

## HEALTH

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### Int'l NGO seeks approval of Chinese contraceptive on African market

www.chinaview.cn 2009-11-18 19:21:14

  Print

KAMPALA, Nov. 18 (Xinhua) – Family Health International (FHI), an international Nongovernmental organization, is traversing several African countries to seek governments' approval of a low cost Chinese contraceptive, Sino-Implant.

Markus Steiner, the senior epidemiologist at FHI, told Xinhua in an interview on Wednesday, on the sides on an on-going International Conference on Family Planning here that there is an unmet need in Africa for contraceptives especially for implants.

He said the Sino-Implant is affordable because its price is 60 percent lower than other implants on the market.

"Implants up to now have been too expensive to provide in a sustainable fashion. We feel like Sino-Implant is a product that can be provided in a sustainable fashion across Africa," he said.

The implant manufactured by Shanghai Dahua Pharmaceutical Co. Ltd has already been approved in Kenya and Sierra Leone.

According to experts, though the implant is cheaper than the others on the market it is still not affordable for many people unless it is subsidized by the governments.

The implant costs eight U.S. dollars.

"The challenge is the financing of these commodities, we need to find some financing mechanism and that is what we are discussing at this meeting," said Parmindar Lotay, the chief executive Officer of Pharm Access Africa, the company which is distributing the product.

According to the experts at the meeting, the continued rapid population growth is a major challenge to meeting the United Nations Millennium Development Goals.

They say that the rapid population growth adds to the number of people in need of healthcare, education, livable wages and other social services, which in turn requires additional human, financial, material and natural resources.

They recommend increased access to family planning services to slow down the population growth.

According to the United Nations Population Fund, over 75 million women in developing countries have unintended pregnancies each year and almost 20 million women undergo unsafe abortion.

Editor: Li Xianzhi

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