The Benefits of Canada’s International Assistance for Family Planning

In federal fiscal year 2017/18, a total of CA$460 million (US$358 million) was spent on Canada’s international assistance for sexual and reproductive health and rights, of which CA$42.6 million (US$33.2 million) was spent on family planning.

This level of funding achieved the following:

- **387,000 unintended pregnancies** were averted, including:
  - 187,000 unplanned births
  - 147,000 induced abortions
  - 108,000 of which would have been provided in unsafe conditions

- **1,100 maternal deaths** were prevented.

An increase in funding would amplify these benefits. An additional CA$10 million (US$7.8 million) in Canadian international family planning assistance would result in the following:

- **323,000 more women and couples** would receive contraceptive services and supplies

- **91,000 fewer unintended pregnancies** would occur, including:
  - 44,000 fewer unplanned births
  - 35,000 fewer abortions
  - 25,000 of which would have been provided in unsafe conditions

- **250 fewer maternal deaths** would occur.
Methodology and Sources
Canada’s funding for family planning allocations by country and region include bilateral amounts coded to the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Purpose Code 13030 (Family Planning) as well as core funding to United Nations Population Fund based on its 2017 Annual Reports, and UN Women, based on Global Affairs Canada (GAC) estimates, allocated to family planning. Figures represent Fiscal Year (FY) 2017/18 (April 1 to March 31) in Canadian dollars. Amounts do not include family planning delivered through humanitarian assistance which is coded to the DAC Emergency Response Purpose Codes. Conversion to US$ is based on the OECD-DAC 2017/2018 monthly average (CA$1.283497083 to US$1). GAC considers FY 2017/18 funding information preliminary until final verification in March 2019. Estimates of cost and impact are based on the following:

- **Numbers of modern contraceptive users**—Calculated by dividing family planning allocations to countries and regional offices for FY 2017/18 by estimated 2017 country-level costs per user taken from the most recent comprehensive analysis of costs and benefits of family planning in developing countries, revised to incorporate new data for India.

- **Numbers of unintended pregnancies and other events prevented by users of modern contraceptives supported by Canada’s funds**—Calculated as the difference between the annual number of events that would occur if women wanting to avoid pregnancy used modern methods and the annual number of events that would occur if women relied on traditional or no methods while remaining sexually active and not wanting to become pregnant. The main sources of data used for these estimates are national surveys of women’s pregnancy intention and method use, contraceptive service costs, contraceptive use-failure analyses, proportions of births that had not been wanted at the time or ever, estimates of the numbers of women having induced abortion and estimates of numbers and causes of maternal deaths.

Acknowledgments
This fact sheet was made possible by a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the positions and policies of the donor.

References
2. Special tabulations of data from the Global Affairs Canada financial database.
7. Guttmacher Institute, Special analysis of data from Demographic and Health Surveys, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys, Performance Monitoring and Accountability 2020 and other national survey data files.