



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

WEST AFRICA

SUCCESS STORY

Improving Reproductive Health

Governments help meet reproductive health needs

Despite numerous studies that demonstrate a high need for family planning in West Africa, contraceptives are not widely distributed in the region. During a USAID-supported regional conference in Accra, Ghana that focused on gaining support for

family planning initiatives, participants identified shortages of reproductive health commodities, like condoms, as a key reason for family planning's low profile in the region.

USAID has been working to address this through a number of initiatives, which include helping countries strengthen their supply chains for reproductive health commodities.



Photo: MSH/Antoine Ndiaye

A reproductive health center's in-house pharmacy ensures better access to medical supplies.

“The involvement of the Ministry of Finance in the development of the reproductive health commodity security strategic plan has helped raise awareness to the need to provide funding for contraceptive commodities in the national budget,” said Dr. Aboudou Dare, Director of Family Health, Togo.

USAID helps each participating country identify a sustainable solution for determining and providing supply needs. Then the country takes responsibility for ensuring the solution gets put in place, developing a national reproductive health commodity strategic plan. Representatives from all relevant sectors — health, social services, private businesses, and various government ministries — all contribute to the strategic plan. The task forces consider issues like forecasting, financing, procuring, and distributing reproductive health commodities to the places where they are needed, at the time they are needed.

USAID has helped four countries in West Africa — Burkina Faso, Cameroon, The Gambia, and Togo — develop national strategic plans. As a result, the governments of these countries are more aware of their responsibility to ensure the security of reproductive health commodity supply chains. In fact, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, and Togo have all increased funding for reproductive health commodities and are working to allocate funding for these commodities in their national budgets.

Telling Our Story
U.S. Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20523-1000
<http://stories.usaid.gov>