



PATH/Jolene Beltz

Enhancing Equity and Sustainability of Public-Sector Family Planning Through Total Market Approaches

“The main agenda in the years immediately ahead will be one of learning to do with less external aid and shifting the cost of programs to national government budgets and to families seeking services in the commercial sector.”¹

PATH is enhancing equitable and sustained access to family planning by strengthening country-led, public-sector decision-making within a total market context. A whole or total market approach has been defined as “a coordinated approach that responds to the multiplicity of family planning needs in a country...[and] ensures that the entire market of clients—from those who require free supplies to those who can and will pay for commercial products—is covered.”² PATH has worked with governments in Nicaragua and Vietnam to develop operational plans for public-sector contraceptive services to targeted market segments. PATH also strengthens public-private dialogue around family planning service delivery—including for the poorest populations—and collaborates actively with private-sector initiatives. Lessons learned are disseminated to promote widespread readiness for a country-led decision-making approach that draws on the total family planning market.

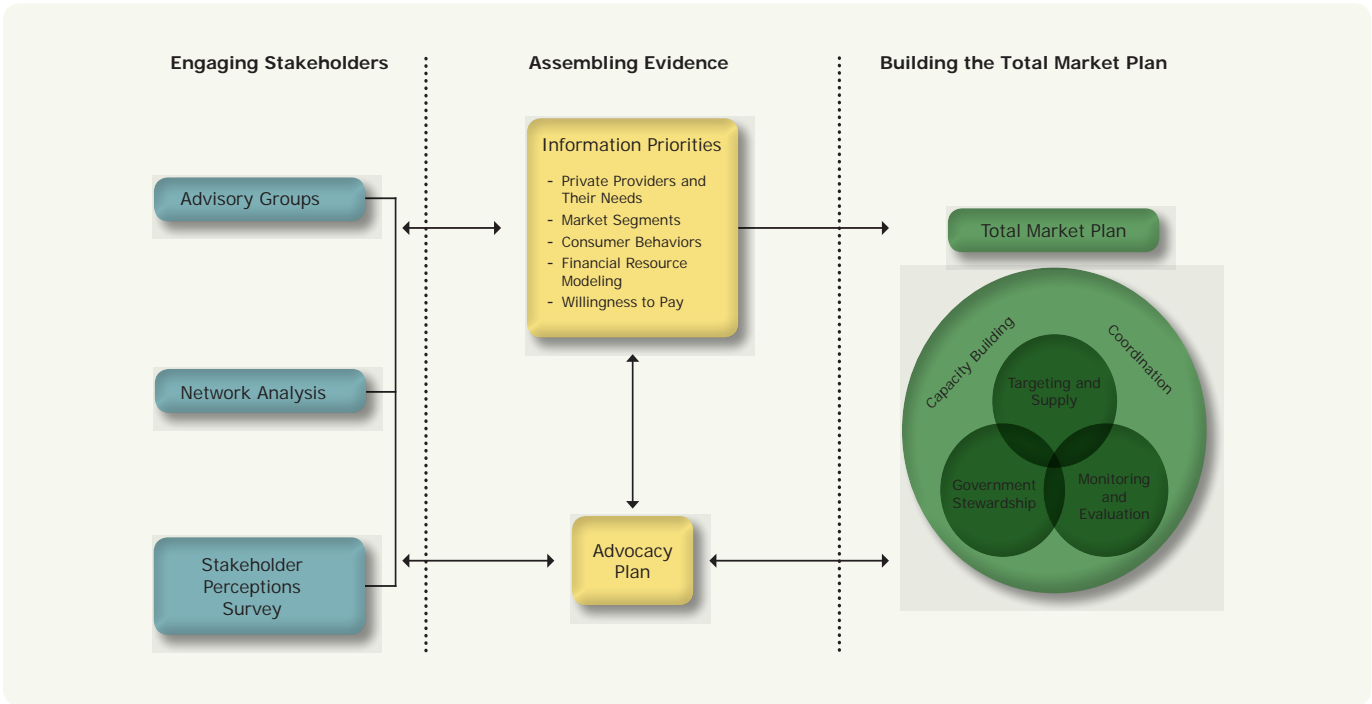
RATIONALE

Against a backdrop of the largest cohort in the history of the world entering reproductive age, ministries of health are struggling to provide for the contraceptive demands of their family planning programs. Further, governments are increasingly required to make strategic

decisions about these programs without the capacity and expertise for such decision-making. For example, governments in many developing countries historically received sufficient financial and technical support from international donors to provide free contraception to all segments of the population. They have limited expertise with targeted service provision in the context of reduced resources, including how to reach the poorest quintiles of the population with services and products and whether to include newly developed contraceptives.

