

## Internal FAQs

### Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) budget cuts

#### Summary

At the end of 2020, the U.K. government took the decision to cut their legal commitment to spending 0.7% of Gross National Income on foreign aid to 0.5% during a global pandemic. These cuts have been enormous, sudden, and justified as a technical necessity due to the impact of COVID-19 on the British economy. However, no other donor government has made cuts of this nature, despite being equally impacted. In June, we go into the G7 Summit with other nations who have stepped up their efforts in a global recovery, whilst the U.K. has stepped back. The fallout from the cuts is parallel to, if not more severe than the Global Gag Rule imposed on IPPF by the Trump Administration in 2017. IPPF will continue to explore funding options and commodity procurements to ensure continuity of service delivery for Member Associations.

#### Timeline of key events

##### 2020

**17<sup>th</sup> June:** Department for International Development (DFID) and Foreign & Commonwealth Office merge to become Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO).

**25<sup>th</sup> November:** Chancellor Rishi Sunak announces that the U.K. will not spend 0.7% of gross national income in 2021 and will instead contribute just 0.5% of GNI. The reductions amount to a loss of 30% compared with the 2019 ODA budget — £4.5 billion.

##### 2021

**February:** The U.K government rejects a Freedom of Information request on the U.K aid cuts. The request came from [Bond](#), the U.K. network for organisations working in international development.

**5<sup>th</sup> March:** [Open Democracy](#) reports that a leaked FCDO document shows officials are discussing deep cuts to numerous fragile and poverty-stricken states. NGOs accuse the government of a complete lack of transparency.

**16<sup>th</sup> March:** The government releases the [Integrated Review: Global Britain in a competitive age](#), a review of the foreign, defence, security and international development policies. There are no commitments to sexual and reproductive healthcare.

**19<sup>th</sup> March:** Affected NGOs begin to speak out on the extent of U.K. aid cuts happening behind closed doors and the lack of transparency from the U.K. government. IPPF's **Dr Alvaro Bermejo, director-general**,

speaks to [Devox](#) about the impact that the will have on the WISH programme and IPPF's services worldwide, kickstarting media interest in IPPF and the FCDO cuts.

**March-May:** The U.K. government begins to announce cuts (complete list of cut programmes so far). The FCDO begins working with IPPF on a no cost extension of its flagship WISH project in place of a costed extension for 2021, forcing significant reduction and closure of SRH services. The ACCESS Project, which had only just started, must also close, ending a grant that would have supported sexual and reproductive health access through to 2023. In total, IPPF estimates it will lose £72 million (approximately \$100 million) in funding for the WISH & ACCESS projects.

UNFPA Supplies, IPPF's procurement partner, receives 85% cuts: from £154 million to around £23 million and to cuts to UNFPA's core funding by 60%, from £20 million to £8 million.

**2<sup>nd</sup> June:** MP's table an amendment backed by rebel Tory MPs to force the UK government to return to spending 0.7% of its GNI on ODA. The amendment heads to the Commons on Monday 7 June.

**11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> June:** The U.K government will host the G7 Summit in Cornwall, U.K. This G7 focuses on uniting 'leading democracies to help the world fight and then build back better from coronavirus and create a greener, more prosperous future'. IPPF is leading a high-level roundtable on SRHR, with the U.K. government and the Canadian government as co-hosts. The roundtable event aims to create an opportunity to engage G7 and guest countries in a meaningful conversation about achieving the promises of Beijing and invest in women and girls and SRHR while ensuring that they are at the centre of building a better and fairer post-COVID-19 world.

## **How have the FCDO cuts impacted IPPF?**

### **WISH & ACCESS**

FCDO supported Sexual and Reproductive Healthcare service delivery and best practice sharing in 18 IPPF Member Associations through the WISH and ACCESS projects.

Overall, **IPPF will be losing £72 million from FCDO** (approximately US\$100 million), this includes:

#### **1) WISH Lot 2 – funding loss of £52.8m**

WISH Lot 2 service delivery will stop in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Zambia, Mozambique and Zimbabwe in July 2021, with close by the end of August 2021. This reduces the global Project from 15 countries to 10 countries. Where programmes continue, it will only be at 30% capacity.

#### **2) WISH Lot 1 – funding loss of £2.4m**

The impact on WISH Lot 1 will be significant, particularly as the project supports chronically underfunded countries such as Chad, Mauritania, DRC, Cote D'Ivoire, Cameroon and Nigeria. All WISH project supported Sexual and Reproductive Health services in these countries will end by December 2021.

Since the WISH programme began in October 2018, it has prevented an estimated:

- 11.7 million unintended pregnancies
- 4.3 million unsafe abortions
- 34,000 maternal deaths.

If the current programme continued for another 21 months as it is operating now, the services provided would avert an estimated additional:

- 7.5 million unintended pregnancies
- 2.7 million unsafe abortions
- 22,000 maternal deaths

The speed in which the cuts have been made significantly challenge member associations in now meeting the enormous demand for SRH services, already working within extremely difficult contexts, now also compounded by the additional challenges of ensuring SRH access within the COVID 19 context.

