



Saving Lives Through Improved Access to Contraceptives in West Africa

The USAID/West Africa Regional Mission (USAID/WA) partners with regional organizations, the private sector, and the local sector to achieve peace and prosperity,¹ including supporting strong and resilient health supply chains that strengthen contraceptive security in Francophone West Africa. Since 2011, USAID investments in system strengthening to improve commodity security in West Africa through projects like AgirPF, Health Policy Plus, and USAID|DELIVER have provided support for early warning system reports, service delivery, and securing commitment to support family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) programs. Despite this support, stockouts have persisted, particularly at the last mile; logistics management information systems (LMIS) are fragmented with limited data quality². Since fiscal year (FY) 2017, the Global Health Supply Chain-Technical Assistance (GHSC-TA) Francophone Task Order (TO) project has provided systems strengthening and commodity security assistance to focus countries under USAID/WA³ (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mauritania, Niger, and Togo).

The project works closely with these governments, non-governmental organizations, private sector actors, and regional partners⁴ to improve commodity security. To achieve this, the project has supported regional organizations and focus countries in three key areas: 1) improving best practices for distribution, warehousing, and logistics; 2) improving access to commodities; and 3) building capacity to improve logistics management and commodity security.

USAID Investment

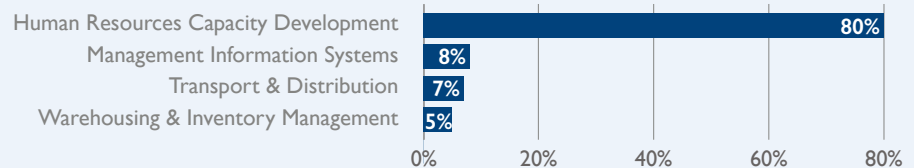
By the end of FY22, USAID had provided \$1.56 million in technical assistance in partnership with focus country governments, as well as regional organizations and associations, to support FP/RH³. This support focused on improving coordination and collaboration between regional organizations to improve commodity security.

Key Activities and Achievements

Through the project, USAID has invested in FP/RH commodities and strengthened the supply chain to meet Francophone West Africa's contraceptive needs. Through this investment, USAID, in partnership with regional governments and organizations achieved the following:

- **Three focus countries have revitalized their contraceptive security committees to strengthen national FP/RH supply chains.** Since 2018, the project has collaborated with FP programs to revitalize existing contraceptive security technical working groups (CSTWGs) in Burkina Faso, Niger and Togo⁵. In Burkina Faso, the CSTWG increased the frequency of data consumption reviews to quarterly, resulting in improved supply plan updates and a 54% reduction in stockout rates at the central level. In Togo, the contraceptive security committee has led meetings independently since Q2FY21, leading to a 59% reduction in stockouts of FP/RH commodities between 2020-2022. In Niger, the project's support to the commodity security working group (CSWG) for quarterly supply plan reviews improved supply plan quality by 58%.
- **50 participants from 15 ECOWAS member states developed advocacy plans to increase FP/RH commodity purchases.** In FY22, the project collaborated with the West Africa Health Organization (WAHO), Reproductive Health

Investment by Supply Chain Area*



*Knowledge management, program management, and office operations costs are allocated across technical subcategories based on the proportion of funding spent in each technical subcategory.

¹ <https://www.usaid.gov/west-africa-regional>

² SOL-OAA_16-000192

³ Please see country-specific snapshots on [Burkina Faso, Niger, and Togo](#) for further information on select country support provided by GHSC-TA Francophone TO.

⁴ Regional partners include West Africa Health Organization (WAHO); Economic Community to West African States (ECOWAS); West African Economic and Monetary Union (UEMOA); United Nations Population Fund, West and Central Africa Regional Office (UNFPA/WCARO); the Ouagadougou Partnership Association (OPCU); and Association Africaine des Centrales d'Achats de Médicaments Essentiels (ACAME).

⁵ A revitalized contraceptive security committee that serves as a functioning coordinating logistics mechanisms according to the project indicator necessitates the following: 1) host-country government agencies hold at minimum semi-annual meeting with relevant sector actors, 2) committees develop policies, procedures and action plans and 3) demonstrate adherence to policies, procedures and implement action plans.



15

Country advocacy plans to address FP/RH commodity funding gaps developed



3

Number of focus countries with a functional logistics coordination mechanism in place



32



53

Number of focus country staff trained on VAN premium

Supply Coalition (RHSC), and UNFPA to host the three-day Regional Workshop on Family Planning Commodity Supply Plan Financing for ECOWAS countries. The workshop provided the opportunity for 50 participants to collaborate across countries and linguistic lines and develop action plans to support advocacy for increasing local resources for the purchase of contraceptive commodities and building local ownership in commodity availability.

- **Close collaboration with regional organizations to support ongoing harmonization of quantification and stock management practices in Francophone West Africa continued.** Since FY18, the project has been supporting WAHO to improve data validity and reliability, as well as improving quantification and supply planning for FP/RH commodities. This support includes WAHO's annual Early Warning System (EWS) workshops for ECOWAS countries, during which participants developed a capacity-building plan with an accompanying budget for forecasting and supply staff.

The support also included a plan for transitioning countries from the Performance Progress and Monitoring Report, a legacy EWS tool used to manage its data and contraceptive logistics needs, to the Global Family Planning Visibility and Analytics Network⁶ (VAN) — a more robust commodity logistics data platform. Additionally, the project provided guidance to WAHO on workshop design, objectives, and

themes. The project also contributed to the preparation and facilitation of the workshops' technical sessions, such as VAN premium⁷ user training sessions (75 people trained), a review of VAN data sources, discussions on recommendations to mitigate VAN data quality issues, harmonization of VAN data sources within countries, and development of guidelines to improve commodity transfer between countries. These workshops have proven instrumental in engaging host governments to the VAN, empowering country ownership of logistics data, gaining broader and deeper visibility of contraceptive data, and conducting advocacy to ensure the safety and availability of contraceptives.

Future Investment Opportunities

In collaboration with regional governments and partners, the project has made significant improvements to the supply chain of FP/RH commodities. To maintain progress, stakeholders may focus future investment opportunities on several key areas for growth related to digitizing the LMIS. Activities may include improving commodity security through encouraging uptake of the VAN and premium membership in particular; supporting member states to identify commodity gaps and advocate for innovative ways to close them, and providing workforce development support for programs like STEP 2.0⁸ or the Young Logisticians Professionals Program⁹ in other countries or with regional organizations like ACAME.

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⁶To learn more about the VAN, please visit <https://www.rhsupplies.org/microsites/gfpvan/>

⁷The VAN has two levels: basic and premium. Basic viewer membership provides the member country with a dashboard of orders and estimated delivery dates. Premium viewer membership provides the member country with an interactive dashboard where it can enter and adjust orders in line with supply plan updates and interact with donors and suppliers.

⁸**Strategic Executive Leadership Programme (STEP 2.0)** is a training program based on an academic framework of professional competencies for supply chain managers that helps participants develop problem-solving skills and foster effective team building, developed by GAVI in collaboration with other partners.

⁹The Young Logistician Professionals Program (YLPP) strategically places young logisticians in Benin's health districts. YLPP participants in health zones improve warehouse stock management performance and support staff for family planning commodities. Please check out Benin's Country Snapshot to find out more.