Increasing demand, availability of new methods, and scarce resources therefore highlight the need for governments to find new ways to provide family planning for all. Meeting family planning needs by ensuring access to contraceptives now and in the future requires recognition and integration of various market sectors—including nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), as well as subsidized and commercial options—a total market approach. However, it is rare that managers of family planning programs make plans and decisions in the context of the “total market,” in which different provider segments reach different consumer markets. Others have described this role as stewardship, or “setting and enforcing the rules and incentives that define the environment and guide the behaviors of health-system players.”³

FIGURE 1. Steps to a national total market plan.



Barriers to a total market approach include a lack of information about who uses the private sector, for what services and products, what prices they pay, and consumer perceptions of the services and products available in the private sector. Knowledge gaps between the public and private sectors also persist, as each sector may not be aware of the other’s priorities. Market-oriented research on family planning user needs has yet to be translated beyond recommendations and into concrete programmatic action—including decisions regarding contraceptive selection and resource allocations. For example, while several countries have attempted to lay the groundwork for a total market approach by analyzing family planning use through market segmentation analysis, few have had the capacity to actually implement the recommendations that were developed. Other projects focus on supporting and expanding the private sector without linking to the public sector.

Our work is unique in partnering with the government to support its role as the leader and steward of a total market approach. A deliberate planning process is therefore required to determine which family planning sectors should serve which groups and how, and what other changes are required. Figure 1 (above) illustrates our collaborative process for developing a total market plan. As members of the Market Development Approaches Working group of the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition, we co-authored a primer on total market initiatives to identify examples of these steps in different programs around the world.⁴

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS

In Vietnam, the network analysis process found that a closely connected network of family planning stakeholders exists, with the government family planning division of the Ministry of Health and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) having the highest number of connections to others in the network. Consistently, when interviewees were asked to nominate organizations that are in a position to make or influence family planning decisions, the top ten responses were all governmental bodies with the exception of UNFPA. Private commercial family planning groups (manufacturers, distributors, pharmacists) were on the periphery of the network (Figure 2).

