



# Fact Sheet

## Reproductive Health Supplies

### What are reproductive health supplies (RHS)?

All essential equipment, commodities and medicines required for family planning, including male and female condoms and other contraceptives, as well as materials needed for maternal and neonatal health and effective responses to HIV and AIDS.

### Why are RHS crucial for development?

*“Without the right products, the best health programmes can’t succeed.”*

UNFPA [www.unfpa.org/supplies](http://www.unfpa.org/supplies)

More than 350 million couples worldwide do not have access to modern family planning methods or reproductive health services. As a result, they cannot decide on the timing or spacing of their children;

women’s lives are endangered by the risks of unsafe childbirth; and people cannot protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV.

### Why should European governments invest in RHS?

- RHS are essential for achieving the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and eradicating global poverty, particularly MDG 5 and its target of universal access to reproductive health.
- Pregnancy and delivery-related complications are the leading cause of death among women in developing countries. Plus, more than one-third of all pregnancies in developing countries

are unwanted, and two-thirds of those are the result of sex without any use of modern contraceptives.

- There is a global shortfall in RHS compared to demand. The success of family planning programmes in developing countries, combined with population growth, indicates that demand for RHS is expected to increase 40% by 2015.

*“No one should die for want of a three-cent condom.”*

Dr. Peter Piot, former Executive Director, UNAIDS

- The largest-ever generation of young people is already or will soon be sexually active, thus increasing even further the supply/demand gap.
- 75% of all HIV infections are through sexual transmission, making condoms essential for HIV prevention.

### \$1 million in commodity support for contraceptives can:

- Save the lives of 800 women and 11,000 infants
- Prevent some 14,000 additional deaths of children under five years of age
- Avert 360,000 unwanted pregnancies
- Prevent 150,000 additional induced abortions<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> UNFPA, website, <http://www.unfpa.org/supplies/securing.htm>

**Countdown 2015 Europe** is a group of leading European NGOs working in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), who have joined forces to achieve universal access to reproductive health as outlined at the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and under the new United Nations target under Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5. A track record on policies and funding for reproductive health supplies in 15 European countries is available online at [www.countdown2015europe.org](http://www.countdown2015europe.org). For more information, contact Project Coordinator An Huybrechts, [ahuybrechts@ippfen.org](mailto:ahuybrechts@ippfen.org).

