

WHAT WE DO

THE GLOBAL FAMILY PLANNING VISIBILITY AND ANALYTICS NETWORK

You can't manage what you can't see: the importance of data visibility

In the face of shrinking development resources, reaching the new FP2030 goals will require more effective and efficient family planning (FP) supply chains. Attaining these goals hinges on strengthening supply chain visibility.



PROCURERS

will need to know how many units of each product to buy and for whom.



MANUFACTURERS

will need to know how much to produce and by when.



SHIPPERS

will need to know which products to send where.



CENTRAL MEDICAL STORES

will need to know which products to order and when they will arrive.

Insufficient or incorrect data sends wrong messages through the supply chain, which results in stockouts, overstocks, expiration, wastage, and ultimately, empty hands.

Setting the foundations of supply chain visibility

For nearly two decades, the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (the Coalition) has enhanced visibility and averted supply crises using resources that have become bywords in the community, such as the Coordinated Assistance for Reproductive Health (CARHs), Coordinated Supply Planning group (CSP), RH Interchange and Procurement Planning and

Monitoring Report (PPMR). From scanning for signs of imminent stock issues to systematically tracking stock levels at central medical stores, we have successfully identified threats and reacted quickly. The Coalition has rushed deliveries, arranged product transfers, and driven new procurement.

**RH
INTERCHANGE**



2004

**CARHS
GROUP**



2005

PPMR



2009

**CSP
GROUP**



2013

**FP MARKET
REPORT**



2014

**COMMODITY
GAP**



2016

VAN



2019

Transcending silos and enhancing visibility through the VAN

Today, the Coalition hosts the Global Family Planning Visibility & Analytics Network (VAN), which offers the RH community a single, comprehensive platform—bringing together the former functions of CARhs, CSP, RHI, and PPMR—to assess and prioritize supply needs, communicate with one another, and act when supply imbalances loom. The VAN also links procurers, manufacturers, and countries in an active network focused on product flow into countries. Technology supports greater data capture and harmonization while overarching policies govern data sharing and use. Over time, the linkages, technology, and policies will improve how members interact and analyze data to better align country demand with production, procurement, and funding. Eventually, a well-functioning VAN will lead to more timely and cost-effective delivery of commodities; more women reached with the right product at the right time; and a better allocation of limited health resources.

PROCESSES

POLICY

TECHNOLOGY

PEOPLE



What makes the VAN innovative and exciting?

A community initiative and a collective mindset

At the 2017 London Family Planning Summit, international stakeholders committed to establishing a VAN. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the UK Department for International Development pledged seed money; the US Agency for International Development and the United Nations Population Fund offered human resource support to design, test and use the platform, and the Coalition committed to hosting and managing the VAN. A central [governance](#) structure includes a multi-partner Steering Committee that meets regularly to align policies, design needs, and funding options; a central management unit that oversees implementation; and four task forces that provide technical input.

Forging a collective “ask” to select a technology vendor

Stakeholders and bidding vendors forged a collective “ask” of a [technology vendor](#) through use of an interactive, collaborative, web-based software to view documents as they were developed, formulate questions, share feedback, and develop final system requirements. These requirements were then validated by community endorsers and the Steering Committee. The rigorous tendering process ultimately led to the selection of [E2open](#) as the technology vendor.

A new approach to community-oriented data sharing

A more efficient VAN demands an equally efficient, widely accepted [legal framework](#). Traditionally, the issue of data confidentiality has been handled through negotiated bilateral agreements, which can often make it legally confusing and logistically cumbersome for multilateral groups seeking to share data. The VAN has resolved such barriers through the development of its transparent, multilateral [terms of use agreement](#) that hinges on a robust, secure, role-based [data security model](#).

Breaking new ground in collaborative data management and analysis processes

In bringing together previously siloed data and analytic functions, the VAN established new processes defining how data is managed and aggregated and how supply chain actors interact and make supply chain decisions using those analytics. Data standards were developed to harmonize data descriptions so different supply chain inventory, order, and shipment data can be integrated and aggregated into the singular VAN platform. A pool of analysts work with VAN members to validate and analyze the data, ensuring they have the raw data, analyses and technical support to make decisions using the data. The combination of high quality data and [analysis](#) facilitates [accurate supply planning](#) across trading partners, as well as rapid response to supply concerns.

The power of visibility: impact and the way forward

The VAN is the first fully scaled control tower in the public health sphere. Its 100+ members can track over 7,500 shipments of 71 products across 145 countries in real time. Over the last three years, procurers collaborating with governments through the VAN mobilized more than \$70 million in new orders for countries, avoided waste by supporting product reallocation worth \$4.67 million in cancelled and transferred orders, and expedited 86 orders to mitigate supply shortages. In 2022, the VAN was used to identify a critical procurement funding gap of \$100 million across 32 countries and supported UNFPA and USAID mobilization and allocation of \$15.8 million worth of products. Going forward, VAN activities include increased country engagement and assessing the feasibility of integrating global information systems and country electronic logistic management systems. For more information, please contact GlobalFPVAN@rhsupplies.org, and visit <https://www.rhsupplies.org/gfpvan>.