

Family Planning: Messages

BACKGROUND

On 11 July the UK Government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation will host, with UNFPA and other partners, a groundbreaking summit to provide an additional 120 million women in the world's poorest countries with lifesaving contraceptives, information, and services by 2020. *The London Summit on Family Planning* calls for unprecedented international political commitment and resources to transform the lives of millions of women and girls, which will save lives and help lift families, communities, and nations out of poverty.

The time is now for developing countries, donors, the private sector, and civil society to come together to help the world's poorest women.

Today, more than 200 million women in developing countries who don't want to get pregnant lack access to contraceptives, information, and services.

- In developing countries, contraceptives are frequently out of stock when women try to get them.
 - In Nigeria, many public hospitals and clinics are stocked-out of injectables for 60% of the year—that's 226 days.
- Without access to contraceptives, the world's poorest women and men are not empowered to decide if and when to have a child.

Contraceptives save lives.

- Complications in pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death for women in Africa.
 - Every two minutes a woman dies of pregnancy-related complications, and 99% of these occur in developing countries.ⁱ
 - By giving women the means to space the births of their children by three years, deaths of children under-five would decrease by 25 percentⁱⁱ.

We will reach 120 million women with contraceptives by 2020.

- By 2020, if 120 million more women who want contraceptives could get them, there would be:
 - More than 100 million fewer unintended pregnancies
 - 200,000 fewer women and girls dying in pregnancy and childbirth
 - Over 50 million fewer abortions
 - Nearly 3 million fewer babies dying in their first year of lifeⁱⁱⁱ

Family planning will lead to healthier, wealthier and better educated nations.

- Reducing unintended pregnancies leads to more girls staying in school, raising their lifetime earnings and enabling them to lift themselves out of poverty.
 - Up to a quarter of girls in Sub-Saharan Africa drop out of school due to unintended pregnancies.^{iv}
 - Mothers who have had an education are more than twice as likely to send their own children to school than mothers with no education.

Contraceptives are one of the best investments a country can make in its future.

- Contraceptives are cost-effective and deliver big savings in healthcare costs.
 - Each US dollar spent on family planning can save governments up to 6 dollars on health, housing, water, and other public services.^v
- For example, in the 1970s, half the villages in Matlab, Bangladesh, were randomly chosen to have access to contraceptives. Today, they have healthier, better-educated children and financially are far better off than the villages without access to contraceptives.

Every woman and girl deserves the opportunity to determine her own future.

ⁱ Trends in Maternal Mortality 1990-2010

ⁱⁱ *Back to Basics: The Rationale for Increased Funds for International Family Planning*. Guttmacher Policy Review volume 11, no. 3, 2008.

ⁱⁱⁱ *Family Planning Summit Technical Note: data sources and methodology for developing the 2012 baseline, 2020 objective and costings*. May 2012, FPS Metrics Group

^{iv} *Countdown 2015*

^v USAID, *Achieving the MDGs: The Contribution of fulfilling the unmet need for family planning*, Washington DC: Futures Group International, 2006.