



IT TAKES A HEALTH WORKER

INTRAHEALTH'S SUPPORT FOR FAMILY PLANNING

IntraHealth
INTERNATIONAL
Because Health Workers Save Lives.



As many as **215 million** women around the world have a need for family planning, but for various reasons they are not using contraception. Given the recent dramatic success of family planning programs in Ethiopia, Malawi, and Rwanda, the arrival of the seven billionth person on the planet, and enthusiasm around the 2011 International Conference on Family Planning in Dakar, this is an opportune moment to revitalize efforts to help women and couples meet this unmet need. Doing so could prevent the death of more than two million children annually and up to one-third of maternal deaths.

As a global champion and leader in supporting health workers for more than 30 years, IntraHealth International has shared its extensive experience and expertise to improve family planning programs. The shortage and poor distribution of health workers represents a major barrier to extending access to services. IntraHealth is committed to assisting country-led efforts to better manage, support, empower, and expand the health workforce to serve communities in need with family planning services.

From 2008-2010, IntraHealth trained almost 7,500 health workers in family planning and engaged almost 30,000 community health workers in delivering family planning. In 2010 alone, IntraHealth's work led to 1,164 facilities offering improved family planning services, 118,831 new users of contraception, and 354,928 couple years of protection.

ENHANCE SKILLS

Improving the performance of health workers

To perform at their best, health workers need up-to-date skills and knowledge, motivation to do a good job, adequate equipment and supplies, clear job expectations, and regular feedback on their performance. They also need recognition of a job well done. IntraHealth assesses and solves problems in each of these areas through its comprehensive approach to improving health worker performance. Examples of this work include building the capacity of organizations in **Bangladesh** to train more than 45,000 health and family planning personnel; improving the quality of family planning counseling and the provision of contraceptives by pharmacy agents in **Benin**; and improving family planning services in **Senegal** through on-the-job mentoring.

Developing innovative approaches to education and training

IntraHealth has worked in countries around the world to improve preservice education and in-service training programs that support improved quality of family planning and reproductive health services. In **Malawi**, we collaborated with the Ministry of Health and nursing schools on a multi-pronged approach to improve preservice education in family planning, including developing participatory activities, assessment tools, and a comprehensive family planning reference guide for use by tutors and lecturers. The contraceptive prevalence rate in Malawi increased from 24% in 2004 to 42% in 2010.

Expanding the roles of health workers

IntraHealth has expertise in helping countries use a broad variety of health workers to deliver appropriate family planning services, supported by policy changes as necessary. We have worked to strengthen family planning services and awareness-raising through a wide variety of health workers, including pharmacists in **Togo**, volunteer health promoters in the **Dominican Republic**, pediatricians and family physicians in **Armenia**, indigenous medicine practitioners in **India**, and community outreach volunteers in **Bangladesh**.

STRENGTHEN SYSTEMS

Strengthening the health workforce and health systems

IntraHealth helps countries strengthen their health workforce and the planning, information, education, and management systems that support health workers. In **Kenya** we contributed to the development of a national family planning training plan and a successful rapid hiring plan that deployed over 800 health workers in a fraction of the usual time. Our comprehensive assistance to the government of **Rwanda** to strengthen family planning services—including work in the areas of policy, decentralization, education and training, and community-based care—contributed to the country's dramatic increase in modern contraceptive prevalence among married women, from 10% in 2005 to 27% in 2007 and 45% in 2010.

"With the world's population reaching **seven billion** it becomes ever more pressing that we address social inequalities in health, as well as the unmet need for family planning services. IntraHealth is committed to championing the crucial role of equitably distributed, skilled, motivated, and productive health workers in increasing access to family planning and improving health and well-being."

— **Pape Gaye** | President and CEO





IMPROVE SERVICES

Integrating family planning services

Chronic shortages of health workers in developing countries make it essential to leverage opportunities to integrate family planning services with other vital health care services. In **Ethiopia**, **Namibia**, and **Rwanda**, IntraHealth has integrated family planning counseling and services with services to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Results from Rwanda showed a 70% family planning acceptance rate among HIV-positive women at facilities where IntraHealth trained providers in family planning.

Increasing the range of available methods

IntraHealth works to make family planning more available, socially acceptable, and widely used by offering more people a range of family planning options, including long-acting and permanent methods. In **Senegal**, we helped the Ministry of Health revise protocols and train nurses at rural health posts to offer contraceptive implants and intrauterine devices (IUDs), which were previously available only through doctors and midwives at larger hospitals and health centers. In **Rwanda**, we trained physicians and nurses to offer non-surgical vasectomies, resulting in more than 450 men opting for the procedure in the program's first year.

Reaching out to communities to increase awareness and knowledge

IntraHealth also engages and educates communities through public campaigns, advocacy, and open dialogues. In **Senegal** we helped organize community dialogue sessions attended by almost 8,000 people, resulting in a better work environment for health personnel, more clients using family planning services, more districts taking action to improve services and perceptions of family planning, and the ability of men and women to identify and speak out about problems with access to and availability of family planning services.

"The **IntraHealth approach** is very promising because health workers themselves have the opportunity to train their peers."

— **Thiam Ami Mbow** | Reproductive Health Coordinator, Kaolack medical region, Senegal



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Chapel Hill, NC | 6340 Quadrangle Drive, Suite 200 | Chapel Hill, NC 27517 | **Tel:** 919-313-9100

Washington, DC | 1776 I St. NW, Suite 650 | Washington, DC 20006 | **Tel:** 202-407-9432

www.intrahealth.org

