



**Regional Workshop on the strengthening of reproductive health commodities procurement and supply chain management, and provision of integrated reproductive health information and services in West and Central Africa**

*June 18-22, 2018 (Dakar, Senegal)*

## Concept Note

### 1. Background

Over the past ten years, through the "Global programme to enhance Reproductive Health Commodity Security" (GP/RHCS 2008-2013), which became "UNFPA Supplies" in 2014, the UNFPA has invested in strengthening Family Planning (FP) programs and securing Reproductive Health (RH) products in 46 low- and middle-income countries around the world, including 20 in West and Central Africa where demographic and health indicators are among the most concerning in the world.

Indeed, despite significant progress in the socio-economic, demographic and health areas over the past decade, the region's indicator levels in areas related to sexual and reproductive health are still very problematic, which make it the most "*left behind*" region. The following indicators and findings illustrate this: (i) high population growth (2.7 percent) systematically cancelling the benefits of economic growth; (ii) very high fertility with an average of more than 5 children per woman; (iii) maternal mortality at more than 679 deaths per 100 thousand live births; (iv) an average contraceptive prevalence of only 17 percent for modern methods and unmet need for family planning at 24 percent; (v) a predominantly young population (over 65 percent of the population is under 25 years old) but poorly educated and largely unemployed; (vi) sociocultural constraints that are not conducive to the development of women and girls. In short, this situation if it persists could compromise the acceleration of the demographic transition and the capture of the demographic dividend.

One of the major causes of this significant weakness in sexual and reproductive health indicators is the limited availability of RH products in service centers, which in turn is largely related to the inefficiency and even critical failures of health product supply chains in the countries of the region.

To address this situation and in order to enable all individuals and couples to choose, obtain and use quality Reproductive Health products, whenever they express the need for it, the UNFPA West and Central Africa Regional Office (WCARO) has over the past several years developed additional initiatives and partnerships with a view to more coordinated and synergistic interventions in the region with regards to countries supply of RH commodities. The establishment by the Regional Director of a Regional Champion Mechanism (one of which is dedicated to managing RH product procurement and supply chains) is one of these initiatives.

It is also in this context that we must consider (i) the contribution of the SWEDD project in particular in its component 2 regarding the supply of RH products and the strengthening of human resources in the realm of health, (ii) the elaboration of a regional guidance document on the strengthening of supply chains, (iii) the organization of a number of regional workshops on the management of the HR product supply chain in collaboration with other partners working in this field; and (iv) the region's contribution to the development of UNFPA's global supply chain management strategy (2018-2021) and the (ongoing) revision of the Organization's procurement management guidelines and policy.

## 2. Rationale

Availability of and access to RH commodities (contraceptives, essential medicines for emergency obstetric and neonatal care, safe and effective equipment, etc.) play a vital role in promoting sexual and reproductive health and associated rights. Indeed, a strong health care system cannot function without a well-designed, well-managed and well-maintained essential health care procurement system and supply chain - an integrated system that can ensure the availability of essential health commodities to clients who need it.

It is important to note that the goal of a public health procurement system and supply chain is much broader than simply ensuring that a product arrives where it is supposed to. More specifically, the goal is to improve public health outcomes. In other words, the performance of an RH procurement and supply chain management system contributes to the success or failure of any RH program. A well-functioning procurement system and supply chain for RH products benefits any RH program by (i) increasing the impact of the program; (ii) improving the quality of care; (iii) improving profitability and efficiency and reducing disparities and inequalities in access to health services.

Specifically with regards to the West and Central Africa region, although no evaluation or regional study has yet been conducted, partial analyzes (SIGL/SWEDD, annual surveys regarding the availability of RH products, etc.) reveal the following weaknesses: (i) low contribution by the governments of the region countries to the funding of contraceptive products; (ii) a financing gap for the different functions of the supply chain to ensure supply up to the last kilometer; (iii) a multitude of actors in the supply system, and the persistence of parallel and non-integrated supply systems; (iv) the lack of national skills coupled with the lack of reliable logistics data to ensure the quantification of national requirements for RH products and rational planning of supplies; (v) the absence of a supply master plan or where it exists, it does not take into account the last kilometer level or those who are left behind, and often it is not respected by all the actors of the health system; (vi) the inadequacy or obsolescence of transportation means which delay the supply of peripheral depots, with inadequate storage conditions at the level of community health facilities and service delivery points, coupled with the insufficient exploitation of the private sector potential, or even exploration of innovative approaches in this area; (vii) non-compliance with standard operating procedures to ensure the quality of distributed products; (viii) a logistical information system that is not very functional, and largely non-computerized, complicating the obtention of data in a timely and permanent manner.

