



EXPAND COMMUNITY-BASED DISTRIBUTION OF INJECTABLE CONTRACEPTIVES IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

A CALL TO ACTION FOR POLICYMAKERS

Brief

Photo credit: Mike Blyth

Family planning helps women to space their children, giving them time to take better care of themselves, their spouse, and their children. Family planning also helps to mitigate the health risks associated with pregnancy and childbirth.

Despite the benefits of family planning, these services are not readily available in Rivers State, where only 14 percent of women use a family planning method to space or limit pregnancies.

What Has Been Done to Improve the Situation?

The Federal Government of Nigeria is committed to increasing investment in family planning and ensuring that women of childbearing age have access to their desired family planning method. In 2012, the National Council on Health approved a policy change enabling community health extension workers to administer injectable contraceptives—one of Nigeria’s most preferred contraceptive methods.¹

The Potential for Impact

This policy change provides an opportunity to reach more women with the services they desire, but the change cannot be implemented without the leadership and support of the state government.

With assistance from the Health Policy Project, funded by the United States Agency for International Development, the White Ribbon Alliance Nigeria (WRAN) used national- and state-level data to project the impact of fulfilling the goals and interventions set in the State Strategic Health Development Plan (2010–2015). WRAN estimates that Rivers State could increase the contraceptive prevalence rate from 14.1 to 81.6 percent and the use of injectable contraceptives from 15.1 to 27 percent by 2030 if there is a sustained campaign to increase both the demand for and supply of contraceptive commodities.² The state could also increase the use of family planning services and avert an estimated 13,000 maternal and newborn deaths by 2030.

What You Can Do as a Community Leader

WRAN is calling on the Rivers State Government to develop a strategic framework and costed implementation plan to expand delivery of family planning services, including injectable contraceptives, by 2018.³ This plan should include

- Establishing a budget line for family planning
- Training community health extension workers to deliver family planning services
- Strengthening the logistic management system to ensure that family planning commodities are reaching service delivery points in a timely manner and preventing stockouts
- Setting a target, endorsed by the Rivers State Ministry of Health, to increase the contraceptive prevalence rate by 2 percentage points per year

Resources

¹ Communique: 55th National Council on Health (NCH) Meeting, Sheraton Hotel & Towers, Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, 16–20 July 2012.

² Nwachwukwu, Emeka. Unpublished, 2013. Policy Analysis of Benefits and Program Requirements of Family Planning Scale-Up in Rivers State. Abuja: White Ribbon Alliance Nigeria.

**WOMEN ARE THE HEART OF
THE STATE'S ECONOMY.....
Support them to live healthier lives.**

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The Health Policy Project is a five-year cooperative agreement funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development under Agreement No. AID-OAA-A-10-00067, beginning September 30, 2010. It is implemented by Futures Group, in collaboration with CEDPA (part of Plan International USA), Futures Institute, Partners in Population and Development, Africa Regional Office (PPD ARO), Population Reference Bureau (PRB), RTI International, and the White Ribbon Alliance for Safe Motherhood (WRA).

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