



The London Summit on Family Planning

Wednesday 11th July 2012

"I want to bring every good thing to one child before I have another."
Mother from Korogocho; a slum outside Nairobi, Kenya

A groundbreaking Summit

In July 2012, partners from across the globe are coming together to support the right of women and girls to decide, freely and for themselves, whether, when and how many children they have.

Today, more than 220 million girls and women in developing countries who don't want to get pregnant are not able to access and use modern contraceptives, information, and servicesⁱ. This results in over 60 million unintended pregnancies every year and puts girls and women at serious risk of death or disability during pregnancy and childbirth, and unsafe abortion. In 2008, there were around 14 million births to adolescent girls in developing countries, most often before they were physically, emotionally or economically prepared.ⁱⁱ Access to family planning increases girls' and women's opportunities and life choices, and also supports the social and economic development of their families, communities and nations.

On 11 July 2012, the UK Government and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation – in partnership with UNFPA, national governments, donors, civil society and faith-based organisations, the private sector, the research community, and others – will launch a groundbreaking effort to make affordable, lifesaving contraceptives, information, services, and supplies available **to an additional 120 million girls and women in the world's poorest countries by 2020**ⁱⁱⁱ.

In addition, country governments, supported by the global community, will commit to sustaining coverage for the estimated 260 million women in these countries who are currently using modern contraceptives, so that by 2020, a total of 380 million women and girls in the world's poorest countries will have voluntary access to modern methods of contraception^{iv}. These efforts will also lead to increased access in other countries through, for example, revitalizing interest in family planning internationally and strengthening the market for quality, affordable contraceptives, including new and under-used methods.

The London Summit on Family Planning will mobilize commitments to support the rights of an additional 120 million women and girls in the world's poorest countries to use contraceptive information, services and supplies, without coercion or discrimination, by 2020.



Picture: Peter Caton/IPPF

"I knew [early marriage and pregnancy] would mean dropping out of school, moving away from friends and family and then childbirth. I had heard of girls dying when giving birth. If I was married tomorrow, what would I lose? My independence, my vision, my dreams."

Hosna, Bangladesh

At the centre - respect for rights

The Summit's vision is to ensure that women and girls in developing countries can have the freedom to access and use family planning, without coercion or discrimination.

The Summit and its follow-up will place rights front and centre, promoting and respecting people's human rights, and working to ensure those rights become a reality, especially for the poorest and most vulnerable girls, boys, women and men. The Summit and its follow-up align with the broader framework established by the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) almost 20 years ago^v. The Summit will affirm the fundamental importance of voluntary family planning, and freedom of access to a full range of contraceptives for married and unmarried women and adolescent girls. The Summit will have a strong focus on equity and empowering all girls and women to realize their rights to family planning.



Picture: Marie Stopes International

Miriam lives in Mali, where 65% of women aged 20-24 were married by the age of 18.

At just 18 years old, Miriam has two children under three to look after. She had no knowledge of modern family planning methods, until she visited a health centre, where she learned about the different options and decided to use an IUD.

Six months later, Miriam is still happy with her choice:

"My whole family is at peace now. My husband doesn't have to worry about financing another pregnancy and another child, the children I already have are better cared for and I can take some time to rest."

Access, choice and equity

The Summit will call for the global community to tackle the many barriers which prevent girls and women using modern contraception, such as lack of political commitment, restrictive laws and policies, and social, cultural and financial barriers to access and use, including gender inequalities and neglect and abuse of people's rights. Limited resources, poor quality services, fragmented procurement, weak supply chains, and lack of quality and affordable contraceptive methods to meet people's needs are further challenges.

Efforts to strengthen family planning should also be integrated into broader reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, including postpartum and post-abortion care, and comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including HIV. These efforts will support and strengthen the continuum of care while filling critical gaps in access to family planning.

Unprecedented commitments

The London Summit on Family Planning is an opportunity to generate global commitments to make high quality, voluntary family planning services more available, acceptable and affordable. In doing so, we can accelerate the achievement of the MDGs (including MDG5b, universal access to reproductive health), and mobilize further commitments to the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, "Every Woman, Every Child", and other innovative public-private and civil society partnerships.



London Summit on FAMILY PLANNING



New and unprecedented political commitment and resources will be called for at the Summit, resulting in a huge return on our collective investments. If the global community supports countries' own ambitions and plans, and in doing so, enables 120 million more women and girls with unmet need in the 69 poorest countries to use contraceptives between 2012 and 2020, more than 110 million unintended pregnancies, and approximately 50 million abortions (of which the majority would be unsafe), will be prevented. Over 200,000 fewer women and girls will die in pregnancy and childbirth, and nearly three million fewer infants will die in their first year of life.^{vi}

All members of the global community have a role to play in meeting the Summit's ambitious goals, and are being called upon to work together to:

- Ensure access to voluntary family planning, with respect for the rights of individuals and couples to make informed decisions about family planning within enabling policy and legal frameworks;
- Increase the demand and support for family planning including increasing the support of men, families and communities, and removing other barriers to access and use;
- Improve supply chains, systems and service delivery models, including through innovative public, private and not-for-profit partnerships;
- Improve market dynamics, including country forecasting capabilities and increasing the availability and quality of a range of family planning methods;
- Procure additional commodities, including new methods which fill gaps in meeting demand;
- Strengthen monitoring and accountability, including beneficiary and community-based monitoring, to improve access to and voluntary use of contraceptives, and track financial resource flows to family planning;
- Advocate for sustained government and donor funding, and to protect and promote global commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning.



"I want to go back to nursing school. I am sure that, with family planning, I will be able to achieve what I want because I will not be having another baby in the near future."

Ruth Jotua, 24 years old, a mother of two from the Nsanje region, Malawi



Pictures: Lindsay Mgbor/DFID

These commitments will enable effective changes to take place at the international, country, and local levels to overcome the barriers that currently prevent girls and women from accessing contraceptives. Summit follow-up arrangements will work with the processes, frameworks and organisations that are already in place, and build on the remarkable commitment of partners from across the spectrum of family planning stakeholders.

A cost-effective investment

Access to voluntary family planning has transformational benefits for women and girls and is one of the most cost-effective investments a country can make in its future. It is estimated that every US\$1 spent on family planning can save up to \$6 on health, housing, water, and other public services.



Picture: Lindsay Mgbor/DFID

Access to contraceptives also leads to:

- Fewer deaths among women and newborn babies and wider health benefits;
- More girls completing their education and greater opportunities for girls;
- Healthier and more prosperous families and communities;
- Reduced demands on social sector budgets.

The London Summit on Family Planning provides an unprecedented opportunity to drive this vital agenda forward, generating new global commitments that will save and transform the lives of millions of girls and women, and in doing so, boost the health, prosperity and development of families, communities, and nations for generations to come.

ⁱ Singh S and Darroch JE, *Adding It Up: Costs and Benefits of Contraceptive Services—Estimates for 2012*, New York: Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA, 2012.

ⁱⁱ Facts on the sexual and reproductive health of adolescent women in the developing world. Guttmacher Institute and IPPF. April 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ These countries—69 in total—are defined as those with a Gross National Income (GNI) of \$2,500 per year or less (based on the World Bank 2010 classification using the Atlas Method).

^{iv} Family Planning Summit 2012, *Technical Note: data sources and methodology for calculating 2012 baseline, 2020 objectives, impacts and costings*, Family Planning Summit Metrics Group, 2012

^v <http://www.unfpa.org/public/cache/offonce/home/sitemap/icpd/International-Conference-on-Population-and-Development>

^{vi} See footnote 4