

Family Planning and the Millennium Development Goals



ERADICATE
EXTREME POVERTY
AND HUNGER

■ **End poverty and hunger.** Per capita gross national product has a correlation with the prevalence of modern contraceptive methods, and family planning reduces the aggregate demand for increasingly scarce food products. Better birth spacing reduces incidence of low birth weight and poor maternal nutrition. Family planning results in more wealth and less hunger.



ACHIEVE UNIVERSAL
PRIMARY EDUCATION

■ **Universal education.** Girls often have to drop out of school due to unintended pregnancy or to help care for younger siblings. Fewer than half of all African girls complete primary school. Family planning prolongs education and helps girls in particular to achieve their dreams for the future.



PROMOTE GENDER
EQUALITY AND
EMPOWER WOMEN

■ **Gender equality.** Unplanned pregnancies divert women from other life plans. In Egypt, women who use contraception are more likely to be employed than nonusers. In Brazil and Indonesia, use of long-acting or permanent contraceptive methods was associated with a greater likelihood of working for pay. Using family planning empowers women; involving men in family planning can lead to changes in gender norms. Empowering women in many ways, including their ability to achieve their desired family size, is the most important driver of modern development efforts.



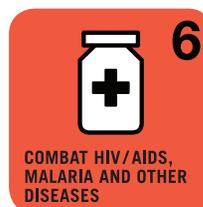
REDUCE
CHILD MORTALITY

■ **Child health.** About 1.4 million infant deaths are averted globally each year by preventing unintended pregnancies. If we could meet all demands for contraception, another 1.1 million infant deaths would be prevented. Family planning increases child survival.



IMPROVE MATERNAL
HEALTH

■ **Maternal health.** Universal access to reproductive health, including family planning, is designated in MDG 5B. Also, if a woman seeks to terminate an unintended pregnancy, the risks associated with unsafe abortion are among the main causes of maternal death, especially in young women. If she wishes to continue the pregnancy, in low-resource settings without safe delivery services, the risks of maternal mortality and serious complications are also high.



COMBAT HIV/AIDS,
MALARIA AND OTHER
DISEASES

■ **Combat HIV/AIDS.** Contraception is the best-kept secret in HIV prevention. Women with HIV who have unintended pregnancies run the risk of transmitting the virus to their children. Preventing unwanted pregnancies among HIV-positive women is a key component of programs to prevent mother-to-child transmission.



ENSURE
ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY

■ **Environmental sustainability.** Many women want fewer children, and 220 million have unmet needs for contraception. A family with fewer children needs less food, land and water and puts less pressure on a country's forests and tillable land. Moreover, family planning is five times less expensive than conventional green technologies for reducing atmospheric carbon dioxide that leads to climate change.



A GLOBAL
PARTNERSHIP FOR
DEVELOPMENT

■ **Global partnerships.** Four decades of global investment in family planning programs have contributed to strong collaboration among international agencies, governmental ministries, multinational organizations and local community groups.

Adapted from: Cates Jr W. Family planning: the essential link to achieving all eight Millennium Development Goals. *Contraception*. 2010;81(6):460-61.