

Press release: UK announces £90 million funding for family planning in Ethiopia

The UK, through its Department for International Development today announced its new Family Planning by Choice programme, which will provide £90 million of support for voluntary family planning in Ethiopia over the next four years.

The programme will work with the Federal Ministry of Health to give millions of women access to modern, voluntary family planning services across the country.

The programme aims to:

- Provide 13 million women with direct access to family planning information;
- Support 6 million current family planning users and attract three million more voluntary users;
- Prevent 15 million unwanted pregnancies and 300,000 maternal child deaths.

The programme will:

- Enable over 3,000 health facilities, mostly rural health centres, to provide quality family planning services;
- Establish 100 Quality Assurance Hubs at referral and general hospitals; and,
- Establish 10 family planning Centres of Excellence at teaching hospitals.

By providing family planning choices for everyone who wants it, Ethiopia will be able to: increase women's voice, choice and control over their reproductive health; slow down population growth; and enhance economic growth.

This programme is part of the UK's global leadership on family planning, and was announced as part of a package of UK support around the world at the

London Family Planning Summit on 11 July 2017.

The Summit, co-hosted by the UK Secretary of State for International Development, Priti Patel, Melinda Gates (Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation) and Natalia Kanem (UN Population Fund – UNFPA), looked at practical measures to reduce costs and increase availability for the millions of women who want contraception, but can't afford it or get hold of it.

Speaking about the new UK support for family planning world-wide, the Secretary of State for International Development, Priti Patel said:

It's truly astonishing that in today's world there are still 214 million women around the world who do not want to get pregnant, but who are not currently using modern methods of family planning.

Britain is leading the world on sexual and reproductive health, helping millions more women in the world's poorest countries to access and use desperately-needed family planning services.

But this isn't a job for the UK alone and that's why at this global Summit governments from around the world have come together to make commitments on family planning to address the long term need and unsustainable population growth.

We are supporting the world's poorest women to take control of their lives, so they can finish their education, get better jobs and in turn provide for their smaller, planned families rather than being trapped in a cycle of grinding poverty through unplanned pregnancies.

Notes to editors:

- Ethiopia has made significant progress in increasing modern family planning uptake, nearly one-in-three women in Ethiopia are now using modern family planning methods, compared to less than one-in-thirty 25 years ago.
- Despite this progress, Ethiopia's population has doubled in the last 25 years, from around 50 million in 1991 to 102 million in 2016. If the current fertility trend continues, the country's population is likely to double again in the next 35 years, which could undermine Ethiopia's ambition to reach middle income status by 2025.
- Three and half million (one-in-five) married women of reproductive age are currently not using contraception, but wish to postpone their next birth, or stop childbearing altogether. This programme will enable these women to use family planning.

- The public health service delivers four-fifths of family planning services.

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