

SEMA

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

Shaping Equitable Market Access for Reproductive Health

OVERVIEW

This fact sheet introduces a new, innovative partnership: Shaping Equitable Market Access for Reproductive Health, known as **SEMA Reproductive Health**. [SEMA](#) aims to transform sexual and reproductive health (SRH) markets so that people everywhere can access the SRH products they want and need to control their health and future. This fact sheet provides a summary of SEMA, including its vision, structure, and how it will work with the global SRH community to advance the SRH agenda.

THE PROBLEM

SRH products – like contraceptives, medicines to manage pregnancy-related complications, and supplies for safe abortion and post-abortion care – are critical to saving lives and advancing gender equality. They can dramatically improve people's health and wellbeing by reducing unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortions, and maternal deaths. When women and girls can access quality SRH products, they are also more likely to stay in school, join the workforce, and help bolster their economies – key components to achieving a gender equal world.

However, persistent weaknesses in current SRH markets (see *box*) still prevent millions of people from being able to access **comprehensive, quality, and affordable** SRH products that fit their preferences. The consequences of these market challenges are startling. [218 million women](#) in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) who want to avoid or delay pregnancy are not using modern contraceptives and approximately [810 women](#) die every day from causes related to pregnancy, childbirth, and unsafe abortion. Currently, from development to launch, new

WE NEED A MORE PROACTIVE AND COORDINATED APPROACH TO IMPROVE SRH AVAILABILITY AND ACCESS.

SRH products are too often **unaffordable, unavailable, or simply don't match individual preferences** or lifestyles.

Market inefficiencies or gaps include:

- Little insight into user preferences
- Fragile procurement systems
- Overreliance on donor funding & limited country ownership of market strategies
- Slow and protracted launch of new SRH product choices
- Inadequate information flow between countries, donors, and global health organizations

contraceptives take years longer to be introduced to LMIC markets than other global health products.

It's time for a radical shift away from business as usual. Although global efforts in the last decade have enabled [60 million](#) additional women and girls in 69 LMICs to use modern contraception, the SRH community needs a new approach to tackle access barriers and equip more people with products they need to realize their sexual and reproductive health and rights.

THE PURPOSE & VISION OF SEMA

SEMA Reproductive Health is a new, innovative partnership designed to create healthier, more equitable, and more resilient SRH markets that better meet the reproductive health needs of people around the world. With country and global partners, SEMA will focus on aligning and strengthening efforts to address market challenges across geographies and private and public sectors through a proactive and coordinated approach.

In all its activities, SEMA aims to **shift the power of market stewardship to countries** by supporting country-led strategies through locally-based operations. That way, interventions to improve access can be informed by the unique needs and priorities of each country.

Specifically, over the next five years, SEMA will help countries:

- **Ensure consistent availability and improve user prices** of existing SRH products, so more women and girls can benefit.
- **Generate more sustainable domestic funding** and stewardship of SRH products and market strategies to reflect country priorities and optimize global financing support.
- **Streamline the introduction of new products and interventions** to meet people's preferences and lifestyles.

CORE ACTIVITIES

SEMA will bring together a diverse set of partners to focus on **three core activity areas**:

1. **Proactively monitoring SRH market health** by aggregating datasets and building a holistic, unified view of user demand and current market supply across regions and sectors. SEMA will work with civil society organizations and public and private partners who collect, own, and analyze user insights and market data to help countries and global partners generate and share critical insights.
2. **Identifying market barriers across geographies and co-designing strategic solutions**, tapping the unique strengths of existing networks and organizations in-country and globally. SEMA will convene experts to provide technical support, identify and align around strategies to address market weaknesses, co-design investment opportunities, and make sure efforts are coordinated efficiently.

3. Supporting countries and global partners to finance and implement interventions by helping governments mobilize domestic funding, crowding in new players, and coordinating global investments to maximize impact. SEMA's activities could include aligning with funders to support programs that fill market gaps, incentivizing new manufacturers, developing multi-country consumer research agendas, or supporting countries' national financing and implementation plans around new and existing products.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

SEMA seeks to be nimble, with small and responsive teams. To allow for a rapid launch, initially SEMA will be incubated within an existing organization and will include 4 organizational bodies:

- A **Management Team** mainly staffed out of Africa with an executive leader to oversee day-to-day operations and country leads in each priority geography.
- A **Governing Board** composed of several country leaders and funders to provide broad guidance and set strategic direction.
- A **Technical Oversight Committee** of external experts, country leaders, market actors, civil society, and more to guide strategy and inform investment recommendations.
- A **business and operation support team** provided by the incubator who will provide fiscal sponsorship and back-office functions to the initiative. The incubator will also facilitate a pathway for SEMA to eventually spin out as an independent organization.

PARTNERS

Promoting healthier SRH markets will require coordination across the entire ecosystem to ensure efforts build on each other and maximize limited resources. SEMA was launched with country governments from **Burkina Faso, Nigeria, and Uganda**; with financial support from the Children's Investment Fund Foundation (CIFF), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs (MEAE); and with strategic partnership from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office of the United Kingdom (FCDO), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC).

SEMA's work will also complement the unique roles of other critical partner institutions that form the backbone of delivering on SRHR commitments, including UNFPA, RHSC, Family Planning 2030 (FP2030), the Global Financing Facility (GFF), and more.

NEXT STEPS

In the coming months, SEMA will be working to deepen the dialogue with interested partners and welcome new donors, technical partners, and Ministries of Health in low- and middle-income countries to the partnership. SEMA will also recruit an inaugural CEO and officially launch activities by the end of 2021, with operations based in Africa.