In view of all these weaknesses, WCARO determined it was necessary and urgent to develop a regional action plan for strengthening RH product procurement and supply chain management systems. An action plan that will serve as a reference for all country offices in the region while ensuring a regional synergy of transformation towards the effective securing of RH products with a view to achieving the three transformational objectives of the 2018-2021 UNFPA Strategic Plan (zero preventable maternal deaths, zero unmet needs in FP and zero GBV and other harmful practices) and the aspiration of the Sustainable Development Goals to "*leave no one behind*".

The process of developing this regional action plan involves a number of steps, the first of which would be the harmonization of the basic knowledge underlying the acquisition and management of the RH product supply chain, hence the organization of a regional workshop on the strengthening of procurement and supply chain management systems for reproductive health commodities, and the integrated approach to the provision of reproductive health services and information in West and Central Africa.

## 3. Expected Objectives and Results

### 3.1. Purpose

Ensure the availability of RH commodities including contraceptives at the "last mile" and, ultimately, the full self-sufficiency of West and Central Africa countries in this matter.

### 3.2. Overall Objective

Strengthen country capacities to procure and distribute RH commodities to the last mile.

### 3.3. Specific Objectives

- Have a common understanding of the main challenges faced by countries in the region in the procurement and supply of RH commodities, including in humanitarian situations.
- Share new developments in procurement and supply of RH products including the '*Visibility & Analytics Network*' (VAN) approach, UNFPA's new Procurement and Supply Management Policy and the SYSTMAPP platform for the collection and analysis of data from annual surveys on the availability of RH commodities.
- Identify priority approaches for the next four years (2018 - 2021) to address the challenges faced by countries in the region with respect to the procurement and supply of RH products including in humanitarian situations, and validate the regional action plan for RH product procurement and supply chain management systems enhancement (2018 - 2021).
- Based on country data from the completion of the supply chain maturity assessment tool, develop a regional road map for country capacity building to establish effective procurement and supply chain management systems for RH commodities.

The workshop will also be used to (i) validate short operational plans for regional approach to the provision of reproductive health (maternal health, family planning, HIV, adolescent and youth reproductive health, harmful practices) information and services; (ii) orient Country Offices on the new developments under way for each of the different thematic funds implemented in the region (UNFPA Supplies, MHTF, Muskoka, UBRAF, FGM, Child Marriage) and (iii) validate the terms of reference for the development of Family Planning Business cases for West and Central Africa countries.

### 3.4. Expected Results

- A common understanding of the main challenges faced by countries in the region in the procurement and supply of RH products, including in humanitarian situations.
- '*Visibility & Analytics Network*' (VAN) approach, UNFPA's new procurement and supply management policy and shared SYSTMAPP platform.
- Priority approaches for the next four years (2018 - 2021) to address challenges faced by countries in the region with respect to the procurement and supply of RH products, including in humanitarian situations.
- Regional action plan for strengthening RH product procurement and supply chain management systems (2018-2021) validated.
- Regional road map to strengthen the capacities of countries to establish effective procurement and supply chain management systems for RH products developed.
- Short operational plans underpinning the regional approach to the provision of reproductive health (maternal health, family planning, HIV, adolescent and youth reproductive health, harmful practices) information and services validated.
- Country offices oriented on new developments underway for each of the different thematic funds implemented in the region (UNFPA Supplies, MHTF, Muskoka, UBRAF, FGM, Child Marriage).

- Terms of reference for the development of Family Planning Business Cases for West and Central Africa countries validated.

#### 4. Methodology

Organized in two tracks:

- Track 1. Procurement and Supply Chain Management of Reproductive Health commodities; and
- Track 2. Provision of reproductive health information and services,

the workshop will take place in the form of plenary presentations followed by interactive discussions and syntheses, and group works.

The Regional Advisers and Technical Specialists, the regional champions (PSCM, Family Planning, Maternal Health, Youth and MGF, Demographic Dividend) and representatives of Headquarter Commodity Security Branch (CSB) will be in charge of facilitating and moderating the workshop.

