, including information about service providers, use instructions, potential side effects, and price.

FPASL ran an extensive advertising campaign that directed readers to the hotline; these advertisements appeared in daily newspapers and weekly publications read by young people and published in English, Sinhala, and Tamil. FPASL staff also created point-of-sale advertisements for pharmacies, produced a training videocassette for providers, and participated in numerous radio talk shows. FPASL staff approached general practitioners and sent letters to all pharmacies in Sri Lanka, seeking their support of Postinor-2. Information on emergency contraception also was included in family planning educational campaigns that were conducted by 50,000 field volunteers. In addition, the Consortium developed a brochure for clients that was translated into three local languages, and further produced a version for illiterate clients.



International Consortium for Emergency Contraception

By 2000, community and provider response to these efforts was tremendous. The hotline received more than 75 calls each day from all areas of Sri Lanka and sales of Postinor-2 increased to approximately 4,600 packets per month. FPASL supplied Postinor-2 through its own clinics, general practitioners, and over 500 urban and rural pharmacies. By 2001, FPASL reported sales of 120,109 packages of Postinor-2, an 80% increase over the previous year's sales. Over 800 pharmacies were selling Postinor-2.

International Consortium for Emergency Contraception

Advocates for Youth • American Medical Women's Association (AMWA) • Arab World Regional Network • Asia Pacific Network on Emergency Contraception • Association of Reproductive Health Professionals • British Pregnancy Advisory Service • Catholics for a Free Choice • Center for Reproductive Rights • Center for Research on Women and Gender, University of Illinois • Concept Foundation • Consorcio Latinoamericano de Anticoncepcion de Emergencia (CLAE) • CONRAD • DKT International • East Europe, NIS and Balkan Region • ECAfrigue • EngenderHealth • Family Care International • Family Health International • Guttmacher Institute • Gynuity Health Projects • Ibis Reproductive Health • Institute for Reproductive Health • International Planned Parenthood Federation • International Planned Parenthood Federation/Western Hemisphere Region • International Women's Health Coalition • Ipas • JSI Research & Training Center for Women's Health • Management Sciences for Health • Margaret Sanger Institute • Marie Stopes International • Medical Women's International Association • Meridian Development Foundation • Pacific Institute for Women's Health • Partnership for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH) • Pathfinder International • Planned Parenthood Federation of America - International • Population Action International • Population Council • Population Services International • PROSALUD INTER-AMERICANA • WHO, Special Programme of Research, Development and Research Training in Human Reproduction • Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children

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