Envision FP

BACKGROUND

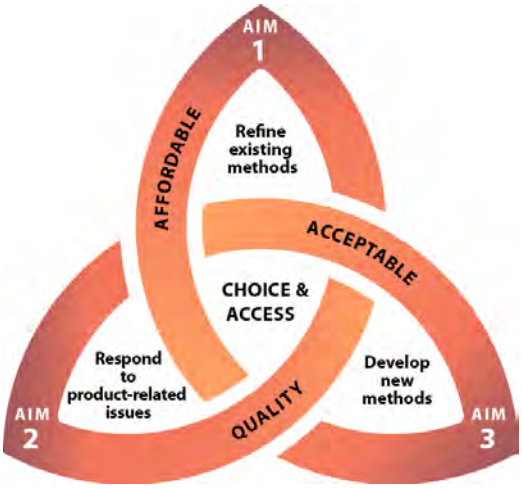
Awarded to FHI 360 in 2015, ***Envision FP: Transforming Contraception to Expand Access and Choice*** is the flagship project on contraceptive technology research for the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). A five-year cooperative agreement, *Envision FP* recognizes that family planning (FP) options must reflect the changing needs of women and couples throughout their reproductive lives. The project goals are to develop, introduce, and expand understanding of contraceptive technologies to enhance choice and reduce unmet need. Research focuses on developing and introducing new or improved contraceptives that are safe and affordable and have fewer side effects.

The research agenda aligns with three specific aims:

1) Refine existing FP methods to enhance safety, use, and/or acceptability.

2) Respond to product-related issues from the field about current FP methods that could affect provision or uptake.

3) Develop new FP methods to address reasons for non-use and to fill gaps in the current method mix.



Aim 1: Refine existing methods to enhance safety, use, and/or acceptability

Refining existing family planning methods to enhance safety and/or acceptability can address factors that cause women to discontinue use or limit uptake. Under *Envision FP*, FHI 360 researchers are evaluating a lower-dose, subcutaneous depot-medroxyprogesterone acetate (SQ DMPA) injectable contraceptive. A lower-dose version of SQ DMPA may result in reduced side effects compared to currently available products, thereby enhancing acceptability and increasing continuation.

Recognizing the importance of meeting the contraceptive needs of postpartum women, *Envision FP* will also help facilitate the registration, introduction, and evaluation of an easy-to-use postpartum IUD inserter developed by Pregna International, PSI, and the Stanford Program for International Reproductive Education and Services (SPIRES). This pre-loaded, pre-sterilized inserter could increase convenience, reduce expulsions, and enhance safety.

Aim 2: Respond to product-related concerns from the field that impact provision or uptake

When concerns about contraceptives arise in the field, loss of trust can lead to disruptions in procurement, provision, and uptake. Under *Envision FP*, a Rapid Response unit of medical and scientific experts has been established to systematically respond to field-based product concerns, research options for corrective action, make recommendations to key stakeholders, and provide post-incident monitoring. USAID missions and country-based programs can submit concerns and/or requests for *Envision FP* Rapid Response support by emailing envisionfp@fhi360.org.

In addition, the FHI 360 team is conducting product-related research, developing new resources, and implementing strategies to address gaps in knowledge that affect FP program practice. This work includes developing a database on contraceptive drug-other drug interactions and assessing the potential impact of expanding access to the levonorgestrel intrauterine system (LNG-IUS) in low-resource settings.

Aim 3: Develop new methods to address reasons for non-use or to fill gaps in method mix

Under *Envision FP*, new product development includes research on innovative delivery systems that have no market precedent. FHI 360 is collaborating with the Georgia Institute of Technology and the Population Council to evaluate delivery of three progestins—Nestorone®, levonorgestrel, and etonogestrel—using a microneedle patch platform. Such an intradermal delivery system could allow for self-administration without generating biohazardous syringe waste, and would provide women with an innovative, discreet, and easy-to-administer option.

FHI 360 is also working to advance development of a highly effective, low-cost, non-surgical permanent contraceptive approach that would give women an alternative to surgical sterilization. A non-surgical option would likely improve uptake, particularly in low-resource settings where access and cost barriers are significant. FHI 360 plans to collaborate with the Oregon Permanent Contraception Research Center at Oregon Health Sciences University to develop a pre-clinical regulatory strategy to enable Phase I testing of its polidoconal foam product.

Contact Us

Dr. Laneta Dorflinger is project director of Envision FP and Dr. Gregory S. Kopf is deputy director.
For additional information about the project, please contact us at envisionfp@fhi360.org or visit http://www.fhi360.org/projects/envision-fp.

FHI 360 HQ: 359 Blackwell Street, Durham, North Carolina, USA 919.544.7040 www.fhi360.org

This work is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the U.S. Agency for International Development.

USAID FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

fhi360 THE SCIENCE OF IMPROVING LIVES