



FAQs

Canada's commitment to sexual and reproductive health and rights March 8, 2017, announcement

1. What does this new sexual and reproductive health and rights commitment include, and how long is this commitment?

As part of our commitment to the empowerment of women and girls and gender equality, Canada is committing \$650 million over three years to improve sexual and reproductive health and rights for all.

The goal of Canada's contribution is to reduce unwanted pregnancies and unsafe abortions, and protect and promote the health and rights of women and girls, giving them the opportunity to develop their full potential and contribute to the development of their communities.

The sexual and reproductive health and rights commitment will include support for:

- comprehensive sexuality education;
- reproductive health services;
- family planning services, including contraception;
- safe and legal abortion services and post-abortion care;
- preventing and managing HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections;
- preventing and responding to sexual and gender-based violence, including the prevention of harmful practices such as child and early forced marriage and female genital mutilation/cutting, and the provision of psycho-social services for survivors;
- training health care professionals in the provision of sexual and reproductive health-care services and family planning;
- advocacy activities of women's, youth, Indigenous and LGBTI civil society groups;
- addressing social norms that limit women's and adolescents' control over their bodies and reproductive decision-making; and
- removing judicial and legal barriers to the fulfilment of sexual and reproductive health and rights.

2. How does the sexual and reproductive health and rights commitment relate to the maternal, newborn and child health commitment?

Canada committed \$3.5 billion between 2015 and 2020 to improve maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH). Canada will meet this commitment. The \$650-million sexual and reproductive health and rights commitment will build on and address gaps in our MNCH commitment by protecting and promoting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and adolescent girls.

3. What does the sexual and reproductive health and rights funding seek to achieve?

Currently, 225 million women worldwide have an unmet need for modern contraception and there are more than four million unintended pregnancies every year. Additionally, an estimated 22 million women and girls worldwide put their lives at risk annually by undergoing unsafe abortions: at least 22,000 girls and women die each year and 6.9 million suffer serious illness or injury.

When women and girls have access to a full range of sexual and reproductive health services, rates of unplanned pregnancies and unsafe and illegal abortions decrease. Lack of attention to sexual and reproductive health and rights is a driver for maternal mortality, poor health and exclusion for far too many women and adolescent girls.

Sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights are essential for advancing the empowerment of women and adolescent girls and gender equality.

The sexual and reproductive health and rights investment will contribute to the attainment of the UN's sustainable development goal 3.7—ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health care services, including for family planning and information and education, and the integration of reproductive health into national strategies and programs by 2030.

4. What else is Canada doing to support sexual and reproductive health and rights?

Canada is joining the Family Planning 2020 commitment, a global partnership of governments, civil society groups, multilateral organizations, donors, the private sector, and the research and development community that will help enable 120 million more women and adolescent girls to access contraceptives by 2020.

Canada will also join the Ouagadougou Partnership, which aims to accelerate progress in the use of family planning services in Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo. This partnership is based on two principles: better coordination between donors to optimize their support to countries, and collaboration and cooperation at national and regional levels to avoid high rates of unmet family planning needs.

5. Who can apply for this funding? Which countries will benefit from this funding?

Canada's commitment will fund projects that will be executed by a range of partners, including multilateral, international, Canadian and local organizations, and recipient country governments. It will assist the poorest and most vulnerable in developing countries, including in fragile and humanitarian settings. Details on specific projects will be provided over the duration of the commitment.