

# WOMEN FIRST DIGITAL:

## An eHealth enterprise advancing self-care solutions

The digital revolution is transforming how more than 5 billion people access sexual and reproductive healthcare (SRH). The increasing use of technology provides a unique opportunity to reach vulnerable populations that are often excluded from traditional healthcare systems or burdened by geographic barriers, high costs, and stigma. Women and young people are increasingly turning to the internet as their first touch-point for information, including for guidance about reproductive health and abortion information.

**Women First Digital (WFD)** is an eHealth social enterprise that leverages the power of this digital revolution by reaching women directly on their handheld devices. WFD makes SRH self-care more universally and equitably accessible with easy-to-understand information and linkages to on-the-ground resources.

WFD offers a diverse range of digital products, including localized websites, on-demand abortion counseling, a referral database of global abortion providers, an eLearning center, multichannel chatbots, and targeted on-the-ground presence in select countries.

Collectively, these products work to minimize barriers, improve access, and strengthen women's decision-making power.



**WFD envisions a world where all women have access to sexual and reproductive health services that are safe, reliable, and tailored.**

*From 2015-2022, WFD received more than 25 million site sessions with users from over 180 countries; provided over 300,000 direct-to-user services for abortion care; facilitated 40,000 referrals to abortion care providers; certified 12,000 medical abortion providers; and reached over 74 million users across social media channels.*



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## Digital products that inform and empower



### [HowToUseAbortionPill.org \(HowToUse\)](https://www.howtouseabortionpill.org)

HowToUse offers stepwise, simple instructions for the safe management of an abortion with pills in 26 languages. Often the primary resource for women seeking accurate medical abortion information in their local language, HowToUse's guidance for self-managed abortions is available for pregnancies up to 13 weeks, and is delineated by each stage of the abortion process (before, how to, and after).

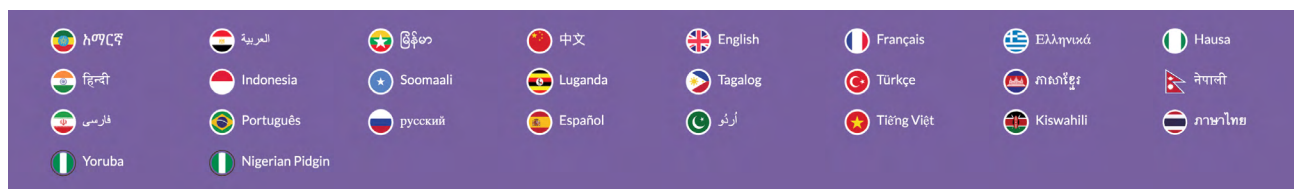
HowToUse also has [57 country profiles](#) that specify the legal parameters for abortion access; types of abortion support available; brands, costs, and images of common in-country pill brands; providers who can perform abortions, and local resources such as hotlines and clinics.

To address the importance of well-trained healthcare providers for safe abortion access, HowToUse partnered with the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) to develop a pan-provider course that is offered through Moodle, an accredited eLearning center and open-source platform. Upon completion, users can earn certification.

Endorsed by the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO), the course has already certified 12,000 providers.

In partnership with Doctors Without Borders, HowToUse developed [two online courses](#) - one for humanitarian aid workers to provide safe medical abortions in restrictive and conflict-prone areas, and another for end-users to safely self-manage an abortion at home.

HowToUse also features "Ally," the first-ever abortion chatbot available on its website, Facebook Messenger, and WhatsApp. Ally offers personalized information and



Abortion information is available in 26 languages, with more to come.

automated prompts on medication abortion and has supported over 169,000 users. Currently, Ally is available in Spanish, French, Hindi, Kiswahili, and English, with plans to expand to more languages.



[safe2choose.org](https://safe2choose.org)

safe2choose is a leader in providing confidential and comprehensive support for abortion care. With its interactive counseling platform that offers live chat and email, the team of medically-trained experts provide compassionate and accurate guidance throughout the entire abortion process.

To improve efficiency and handle a high volume of requests, safe2choose has automated its screening process and can now provide round-the-clock responses to common questions and direct users to relevant resources. This feature is currently being implemented in Mexico, with plans to expand globally.

To ensure a seamless journey from online counseling to on-the-ground support, safe2choose links users to verified local abortion providers and support organizations via its custom-built, encrypted database. Providers can [self-register](#) and undergo thorough vetting for quality, while the database's geolocation feature directs users to the nearest and safest point of care.

With 1,000 points of care registered across 85 countries, safe2choose demonstrates its dedication to providing accessible and informed support to women globally.

The safe2choose website is available in 10 languages and provides information on self-managed and provider-assisted abortions, answers to [frequently asked questions](#), and [testimonials](#) from women who have received support.



**WFD's websites inform users and providers about abortion with pills and self-care procedures.**

## FIND MY METHOD.

[FindMyMethod.org](https://FindMyMethod.org)

Find My Method is a comprehensive and user-friendly resource that promotes sex- and pleasure-positivity by providing reliable and easily understandable contraceptive information in 15 languages. Through side-by-side filters and [comparison tools](#), users can make informed decisions about contraceptive methods based on their individual preferences and lifestyles.

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The website's non-judgmental and youth-friendly content addresses common questions and concerns, which may hinder the uptake or continuation of contraceptives.

