



ADDRESSING UNMET NEED FOR POSTPARTUM FAMILY PLANNING: THE ACCESS-FP PROGRAM

What Is ACCESS-FP?

Designed by the USAID Office of Population & Reproductive Health as a centrally-funded associate award into the ACCESS Program, ACCESS-FP focuses specifically on meeting the family planning and reproductive health needs of women in the extended postpartum period, through the first year postpartum. ACCESS-FP interventions are designed to complement those of the ACCESS Program and others in the promotion and scale-up of postpartum family planning (PPFP) through community and clinical approaches suitable for low-resource settings. ACCESS-FP repositions family planning through integration with maternal, newborn and child health programs, including prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV.

ACCESS-FP's Programmatic Framework illustrates the relationships between postpartum family planning, maternal health, newborn health and prevention of mother-to-child transmission through the first year postpartum. The framework demonstrates the multiple opportunities to promote pregnancy spacing and to provide family planning information and services in the context of maternal and infant health services. These opportunities include antenatal care and early and extended postpartum visits, as well as immunization and well child care.

What Does ACCESS-FP Do?

Through the partners Jhpiego, Save the Children, Constella Futures, the Academy for Educational Development, the American College of Nurse-Midwives and IMA World Health, ACCESS-FP works to strengthen and expand the integration of pregnancy spacing and family planning with maternal, newborn and child health programs in the following priority areas:

- National maternal and newborn policies and strategies to ensure the inclusion of family planning in the development of a variety of essential packages of care;
- Curricula, standards and guidelines for pre-service education, in-service training and service delivery to include critical postpartum information such as return to fertility, pregnancy spacing and the full range of family planning methods;



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Family Planning Initiative
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April 2008

- Behavior change communication strategies to educate people and support pregnancy spacing and family planning including the lactational amenorrhea method (LAM); and facility and community approaches for integrating family planning messages and services with antenatal care, safe delivery, essential newborn care, postpartum care for the mother and newborn, and essential child care.

Prominent Themes in ACCESS-FP

Integration: There are multiple opportunities to provide pregnancy spacing and family planning information and services in the context of maternal, infant and child health care services. ACCESS-FP works to streamline information and services to provide those that are most critical at the most opportune moments and are linked with other services.

For HIV-positive women—whether enrolled in a program aimed at the prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV or not—there are special needs for counseling on exclusive breastfeeding and the effect of abrupt weaning on a woman’s return to fertility. Prevention programs have an additional need to provide ongoing care and support to the mother and infant during the postpartum period, both to support exclusive breastfeeding and for follow-up testing and treatment. ACCESS-FP, with its focus on the extended postpartum period, works with these programs to build or strengthen postpartum follow-up services for mother and infant.

No Missed Opportunities: ACCESS-FP is uniquely positioned to work effectively with facilities and communities on a “no missed opportunity” concept. This ensures that all women who receive antenatal care, deliver in a health facility, are referred for emergency care services or come for postnatal services have the necessary information on pregnancy spacing, family planning and appropriate services. An important part of ACCESS-FP’s work is the development of a model of focused postnatal care that includes FP.

In light of the fact that most women in the developing world do not give birth in health facilities, ACCESS-FP builds on any initial point of contact—either facility- or community-based—for linking follow-up postpartum family planning services.

Learning about What Works: As with many programs that work toward integrated services, it is often necessary to test and adapt approaches to ensure their viability. To accomplish this, ACCESS-FP collaborates with researchers to design and document both educational messages and service approaches to integrate postpartum family planning with ongoing maternal, newborn, infant and child health services.

Focused Populations: ACCESS-FP designs and implements interventions to meet the postpartum family planning needs of specific population groups such as: married adolescents, young women and couples, women and couples in the poorest economic quintiles, HIV-positive women, and the social networks surrounding and influencing these women and couples, such as their elders or religious leaders.

April 2008

Selected ACCESS-FP Activities

PPFP Community of Practice

<http://my.ibpinitiative.org/public/ppfp/>

The PPFP Community of Practice serves as a global forum for those interested in learning and exchanging information, tools and resources related to PPFP. Through the Implementing Best Practices (IBP) Initiative, the wider reproductive health community comes within easy—and virtual—reach for effective information exchange. Through the IBP system, the PPFP Community of Practice:

- Organizes online global discussions on selected PPFP topics identified by the members and facilitates further information sharing through Web-based global discussions.
- Serves as central library for key PPFP resources including research, programmatic information and tools.
- Brings together diverse groups working in maternal and newborn health and family planning to share programmatic experience and learning.

Country Activities

Albania

ACCESS-FP is working in Albania with the Ministry of Health to strengthen postpartum and postabortion family planning services and to reinvigorate the provision of IUD services. The program also works to increase demand for modern contraceptives in the country.

Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, ACCESS-FP is working with The Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Shimantik and the Ministry of Health in carrying out an operations research study to integrate postpartum family planning activities in a community-based newborn care program.

Haiti

ACCESS-FP activities in Haiti focus on the development of a participatory reproductive health model for young girls and young mothers. The model focuses on increasing young women's (under 24 years of age) use of family planning, and maternal and neonatal services including PMTCT, through community-based initiatives that are closely linked with available health services.

Kenya

ACCESS-FP in Kenya is working with FRONTIERS and the Kenyan Ministry of Health on an operations research study aimed at testing a model of focused postnatal care with postpartum family planning emphasized as a key component. The study is being implemented in Embu District. The program is also working to reestablish the IUD as a postpartum contraceptive option.

April 2008

Nigeria

In Nigeria, ACCESS-FP works to incorporate a postpartum family planning approach complementary with essential maternal and newborn care. The family planning activities in Nigeria are designed to build on the platform created by essential maternal and newborn care (EMNC) activities. Rural facilities in two districts in Northern Nigeria are revitalizing their family planning services with a particular emphasis on postpartum family planning, and a complementary behavior change strategy to support initiation and use is being developed.

**For more information about the ACCESS-FP Program,
please contact:**

Catharine McKaig

Director, ACCESS-FP

Tel: 410.537.1848

cmckaig@jhpiego.net

Maureen Norton

CTO, ACCESS-FP

Tel: 202.712.1334

mnorton@usaid.gov

Patricia MacDonald

Senior TA, ACCESS-FP

Tel: 202.712.1235

pmacdonald@usaid.gov

ACCESS Program Web site: www.accesstohealth.org

Postpartum Family Planning Community of Practice:

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