

DFID Family Planning Aid Performance

Introduction

The Department for International Development (DFID) is the UK government agency working to end extreme poverty around the world. It focuses on job creation, ‘unlocking the potential of girls and women’ and helping to save lives during humanitarian crises¹. DFID is responsible for nearly 90 percent of the UK government’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) spending and makes the UK a world leader in addressing shortcomings in family planning and sexual health resources in developing countries².

DFID provides family planning funding bilaterally, regionally, multilaterally and through civil society organisations. Its multilateral family planning funding is delivered through the United Nations Population Fund’s global programme to enhance reproductive health commodity security. Its civil society family planning funding is delivered principally through Marie Stopes International (MSI) and International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF)³.

Summary

As the global population climbs to nearly 8 billion, putting unsustainable strain on the environment, natural resources, and already poverty-stricken communities, family planning offers a solution.

The UK is making a major contribution to global family planning aid, providing 11% of the global total of over \$12 billion and helping over a million women worldwide gain access to contraception. It has committed to increasing this support by 2020, donating £516 million to help 120 million more women and girls access to modern family planning.

The past two years have seen a slight decrease in UK family planning aid, and although it remains on track to reaching some its targets, 222 million women around the world wish to avoid or delay pregnancy and are not using modern contraception.

The urgency of family planning aid

Family planning aid must be the baseline of all other aid spending; the easiest way to reduce carbon emissions and environmental degradation, gender inequality, and poverty is by providing adequate family planning aid.

UNFP Executive Director Dr. Babatunde Osotimehin says, “Reproductive health is not an item of expenditure; it is an investment that brings high returns. Good reproductive health enables couples and individuals to lead healthier, more productive lives, and in turn to make greater contributions to their household incomes and to national economies.” Family planning works for individuals and families and also benefit their country’s economy and environment.

There are currently 222 million women in developing countries who want to delay or reduce pregnancy but do not use modern contraception⁴. As a result, many families are much larger than the global average, with

¹<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-international-development/about>

²https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300087/statistical-release-provisional-uk-oda-tables-2013A.xls

³https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/331591/annual-report-accounts-2013-14a.pdf

⁴<http://www.populationmatters.org/issues-solutions/population/reproductive-health/>

some countries averaging five or six children per woman.

Providing family planning services to all of these women would prevent 52 million unintended pregnancies, thereby preventing 23 million unplanned births, 22 million abortions and the 53,000 deaths from unsafe abortions. Additionally it would prevent 7 million miscarriages, 1.4 million infant deaths, and 142,000 pregnancy-related deaths⁵.

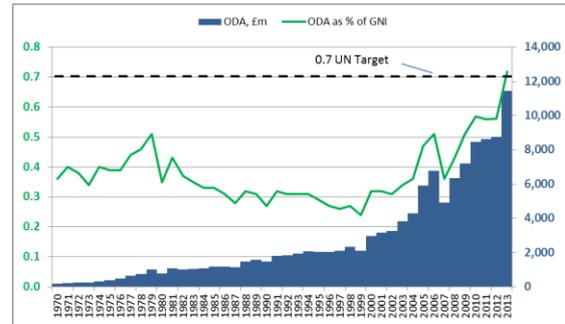
Global family planning funding levels

Global population assistance funding, including private, bilateral, and multilateral funding sources, increased from \$11.3 billion in 2012 to an estimated \$12.3 billion in 2014, and is projected to reach \$12.8 billion in 2015⁶.

UK family planning funding levels

Starting in 2000, the UK's total ODA spiked dramatically, increasing from £2.9 billion to over £11 billion in just 13 years⁷. In 2013, the UK joined just six other countries who meet the UN target of 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) as ODA⁸. A March 2015 law binds all future UK governments to meet this standard.

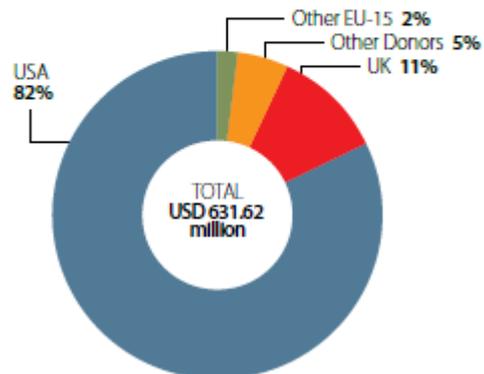
In 2011, the UK was the largest donor of global reproductive health aid, the second largest donor of family planning aid behind the United States, and the third largest contributor of global population assistance⁹.



Whilst the EU's ODA amounts to almost three times that of the US, the same cannot be said of its family planning funding; the US spends nearly 82% of the global total of family planning aid, and EU member states only a combined 13%¹⁰.

Nonetheless, the UK has had a significant impact since 2008 as its family planning aid has been steadily growing. In 2007, the UK had no family planning funding included in its ODA. Between 2009 and 2011, the UK's total family planning aid nearly tripled from \$25 million to \$70 million, and it remains the largest EU contributor¹¹.

