



## February 2011

### [Contributing to Health System Strengthening & The Global Health Initiative](#)

We have all heard the buzz. Health system strengthening ought to be considered a building block of all global health interventions. This concept is at the very center of the U.S. Government's Global Health Initiative (GHI): GHI has invested \$63 billion to support partner countries in the effort to strengthen existing health systems to address key global health issues in the next six years.

How does Georgetown University's Institute for Reproductive Health (IRH) contribute to these important efforts?

Under the USAID-funded Fertility Awareness-Based Methods (FAM) Project, IRH is engaging in a strategic process to scale up two family planning innovations--the Standard Days Method® (SDM) and the Lactational Amenorrhea Method (LAM)--into existing family planning and other health development programs in select countries (see "FAM Project Country Timelines" below). Through this process, which requires working at multiple levels and responding to opportunities in the wider environment, IRH is strengthening broader health systems. Our recent FAM Project brief, "Scaling up a family planning innovation: How health systems are strengthened along the way," details how IRH's efforts respond to the WHO's *Essential Building Blocks for Health System Strengthening*. Read the brief in [ENG](#), [FRE](#), and [SPA](#).



GHI aims to bolster health system strengthening by adhering to [seven guiding principles](#)--among them: implement a woman- and girl-centered approach; increase impact through strategic coordination and integration; build sustainability through health systems strengthening; and improve metrics, monitoring and evaluation. IRH operationalizes these principles through the work of the FAM Project, and other USAID-funded social science grants that address unmet need for family planning and gender-based norms relating to youth reproductive health. Our initiatives in IRH program countries, as well as our global leadership and research, demonstrate how IRH already applies the GHI principles. Read IRH's position statement on GHI in [ENG](#),

### In This Issue

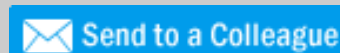
[Health System Strengthening & GHI](#)

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### Follow IRH



[FRE](#), [SPA](#).

## FAM Project Country Timelines

In order to capture FAM scale-up in a visual way, IRH has developed (and continues to build on) event timelines for each of our focus countries. The timelines include the dates of: SDM trainings; FAM inclusion in family planning guidelines, protocols, and norms; commodity procurements; research activities; publication of IEC materials; and other significant events throughout the course of FAM integration. In effect, they demonstrate how the FAM Project works at all levels to achieve scale.

- [DRC timeline 2004-present](#)
- [Guatemala timeline 2002-present](#)
- [India timeline 2007-present](#)
- [Mali timeline 2005-present](#)
- [Rwanda timeline 2002-present](#)

## In the News

- CycleBeads & iCycleBeads featured on network TV!
  - On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Deluxe CycleBeads Contraceptive Kit will make its national debut on the CBS talk show [The Doctors](#). Check [here](#) for local listings.
  - iCycleBeads-and IRH Director and Staff-have been featured on news spots recently. Check out the news coverage here: [WUSA9, Health Alert: Fertility iPhone App](#)
- **Republican House of Representatives on Family Planning.** The Republican-led House of Representatives voted to cut funding for domestic and international family planning programs. This negative effective of a reduction of funds would be felt primarily by women and their families in low-resource settings. The vote passed 240 to 185. Read [more](#).

## Upcoming Events

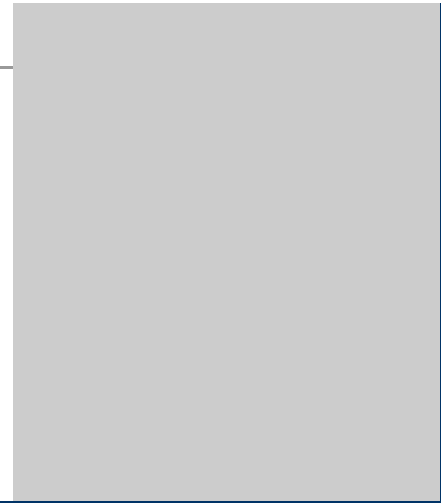
Come visit IRH or hear us present at the following upcoming events:

- [Contraceptive Technology](#), San Francisco, California, March 9-11
- **Symposium on mHealth strategy for Latin America, Lima, Peru, March 25-26.** Presentation: "CycleTel and iCycleBeads: Opportunities for Using Family Planning with Mobile Phones," on the Panel: Education with Mobiles: mLearning and Reproductive Health
- [Sex::Tech 2011](#), San Francisco, California, March 31-April 2. Presentation: "CycleTel™ & iCycleBeads™: Family Planning on Your Mobile Phone," during the session "Mobile & Social Media: The Next New Thing"

Sincerely,  
Your colleagues at IRH

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