

Global Leadership in Family Planning

KEY POINTS

FHI 360 has conducted more than 1,000 research studies in over 100 countries, while supporting the delivery of family planning services on four continents.

Our clinical trials have evaluated the safety, effectiveness and acceptability of nearly every type of contraceptive method.

Our research and development programs have helped to bring more than half a dozen female contraceptives to market in over 30 countries.

We provide global leadership in HIV/AIDS and family planning integration.



Over the last 40 years, FHI 360 has made major contributions to global health through family planning research and services. Our clinical trials and applied social science research have helped define global norms for family planning services. Collaborating with a wide range of partners — from international normative bodies and ministries of health to community-based organizations — we have investigated a wide range of contraceptive technologies and brought many to market. We identify and address the most essential research questions, while introducing innovations that improve access to services, prevent unintended pregnancies and save lives.

Global Achievements

FHI 360 has conducted more than 1,000 research studies in over 100 countries, while supporting the delivery of family planning services on four continents. Our results have been published in thousands of publications that have shaped the field of family planning. We have contributed to global technical guidance, advanced research methodology and developed job aids for local health practitioners. We have investigated a wide range of contraceptive technologies, including intrauterine devices, oral contraceptive pills, male and female condoms, injectables, subdermal implants and female and male sterilization. We promote the availability and correct use of these technologies by engaging policymakers and other stakeholders and by developing guidelines and training materials.

We helped bring more than half a dozen female contraceptive methods to market in over 30 countries. And we have improved access to many contraceptives by working with the World Health Organization (WHO) and health ministries to incorporate the latest findings into their guidelines and training.

From Research to Practice

FHI 360's Research Utilization unit works to ensure that our research findings are put into practice and that tested interventions are scaled up. We use a comprehensive approach to introduce the most effective contraceptive methods, identify best practices for service delivery and implement them. We integrate results from clinical trials, epidemiological studies, operations research, and the behavioral and social sciences to increase access to affordable contraceptive products and services.



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Our behavioral and programmatic research focuses on improving and promoting evidence-based practices. We investigate potential barriers to the use of contraception, the cost-effectiveness of reproductive health programs and the best ways to design and evaluate programs. FHI 360 researchers are also leading investigations of the risks and benefits of contraception in the context of the HIV epidemic, and our clinical research has evaluated the safety of different contraceptive methods in special populations such as HIV-positive women.

Part of our research-to-practice efforts involves information dissemination. We share results through peer-reviewed publications, program materials and the Internet. We also work with the Cochrane Collaboration, contributing more than half of the family planning entries in their global library of evidence-based research.

Increasing Access to Family Planning through Task Shifting

More than 200 million women cannot obtain the family planning services they need and desire. FHI 360 seeks new ways to increase their access to these services without adding to the burden of overworked health professionals. After FHI 360's research showed that provision of contraceptive injectables by trained community workers was safe and feasible in sub-Saharan Africa, FHI 360 promoted this approach and trained trainers to help implement the practice, which is being piloted or adopted in several countries.

Integrating Family Planning and HIV Services

Our research and programs have provided a platform for leading the integration of family planning and HIV services in sub-Saharan Africa. Because clients who seek these services often share the same needs, it makes sense to provide both at a common facility whenever possible. WHO, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and FHI 360 recently collaborated on a publication, *Strategic Considerations for Strengthening the Linkages Between Family Planning and HIV/AIDS Policies, Programs, and Services*, which guides leaders of international public health programs through the process of determining whether and how to pursue this integration.

FHI 360 also contributed to the evidence base for integration of family planning and HIV services by guest-editing a supplement on family planning and HIV for the journal *AIDS*. The supplement covers several family planning issues, including behavioral research on the contraceptive practices and fertility desires of HIV-positive women and couples. The publication also covers biomedical research on the safety and effectiveness of contraceptive methods for HIV-positive women and programmatic research on service-delivery approaches to integrating family planning and HIV services.

Looking Ahead

FHI 360 will continue to expand contraceptive choice and meet other family planning needs in the developing world by conducting research, building local capacity, advocating evidence-based policies and programs, and integrating family planning with HIV/AIDS and other health services. Our success depends on working closely with our partners and local communities, meeting the highest standards of science and ethics, and respecting cultural diversity, human rights and equality. For more information, go to www.fhi360.org.

About FHI 360: FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research and technology — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 60 countries, all 50 U.S. states and all U.S. territories.