Find My Method provides comprehensive profiles for each contraceptive method that are tailored to the specific country in which they are available. These profiles offer critical information such as the general accessibility of the product, pricing, and images of locally available contraceptive brands.

Recognizing that many women face barriers in accessing accurate information and trusted providers, Find My Method is beta-testing a [contraceptive directory](#). This centralized hub will provide geo-located provider information and allow users to share reviews on their access experience. The directory is currently being piloted in Mexico with the goal of expanding globally.

## Features of WFD's technology

WFD prioritizes global scalability and localization in its digital products through language, bandwidth, local preferences, and data security adaptations. WFD's websites are built with GatsbyJS as the front-end and WordPress as the back-end, creating fast-loading and dynamic websites that are less prone to hacking and have faster crash-recovery.

WFD's websites have been localized further for the Latin American region through the creation of Spanish URLs, such as [comoabortarconpastillas.org](http://comoabortarconpastillas.org), [ayudaparaabortar.org](http://ayudaparaabortar.org), and [guiadesexoseguero.org](http://guiadesexoseguero.org), with plans to expand localization to other languages.



**Find My Method uses a sex-positive approach to discuss contraception, sex and pleasure.**

The safe2choose counseling platform is hosted on FreshWorks, offering a secure and user-friendly backend, quick responses, and multilingual automation. The FreshWorks API (application programming interface) allows for external integration, enabling safe2choose to extend its counseling services to other partner websites and digital resources. The Ally chatbot is also designed to be interoperable with partner websites, facilitating a seamless online user journey.

The safe2choose referral database was custom-built on Laravel, with restricted access limited to the counseling team. Multiple layers of encryption protect provider contact information, ensuring the

confidentiality and security of sensitive information.

Data security is a high priority at WFD, and all of our websites and digital products are fully compliant with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and international IT policies. User data is de-identified and securely housed, with periodic deletions to maintain the security of all stored information.

## Digital Marketing and Communications

WFD places great importance on ensuring that its informational products are easily accessible to those who need them. To optimize its reach and visibility, WFD employs a multi-faceted digital media strategy.

Search engines play a vital role in helping users find the information they need. WFD's SEO strategies optimize its content with relevant keywords, backlinks, meta-descriptions, and tags, making it easier for users to find its resources and keeping it up-to-date with Big Tech algorithm changes. Additionally, WFD invests in paid ads to enhance its Search Engine Page Rankings (SERPs).

Social media has become an indispensable tool for WFD to engage with its audience and disseminate information. By providing its content in multiple languages and across various platforms, WFD's social media pages have garnered a following of 488,000 and a far-reaching audience of 57 million as of 2022. The growing popularity and

reach of these pages are a testament to WFD's innovative, creative, and sometimes provocative content, which seeks to inform and spark discussions on sensitive topics, and ultimately shape attitudes towards abortion, bodily autonomy, and sex-positivity.

WFD also understands the value of collaborating with local content creators to drive traffic to its three websites. This collaborative effort involves influencers, activists, bloggers, and media publications beyond the sexual and reproductive health space.



By partnering with these content creators, who have built a loyal following and established trust with their audiences, WFD is able to make its information relatable and accessible to a wider community. This approach has led to partnerships with over 100 content creators across 35 countries, reaching an estimated 17 million users.

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WFD recognizes the importance of keeping pace with evolving digital preferences and habits among its users, as well as reaching users who may not typically access its resources.

To achieve this, WFD experiments with small-scale pilots and explores emerging digital channels to engage with users in the spaces they frequent.

This allows WFD to remain agile and adapt to changes in digital use while ensuring that its resources and information remain relevant and accessible.

### Linking the virtual and the real

WFD recognizes that not everyone has access to the internet, especially vulnerable women and youth. As internet penetration rates continue to rise globally, it is imperative that those without access to the web are not left behind.

To bridge this information gap and reduce unmet needs, WFD invests in offline marketing and outreach by strengthening partnerships with on-the-ground organizations, provider networks, women and youth action groups, and university associations.

This enables WFD to disseminate simplified and localized educational and informational materials, such as posters, pamphlets, and pregnancy wheels, to people who may not have access to the internet.

In addition to these materials, WFD conducts briefing events to introduce attendees to each platform and take them through the

medical abortion protocols. These events ensure that people are informed about the available resources and understand how to access them.

### Demographics

According to Google Analytics data, users from over 180 different countries have visited WFD websites. Over 90% of WFD's digital products are accessed through mobile devices, underlining the importance of mobile compatibility and accessibility.

The majority of users for HowToUse and safe2choose are women, but both sites also draw significant numbers of male users.

Find My Method, on the other hand, receives slightly more male visitors than female visitors. WFD's digital products are most popular among visitors aged 18-24, followed by the 25-34 age group. While Google Analytics does not report data for minors, anecdotal evidence suggests that visitors under 18 also frequently access WFD's websites.



**WFD conducts offline activities in universities and youth centers to increase awareness of abortion with pills.**

## Contact

If you have any questions about Women First Digital, please contact us at [info@womenfirstdigital.org](mailto:info@womenfirstdigital.org). Learn more about [www.womenfirstdigital.org](http://www.womenfirstdigital.org).

Women First Digital, what we do, and where we work by visiting us online at [www.womenfirstdigital.org](http://www.womenfirstdigital.org). You can also get periodic updates by following us on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/company/women-first-digital).

## The map below highlights the top 10 country visits for each website in 2022

