

The UNFPA thematic fund, **UNFPA Supplies**, is the only United Nations programme dedicated to family planning, and it is the world's largest provider of donated contraceptives. **UNFPA Supplies** supports countries with the greatest needs, helping them to strengthen their supply chains so that women and adolescent girls can access a choice of contraceptives no matter where they live. The programme has a particular focus on 46 countries, in addition to providing support for reproductive health services in humanitarian crises.

“Provision of modern short- and long-acting contraceptives, information, counselling and services (including emergency contraception) is lifesaving and should be available and accessible during the COVID-19 pandemic response.” —UNFPA Interim Technical Brief

COORDINATED EFFORT TO AVERT SHORTAGES

This briefing note is based on preliminary analysis of the 46 **UNFPA Supplies** programme countries for Quarter 1 (January to March 2020) in light of COVID-19.*

UNFPA is working with governments and partners to avoid or minimize shortages of contraceptives and life-saving maternal health medicines—all in close coordination. Together, we are working to prioritize supply requests, orders, shipments, production schedules and other operational aspects of procurement. We aim to ensure product availability in countries.

Stock-out risks in next 6 months

UNFPA has assessed what populations need in 46 countries, looking at supplies coming in, projected consumption and other factors.

Contraceptives: Stock-out risks in next 6 months among UNFPA Supplies 46 focus countries

LARCs

- 2-rod implant: 15 countries
- 1-rod implant: 12 countries
- IUDs: 5 countries

Injectables

- Intramuscular injectable (DMPA-IM): 19 countries
- Subcutaneous injectable (DMPA-SC): 5 countries
- 2-month injectable: 8 countries

Oral pills

- Combined oral contraceptives (COCs): 18 countries
- Progestin-only pills (POPs): 10 countries
- Emergency contraceptive pills: 19 countries

Condoms

- Male condoms: 8 countries
- Female condoms: 5 countries

Stock surpluses of COCs & POPs (2 countries each) and male condoms (5 countries) are being assessed, with stock transfers possible.

Life-saving maternal health medicines: Stock-out risks in next 6 months among UNFPA Supplies 46 focus countries

- Oxytocin: 8 countries
- Misoprostol: 14 countries
- Magnesium sulfate: 14 countries
- Calcium gluconate: 5 countries

A list of affected countries is available on request.

Partnerships for supply security

Two existing mechanisms are supporting the efforts of countries to provide supplies to their family planning programmes: the Coordinated Supply Planning (CSP) group and the Coordinated Assistance for Reproductive Health Supplies (CARhs) group. Both seek to prevent and resolve supply shortages or overstocks in countries and both include UNFPA and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and many other donors and partners.

Action to ensure availability of contraceptives

A set of actions are common to all 46 countries in the programme. Work is being conducted in collaboration with governments and key partners and stakeholders—and especially with USAID.

- Purchase orders have been created and issued for countries.
- Some orders have shipped while other orders need to be prioritized or rescheduled according to the indicated risk of stock-out for each country.
- Some orders are partial, others full, in relation to stock levels.
- Assessments are ongoing in several countries.
- Additional needs will be assessed with partners to process additional approvals under the **UNFPA Supplies** programme, considering product coverage under other funding resources.
- UNFPA supports the efforts of countries to obtain waivers when a given product is not registered by a country's National Regulatory Authority.

- UNFPA Country Offices are advocating for prompt customs and port clearance to mitigate the risk of stock-outs.
- UNFPA Country Offices are advocating for uninterrupted distribution of reproductive health commodities as essential medical supplies from port to last mile.

One issue related to provision of supplies and services is provider training. Provider training activities that have been planned might now not be possible given social distancing measures or might face challenges in trying to move online given low Internet connectivity in many programme countries. Training is important for many reasons, and essential for insertion and removal of implants and IUDs.

For more information about the UNFPA response to the COVID-19 pandemic, visit the UNFPA website at www.unfpa.org/covid19



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* Note on limitations: 1) Not all contraceptive products are registered in all 46 countries, and in some countries for certain newer methods registration may be limited to only a single quality assured product, i.e. situations differ and generalizations do not apply; 2) Data reconciliation is ongoing with key stakeholders. Pipeline orders will be confirmed and adjusted as restrictions are lifted, allowing delivery to avert possible stock-outs identified. Due to COVID-19, data completeness, consistency, accuracy, timeliness and validation is a challenge.