The working languages of the workshop will be French and English. Logistical arrangements will be made to ensure that simultaneous translation from English to French or from French to English is available throughout the course of the workshop.

#### 5. Participants

The workshop will be intended for:

- the Regional Office (Regional Director, SWEDD Regional Coordinator, FP Regional Adviser, Gender/Adolescent and Youth Regional Adviser, Regional RHCS Technical Specialist, HSS Regional Technical Specialist, IOM, Procurement Officer, Financial Assistant, WRH Unit Assistant);
- Regional champions (System of acquisition and management of the RH product supply chain, Family Planning, Maternal Health);
- Representatives of CSB;
- All West and Central countries RHCS focal points;
- Some West and Central countries Logistic focal points
- Some West and Central countries Maternal Health focal points;
- Some West and Central countries HIV focal points

#### 6. Date, place and funding

- Date : June 18 – 22, 2018
- Place : Dakar, Senegal
- Funding : Countries and Regional funds (UNFPA Supplies, MHTF, Muskoka, UBRAF)

#### 7. Short Agenda

The agenda of the workshop includes the following sessions:

Dates	Activities
<b>Track 1. Procurement and Supply Chain Management of Reproductive Health commodities</b>	
<b>Day 1 - Monday, June 18, 2018</b>	<b>Session 1: RH commodities procurement and supply chain management challenges and way forward</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of the results of the studies on the approach to improve the availability of reproductive health commodities at the last mile across SWEDD countries.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of the integrated and quantified action plan to improve the availability of reproductive health commodities in Niger.</li> <li>- Presentation of the results of LMIS assessment in SWEDD countries.</li> <li>- Presentation of the evaluation tool for the maturity of supply chains.</li> <li>- Presentation of the results of the assessment of the maturity of supply chains across WCAR.</li> </ul>
Dates	Activities
Track 1. Procurement and Supply Chain Management of Reproductive Health commodities	
<b>Day 2 - Tuesday, June 19, 2018</b>	<p><b>Session 1: RH commodities procurement and supply chain management challenges and way forward</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Group works on the identification of challenges and priority approaches to reinforcing procurement and supply chain management systems for RH commodities in West and Central Africa.</li> </ul> <p><b>Session 2: Regional road map to strengthen the capacities of countries to establish effective procurement and supply chain management systems for RH commodities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of the 'Visibility &amp; Analytics Network' (VAN) approach.</li> <li>- Orientation on the use of UNFPA's Systmapp platform for SDP surveys.</li> <li>- Overview of the new UNFPA supply management policy.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 3 - Wednesday, June 20, 2018</b>	<p><b>Session 2: Regional road map to strengthen the capacities of countries to establish effective procurement and supply chain management systems for RH commodities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New roles and responsibilities of actors in supply management.</li> <li>- Overview of Procurement Management Processes.</li> <li>- Orientation on the phases of quantification, procurement, fulfillment, receipt and delivery, control and accountability.</li> <li>- Group works on the development of the regional road map for country capacity building to establish effective procurement and supply chain management systems for RH commodities.</li> </ul>
Track 2. Provision of reproductive health information and services	
<b>Day 4 - Thursday, June 21, 2018</b>	<p><b>Session 3: Regional approach to the provision of reproductive health information and services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation of short operational plans underpinning the regional approach to the provision of reproductive health (maternal health, family planning, HIV, adolescent and youth reproductive health, harmful practices) information and services.</li> <li>- Presentation of the ToRs for the development of Family Planning Business cases.</li> <li>- Group works on the refining of the short operational plans underpinning the regional approach to the provision of reproductive health (maternal health, family planning, HIV, adolescent and youth reproductive health, harmful practices) information and services and the ToRs for the development of Family Planning Business cases.</li> </ul>
<b>Day 5 – Friday, June 22, 2018</b>	<p><b>Session 4: Thematic Trust Funds Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- UNFPA Supplies QPM</li> <li>- MHTF QPM</li> <li>- FGM QPM</li> <li>- UBRAF QPM</li> <li>- Child marriage QPM</li> <li>- Muskoka QPM</li> </ul> <p><b>Satellite Sessions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Regional Office working session with Country Offices part of Muskoka Initiative.</li> <li>- Regional Office working session Country Offices part of "HIV fast track" initiative.</li> </ul>