



# The Pfizer Foundation Announces \$5 Million in Grants to Support Women and Families

Wednesday, May 30, 2018 - 03:00am

This Second Round of Funding Builds on Initial \$6.7 Million Grant Program

The Pfizer Foundation announced today a new \$5 million grant commitment to initiatives in low- and middle-income countries that provide family planning access and education for women and men at the same time children are routinely vaccinated. These new grants build on The Pfizer Foundation's existing grant program by providing a second round of funding to international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) in five African countries where different barriers exist for women to access family planning services, bringing the total program funding to \$11.7 million to date.

"At Pfizer, we support the belief that women around the world should have access to family planning services and information so that they can make informed decisions that are appropriate for their needs," said Caroline Roan, President of The Pfizer Foundation. "We are proud to be expanding The Pfizer Foundation's support of this innovative approach to family planning, making it easier for underserved women to access family planning services at the same time their children receive critical immunizations to protect them against disease."

As of 2017, an estimated 214 million women and girls who wanted to delay or avoid pregnancy were still without access to modern contraception, and the proportion of women with the highest unmet need was in Sub-Saharan Africa (21 percent).<sup>i</sup>

Through each of the four initiatives in five countries (Benin, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi and Uganda), The Pfizer Foundation aims to create opportunities for women and men to access family planning services and information, while reducing the number of clinic visits and increasing health system efficiency. These projects include:

An initiative with Save the Children to increase access to quality integrated childhood immunization and family planning services for women and children in three districts of southern Malawi by strengthening the quality of services at integrated outreach clinics, provider training and advocacy meetings with community leaders. A partnership with the International Rescue Committee to increase integrated family planning and immunization service access, quality and demand in Ethiopia and Uganda that also engages men through community education. An initiative with World Vision to increase voluntary use of modern family planning methods and immunization through an integrated delivery model in two Kenyan counties with poor maternal and child health. The strategic focus is on mobilizing community health workers, traditional leaders and faith leaders to increase knowledge of the maternal and child health benefits of healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies. A program with CARE to improve family planning counseling and clinical skills of healthcare providers while addressing reasons women avoid seeking contraception in Benin, where more than one-third of women have an unmet need for family planning services.<sup>ii</sup> Among the reasons women avoid family planning are misconceptions about impact on their health or social stigma of being unmarried.

“We’ve seen the significant potential to increase uptake of family planning among women who previously may not have had access to these integrated services,” said Jodi Nelson, Senior Vice President, Policy and Practice, the International Rescue Committee. “This new grant from The Pfizer Foundation will enable us to further expand the scale and scope of the program, while also improving the quality of services in partnership with the local communities and health providers in Ethiopia and Uganda.”

An evaluation, conducted by the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, is currently ongoing to better understand what drives the effective integration of immunization and family planning services at each of the four partner INGOs. Insights from this evaluation, which will be published in the fall of 2018 and presented at the International Conference on Family Planning in November in Rwanda, will be used to refine the implementation of these integrated services in the new grant period and potentially inform future funding and programs.

#### About The Pfizer Foundation

The Pfizer Foundation is a charitable organization established by Pfizer Inc. It is a separate legal entity from Pfizer Inc. with distinct legal restrictions. The Foundation’s mission is to promote access to quality healthcare, to nurture innovation, and to support the community involvement of Pfizer colleagues.

i Adding It Up: Investing in Contraception and Maternal and Newborn Health, 2017, Guttmacher Institute <https://www.guttmacher.org/fact-sheet/adding-it-up-contraception-mnh-2017>

ii Family Planning 2020. "Benin: FP2020 Core Indicator Summary Sheet: 2017." Accessed May 8, 2018 from

<http://www.track20.org/download/pdf/2017%20FP2020%20CI%20Handouts/english/Benin%2020>

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