FIGURE 13: TOP DONORS TO FAMILY PLANNING SERVICES (2011)
 (Net disbursements as percentage of total)
 Source: UNFPA/NIDI Resource Flows Project Database



Despite the net increase in UK family planning aid in recent years, DFID reduced

⁵<https://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/11/3/gpr110313.html>

⁶ UNFPA Financial Flows Report 2015

⁷https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/300087/statistical-release-provisional-uk-oda-tables-2013A.xlsx

⁸<http://devinit.org/#/post/uk-first-g7-country-to-reach-0-7-of-national-income-as-aid>

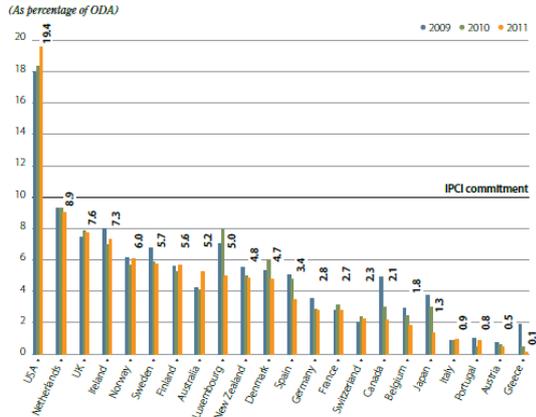
⁹http://www.dsw.org/uploads/tx_aedswpublicati on/Euomapping_2013.pdf

¹⁰http://www.dsw.org/uploads/tx_aedswpublicati on/Euomapping_2013.pdf

¹¹http://www.dsw.org/uploads/tx_aedswpublicati on/Euomapping_2013.pdf

population/reproductive health spending from £424.5 million to £373 million between 2011/2012 and 2012/2013¹². The figures subsequent years are not yet publically available.

FIGURE 10: GLOBAL EFFORTS ON POPULATION ASSISTANCE (2009-2011)



Successes of DFID family planning aid

According to DFID, UK family planning funding aid in 2013-2014 meant that 747,000 additional births were attended by a skilled birth attendant and 1.4 million additional women began using modern methods of family planning¹³.

DFID funding helps MSI to provide sexual healthcare in 12 countries in Africa and Asia¹⁴. Similarly, DFID contributes over £8 million annually to IPPF, helping them provide services to 50 million clients in high need areas around the world¹⁵.

¹² <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/international-development-committee/dfids-departmental-annual-report-and-accounts-201314/written/16196.html>

¹³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/331591/annual-report-accounts-2013-14a.pdf

¹⁴ <http://mariestopes.org/about-us/partners/dfid>

¹⁵ http://iati.dfid.gov.uk/iati_documents/4206180.doc

Plans for the coming decade

In 2012, DFID committed the UK to doubling family planning efforts by increasing investments from £90 million per year in 2010-2012 to £180 million per year over the eight years from 2012 to 2020¹⁶. As part of this goal, the UK has pledged £516 million between 2012 and 2020 to enable an additional 120 million women and girls in the world's poorest countries to have access to modern contraception¹⁷.

Strengthening DFID family planning aid

Although the UK remains dedicated to family planning aid through its recent pledges and in its advocacy, family planning and reproductive health funding have decreased both in real terms (from £424.5 million in 2012 to £373 million in 2013) and as a share of DFID's total budget (from 3.4% in 2012 to 2.8% in 2014)¹⁸.

This dip in family planning funding is unwarranted. Given the urgency of this issue and the fact that Millennium Development Goal 5, to improve maternal health through universal access to reproductive health and a 75% reduction in maternal mortality rate, have not been reached. Other global targets have not been met, including the goal of 10 million more women accessing family planning by 2015; only 5 million more women have access to family planning services to date¹⁹. Until these goals have been met, DFID

¹⁶ <http://progress.familyplanning2020.org/UK-DEPARTMENT-FOR-INTERNATIONAL-DEVELOPMENT>

¹⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67328/london-summit-family-planning-commitments.pdf

¹⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/204543/core-table-4.csv/preview

¹⁹ <http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/international-development-committee/dfids-departmental->

should increase its financial investment in expanding family planning services where they are sorely needed and will do the most good.

Conclusion

The UK has the opportunity to continue to set a global standard by focusing its ODA funding where it will have the greatest impact; reproductive healthcare and family planning aid are two of the best ways to ensure all other types of aid are used efficiently and effectively. Allowing women to plan when and how many children they have empowers the entire family economically, providing a path out of poverty. As the global population climbs towards 8 billion, putting unsustainable strain on the environment, natural resources, and already poverty-stricken communities, family planning offers a solution. The decrease in family planning aid that the UK has seen since 2012 must be reversed. DFID's leadership on women's rights, reproductive healthcare, and family planning has been creditable, but "these commitments should translate into prioritisation of financial resources... setting a precedent to encourage other governments and donors to do the same²⁰."

[annual-report-and-accounts-201314/written/16196.html](#)

²⁰<http://data.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/committeevidence.svc/evidencedocument/international-development-committee/dfids-departmental-annual-report-and-accounts-201314/written/16196.html>