

# Population Reproductive Health Program

## Sub-Saharan Africa Strategy Brief

The David & Lucile Packard Foundation's Population and Reproductive Health program is committed to promoting reproductive health and rights and stabilizing population growth. The Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram works to improve the quality of and access to voluntary family planning/contraception, comprehensive sexuality education (CSE) and adolescent sexual and reproductive health services, including safe abortion and post-abortion care.

### The Challenge

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the lack of access to quality reproductive health information and services as well as social and economic pressures on women often lead to early marriage, early childbearing and large family size. In addition, in many Sub-Saharan countries, roughly 25–40 percent of the population is below 15 years of age, posing challenges to governments who will need to provide educational and economic opportunities as well as appropriate sexual and reproductive health information and services. The inequities and obstacles to care, combined with a rapidly growing youth population, exacerbate poor health outcomes and weaken already overburdened systems.

### Our Strategy

The Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram seeks to increase access to quality reproductive health information and services, including safe abortion and post-abortion care, for women and girls, and to advancing political and financial support for quality family planning and reproductive health.

### Our Approach

The Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram aims to:

- Expand access to quality family planning and reproductive health services, including safe abortion and post-abortion care for women and young people;
- Expand access to comprehensive sexuality education in schools and communities and improve access to youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services in the public sector; and
- Build local and regional movements to advance political and financial support for family planning and reproductive health.

Through our grantmaking at the national level in Ethiopia, the Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram aims to:

- Integrate comprehensive sexuality education into the national school curriculum;
- Improve access to quality second trimester abortions and build government commitment to provide quality abortion services; and
- Build a movement for the advancement of youth sexual reproductive health.

In Oromia, Ethiopia we aim to:

- Expand access to quality, youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health services, including safe abortion services and post-abortion contraception;
- Improve the quality of family planning and reproductive health services, especially long-

- acting contraceptive methods provided by community health workers; and
- Support advocacy and leadership development programs to strengthen organizations and leaders who can sustain the family planning and reproductive health services movement over the long-term.

This subprogram also makes targeted investments in Kenya, Rwanda and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). In Kenya, we focus funding in areas where fertility is high and contraceptive prevalence is low. In Rwanda, we support efforts to improve access to safe abortion and post-abortion care and advance young people's sexual and reproductive health. In Kinshasa, we focus on expanding access and improving the quality of family planning and safe abortion services, especially sexual and reproductive health information and services for young people.

### Where We Work

The Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram makes deep investments at the national level and in Oromia, Ethiopia. We also make targeted investments in Kenya, Rwanda and Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and in regional advocacy efforts.

### Progress

The Foundation's longstanding commitment to comprehensive sexuality information, family planning/contraception, and safe abortion, combined with our international experience and credibility, provides us with an opportunity to make a significant difference in these areas.

The Foundation's Population and Reproductive Health program has been

instrumental in seeding and accelerating progress on reproductive health and rights, often under the most challenging of circumstances. The efforts of the Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram to enable women and girls to make more informed decisions has contributed to Ethiopian parents being more willing to save for the educations of their daughters and to communities being more supportive of girls marrying later and canceling early marriages. Our effort to improve access to services has contributed to the use of modern contraception in Ethiopia doubling during the last strategy period.

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*The Sub-Saharan Africa subprogram seeks to increase reproductive health access and options for women and girls, and advance political and financial support for family planning and reproductive health.*

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### What We Don't Fund

While we coordinate and work closely with public sector stakeholders, we generally do not fund governmental institutions or direct services.

### To Learn More

To learn more about the U.S. subprogram, our strategies and funding, visit our website at [www.packard.org/population-reproductive-health](http://www.packard.org/population-reproductive-health).