FIGURE 2. Vietnam family planning network analysis

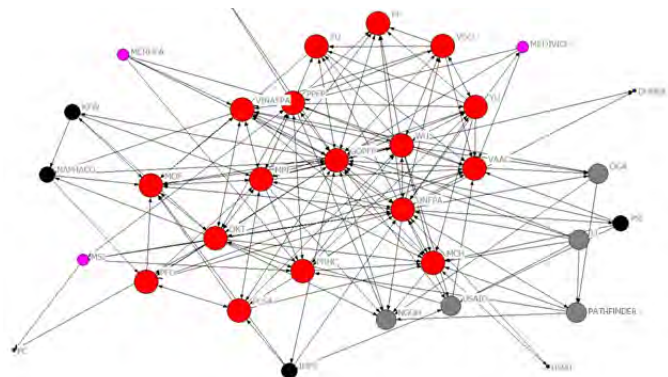
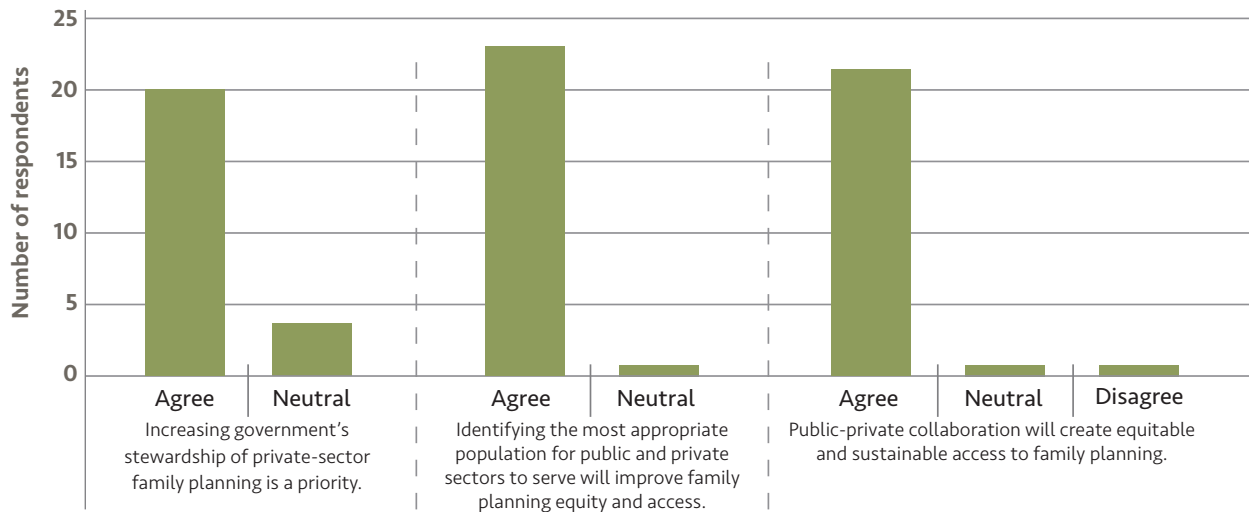


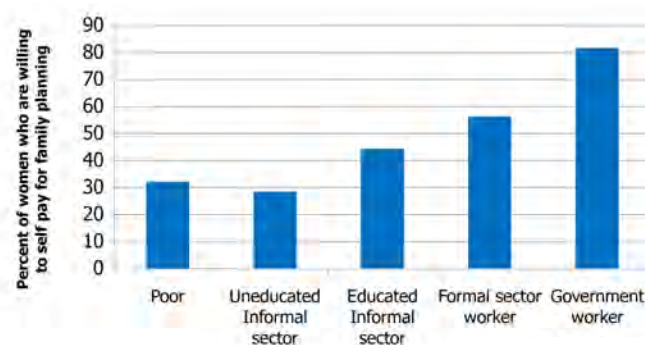
FIGURE 3. Respondent support for total market approach principles: Nicaragua



Network and stakeholder analyses were especially helpful in enabling us to identify the range of players who are especially supportive of specific policy goals, as well as their relationships with each other and opportunities, obstacles, and strategies for engaging them in policy change. More specifically, using these tools enabled us to be thorough in identifying key stakeholders.⁵ For example, provincial government actors did not initially figure very prominently in our stakeholder analysis. However, after developing the network maps, we revisited our analysis and reconsidered where engagement with provincial stakeholders might be particularly important.

In Nicaragua, the network analysis resulted in expansion of the existing coordination committee to include three nongovernmental agencies that were identified as influential in family planning. In addition, stakeholders there expressed strong support for the principles of a total market approach, as shown in Figure 3.⁶

FIGURE 4: Willingness to self pay for family planning in Vietnam (work status)



Source: Vietnam self paying survey, 2009. Futures Institute analysis.

ASSEMBLING EVIDENCE

A key piece of evidence needed to implement a total market approach is information about wealth and use of family planning. In Nicaragua, some information was available from the national Demographic and Health Survey. In addition, PATH conducted a survey to better understand consumer behavior about choosing a family planning provider.

In Vietnam, the data on wealth were out of date, and the government had undertaken its own ability-to-pay study. PATH contracted with the Futures Institute to further analyze these data; they concluded that willingness to pay is concentrated among women living in urban areas and government workers (Figure 4).

BUILDING THE TOTAL MARKET PLAN

In Nicaragua, family planning providers from the private sector have identified priorities in working with the public sector. The consumer study also led to segmentation recommendations for providers by sector. These priorities will then mesh with future strategies of the Ministry of Health.

