

The Innovation Fund

Translating promising ideas into action



Reproductive Health
SUPPLIES COALITION



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The Innovation Fund

Catalyst and visionary

The Innovation Fund was established in 2008, through a generous grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Managed by the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, the Innovation Fund has, to date, made available more than US\$ 2.2M in small grants (maximum US\$ 200,000 per grant) to Coalition partners. The grants – more than 20 altogether – have yielded new tools, supported advocacy and research, leveraged millions of dollars in subsequent programme funding, and launched a host of new initiatives across the Global South.

Since making its first grants 2009, the Coalition has defined the concept of “innovation” broadly to include any promising new idea with the potential to bring about positive change. Innovation needn’t mean a radical departure from previous practice. It could also include new approaches to existing processes or the implementation of an existing strategy in a new context, especially if this adaptation leads to replication or scaling-up at country level.

More than three years on, the Innovation Fund’s core resource base has been largely expended. Efforts are now underway to replenish the Fund and re-launch its successor as part of a broader initiative to support the Coalition’s next four-year funding cycle.

WHAT NEXT?

Under its next phase, the Innovation Fund will continue to serve as the Coalition’s primary vehicle to inspire new initiatives that support the Coalition’s key strategic goals and to provide the seed money needed to get those initiatives off the ground. It will remain a critical catalyst for bridging all the sectors – advocacy, technical, commercial – that make up the Coalition’s large and diverse membership. And it will leverage resources from within the Coalition as a whole.

The new Fund will build on lessons learned over the past three years. It will incorporate the recommendations of an internal review conducted in 2011, build on the observations of the Coalition's recent 2012 programme evaluation, and respond to the ever-evolving needs of the Coalition and its partners. New features will include the following:

- A diverse funding base across multiple donors, to ensure greater long-term sustainability of the Fund.
- More flexible timing of disbursements.
- Allocation of funds for member organizations from the Global South.
- Increased support for multi-sectoral connections and member collaboration, including those at country-level.
- Continuing technical support for proposal development, particularly for member organizations in the Global South.
- Heightened visibility of Innovation Fund-supported results and outcomes.
- Greater focus on scaling-up successful results.

KEY OUTCOMES

A strengthened Innovation Fund is expected to yield the following outcomes:

1. A significant number of innovative activities undertaken by the Coalition's working groups, caucuses, regional forums and other implementing mechanisms.
2. The creation of new multi-sector partnerships around reproductive health commodity security issues.
3. Increased engagement by new and existing Global South partners in issues and interventions relating to reproductive health commodity security.
4. New initiatives that yield a demonstrable impact at country-level.
5. Widespread dissemination of new knowledge and lessons-learned.
6. Increased leveraging of non-Coalition funds to replicate or scale-up successful pilot interventions.

The Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition

The Coalition is a global partnership of public, private, and non-governmental organizations dedicated to ensuring that everyone in low- and middle-income countries can access and use affordable, high-quality supplies for their better reproductive health. It brings together agencies and groups with critical roles in providing contraceptives and other reproductive health supplies. These include multilateral and bilateral organizations, private foundations, governments, civil society, and private-sector representatives.

The Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition

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