

FAMILY PLANNING

FAMILY PLANNING IN RWANDA

A Rwandan woman has an average of six babies in her life and if current trends persist, Rwanda's population will double by 2034. Rwanda currently has a population of over ten million and is one of the most densely populated countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. Rwanda's high fertility rate and population density contribute to conflict over land and pose challenges to economic growth.

Although the majority of women still do not use either a modern or a traditional contraceptive method, Rwanda has made impressive progress in family planning, with a near seven-fold increase in the use of modern contraceptives since 2000 (the proportion of reproductive aged women using a modern contraceptive method grew from 4 percent in 2000 to 27 percent in 2007). The total fertility rate dropped from 6.1 to 5.5 in the same period. Forty nine percent of surveyed women expressed a desire to limit births, an increase of 16 percent since 2000.

RESPONSE

In 2007, the Government of Rwanda (GOR) made family planning a national priority recognizing its relation to economic growth. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) supports the GOR's national family planning program which seeks to increase the demand, access, availability and use of contraception. As the GOR's emphasis on family planning increased, USAID's support grew from \$2.7 million in Fiscal Year (FY) 2004 to \$9 million in FY 2009.

USAID works to increase the availability of family planning and reproductive health services, including the providers needed to deliver these services, and to address unmet demand. USAID's implementing partners train and supervise health providers, sensitize Rwandans to the importance of family planning, and purchase the majority of contraceptives used in the national family planning program.

USAID also provides technical expertise and financial support for capacity building in forecasting, quantification and contraceptive logistics to ensure sustained supply meets the country's growing demand.

RESULTS

In partnership with the GOR and other development partners, in 2009 USAID procured a full range of contraceptives that meet 45% of the public sector needs and 82% of social marketing needs.

USAID ensured availability of family planning services by training over 7,900 health care providers in family planning and reproductive health services and supporting 454 Family Planning service delivery points in 2009.

Increasing male involvement is an integral aspect of USAID's family planning support, with significant results. The non-scalpel vasectomy method was scaled up to six hospitals in 2009, and more than 200 men have received long-term contraception vasectomy since its introduction in two hospitals in 2008. USAID also promotes couples' counseling in health facilities; couple years protection for modern contraceptive increased fourteen-fold from 2005 (from 40,766 couple years in 2005 to 589,430 in 2009).

USAID support promotes the use of contraception through social marketing and improves access to quality family planning methods in the private sector. Family planning methods available through the private sector include a progestin-only pill and a 2-month injectable. Condoms are promoted as a dual protection method (FP/HIV prevention).

POPULATION AT A GLANCE

- Population: 10.2 million^[1]
- Population growth: 2.8 percent^[2]
- Total fertility rate: 5.5 births per woman^[3]
- Life expectancy at birth: 47 years^[1]

^[1] U.S. State Department

^[2] World Development Indicators 2008

^[3] Rwanda Interim Demographic and Health Survey 2007-08