In Vietnam, close collaboration with the Ministry of Health helped to ensure that the total market plan was developed and incorporated into other health strategies and policies. A meeting with the commercial sector, provincial governments, donors, and NGOs helped gather more detailed input on the content of a total market plan and ideas for priorities on segmentation. A veteran official expressed that, previously, family planning plans were prepared unilaterally, and providers and distributors were simply expected to follow them. “A total market plan with active involvement of various stakeholders (including public-sector, social marketing, nongovernmental, and

commercial organizations) will definitely help better meet the demands of different target groups,” he said. The Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Planning and Investment, influential government ministries in terms of budget allocations, both expressed clear support for the plan to family planning officials. PATH gathered input for and drafted an extensive background document to shape the operational plan, and the Ministry of Health was ultimately responsible for refining the content and finalizing the plan. On June 27, 2011, the Vietnamese Ministry of Health officially approved the Operational Plan for the contraceptive total market.

MEASURING SUCCESS

Besides these country-level activities, PATH conducted a retrospective analysis of five total market approaches country experiences: Indonesia, Mexico, Thailand, Turkey, and Romania. We conclude that deliberate government planning and action—beyond fragmented support to or action by the private sector—are necessary for total market success. In particular, strong government leadership and support for family planning strengthens the success of total market implementation. Six processes can be hypothesized as good practices: ensuring problem recognition among key stakeholders, aligning priorities with national government strategies, collecting data about health markets, evaluating options through pilots, engaging all levels of the health system, and evaluating the results.

REGIONAL DISSEMINATION

In 2013, PATH was the strategic partner with UNFPA to assist countries to develop national action plans for the introduction of a total market approach to ensure universal access to modern contraceptives. Through two workshops in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia region, teams from 20 countries came together to learn about how they could implement total market approaches and to develop action plans.

The more than 75 participants included representatives from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Finance, national health insurance companies, Ministry of



Labor, Social Security, UNFPA, International Planned Parenthood Federation affiliates, social marketing organizations, and non-governmental organizations.

REFERENCES

- 1 Caldwell JC, Phillips JF, Barkat-E-Khuda. The future of family planning programs. *Studies in Family Planning*. 2002;33(1):1–10.
- 2 Sarley D, Rao R, Hart C, Patyewich L, Dowling P. Contraceptive security: practical experience in improving global, regional, national, and local product availability. Arlington, VA: John Snow, DELIVER; 2006.
- 3 Lagomarsino G, de Ferranti D, Pablos-Mendez A, Nachuk S, Nishtar S, Wibulpolprasert S. Public stewardship of mixed health systems. *The Lancet*. 2009;374(9701):1577–1578.
- 4 Barnes J, Vail J, Crosby D. *Total Market Initiatives for Reproductive Health*. Bethesda, MD: Strengthening Health Outcomes through the Private Sector Project, Abt Associates; 2012.
- 5 Drake JK, Luu Huong Thi Thanh, Suraratdecha C, Ha Phan Thi Thu, Vail JG. Stakeholder perceptions of a total market approach to family planning in Viet Nam. *Reproductive Health Matters*. 2010; 18(36):46–55.
- 6 Drake JK, Espinoza H, Suraratdecha C, Lacayo Y, Keith BM, Vail JG. Stakeholder perceptions of a total market approach to family planning in Nicaragua. *Rev Panam Salud Publica*. 2011;29(5):329–336.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Additional project briefs on country work and total market approaches are available at: www.path.org/publications/details.php?i=1695.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Janet Vail, Project Director
+1 206 285 3500
jvail@path.org



PATH is an international nonprofit organization that transforms global health through innovation. We take an entrepreneurial approach to developing and delivering high-impact, low-cost solutions, from lifesaving vaccines and devices to collaborative programs with communities. Through our work in more than 70 countries, PATH and our partners empower people to achieve their full potential.

MAILING ADDRESS
PO Box 900922
Seattle, WA 98109 USA

info@path.org
www.path.org

STREET ADDRESS
2201 Westlake Avenue
Suite 200
Seattle, WA 98121 USA

July 2013