

Safe, effective family planning is key to 'empowering people, developing nations' – UN

11 July 2017 – If the demand of women in developing countries who wanted access to safe and effective family planning was met, it would reduce an estimated 100,000 maternal death and avert 67 million unintended pregnancies, the United Nations population agency today said.

Some 214 million women in developing countries who want to avoid pregnancy are [not using safe and effective family planning methods](#), for reasons ranging from lack of access to information or services to lack of support from their partners or communities, the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) said on the occasion of [World Population Day](#), marked annually on 11 July.

This year's occurrence coincides with the [Family Planning Summit](#), the second meeting of the FP2020-Family Planning 2020-initiative, which aims to expand access to voluntary family planning to 120 million additional women by 2020.

Natalia Kanem, UNFPA Acting Executive Director, noted that better reproductive health care including voluntary family planning could bolster economies and contribute to sustainable development by empowering women to complete school and join the labour force. There, she would be likely to earn a higher income and increase her and her family's savings and investment.

In addition, for each additional dollar spent on contraceptive services above the current level, the cost of pregnancy-related care is reduced by \$2.30, according to UNFPA figures.

Investments in family planning help lead to prosperity for all, Ms. Kanem said, highlighting this year's theme for the 2017 Day, 'Family Planning: Empowering People, Developing Nations.'

She added that safe and effective family planning also contribute to the success of the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, particularly the corresponding goals of ending poverty, ending hunger, promoting good health, and aiming for gender equality.

In her message, Ms. Kanem urged all Governments and stakeholders to help the UN agency achieve its goal of meeting unmet demand for family planning by 2030.

On behalf of UNFPA, she also called on the 179 member countries that endorsed the Programme of Action of the 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) to fulfill their commitments to achieve universal access to sexual and reproductive health, including voluntary

family planning.

“Not only is this a matter of protecting health and rights, but it is also a matter of investing in economic development as well as humanity’s prosperity and progress,” said Ms. Kanem.