### **3) UKAID Connect/ACCESS £16.7m**

The ACCESS program will now close after only six months of implementation and two years of co-creation, with a loss of funding of £16.7 million over the next three years.

### **Commodities**

IPPF is an implementing partner in the UNFPA Supplies partnership. 45 Member Associations (M.A.) benefit from commodities of contraception and technical support from UNFPA Supplies.

In 2020 IPPF received \$7 million worth of contraception in direct donations from UNFPA. The total value of commodity support we have received from UNFPA Supplies in 2020 is more significant, as this number does not include commodities, we have received indirectly from UNFPA Supplies through the Ministries of Health.

For 2021, IPPF requested \$14 million in commodities support and received confirmation of allocation of only \$1.5 million in the first quarter of 2021. UNFPA Supplies has been advocating with Ministries of Health to allocate products to Member Associations for our second quarter request, as UNFPA Supplies faces a spending freeze for international procurement and donation of our \$12.5 million second quarter request. With only quarter 1 allocations and immediate stock deliveries from Ministries of Health in 2021 being confirmed, the risk of stockouts of essential commodities will increase significantly over time.

### **Upcoming internal events**

IPPF plans to host a webinar for Member Associations active in UNFPA Supplies focus countries on June 14, 2021. Topics that will be addressed are:

- Update on the impact of the FCDO cuts on different routes of commodity supply to Member Associations;
- Current and future product donation requests from UNFPA directly;

- Mitigating actions: in-country and global advocacy with MOH, UNFPA (Country Offices) and other stakeholders;
- Stock reporting mechanism to allow timely escalation and potential intervention to prevent stockouts;
- Supply of commodities through IPPF, the APB process explained.

### **How will IPPF fill the funding gap left by the FCDO cuts?**

For WISH, no further funding has yet been allocated beyond the initial three-year project period, ending in August/September 2021. With a better picture of how cuts will affect our work on the ground, we are now moving our attention to communicating the impact to donors and identifying where potential new funding could come from.

There is a positive commitment from many donors to look into ways to help close the funding gap in the short term in providing commodities and service delivery. We are also developing programmatic asks that will allow us to make concrete requests from donors as well as the commitments we will make at the upcoming Generation Equality Forum (GEF). It is important that we use the GEF for a collective commitment to keep the cuts in the spotlight as a political priority and come up with additional resources. Like-minded IPPF donors had an extraordinary session at the end of May to discuss the impact of the UK cuts and a joint commitment together with IPPF that could be launched during the upcoming GEF.

### **IPPF advocacy initiatives**

IPPF has collaborated with a range of networks and partners in response to the FCDO cuts, including the UK SRHR Network, the UK Gender and Development Network, the UK Action for Global Health Network, and the Reproductive Health Supplies Coalition (RHSC). Initiatives have included joint statements and letters addressed to Prime Minister Boris Johnson and government ministers and briefings shared with parliamentarians and media.

A recent report released through the UK SRHR Network shows that women and girls are disproportionately affected by what we can see in the cuts. The government has said that it will revert to 0.7% when the financial crisis is over. It has not explained how it will define whether the financial crisis is over, what indicators would be used etc. So, we will need to get clarity on that.

### **IPPF public statements**

[Press release](#) on the UNFPA Supplies cuts and the impact it will have on our ability to deliver services

[News story](#) on the overall FCDO cuts – IPPF warns millions of vulnerable women and girls will pay the price for catastrophic budget cuts.

[Statement](#) on the U.K government's reduction in spending from 0.7% of Gross National Income on foreign aid to 0.5%.

## IPPF & FCDO cuts in the media

There have been 18 pieces of media on the FCDO cuts since 07.04.21. Highlights include the Guardian Today in Focus Podcast, the FCDO press release in Open Democracy, Alvaro's interview with Devex, a Zambia case study feature on Sky News and an article in the Financial Times featuring our Mozambique team.

- [Africa feels the brunt of UK foreign aid cuts](#) – The Financial Times (24.05.21)
- [UK aid cuts: little information, but devastating consequences](#) – Bond (20.05.21)
- [UK aid cuts will mean 700,000 fewer girls get an education, NGOs say](#) – Devex (19.05.21)
- [Why is the U.K. slashing its international aid budget?](#) – Guardian Today in Focus podcast (13.05.21)
- [Tracking the U.K.'s controversial aid cuts](#) – Devex (13.05.21)
- [From Women's Health to Yemen Crisis: 6 Key Issues Hit by U.K. Aid Cuts](#) – Global Citizen (07.05.21)
- [Government Cuts to Reproductive Health Funding Fit into an Anti-Rights Agenda](#) – The Byline Times (06.05.21)
- [U.K. accused of 'Trump tactics' after 'devasting' £131m cut to family planning aid](#) – OpenDemocracy (30.04.21)
- [Britain's aid cuts: what's been announced so far](#) – The Guardian (30.04.21)
- [U.K cuts funding for UN AIDS by 83%](#) – Devex (29.04.21)
- [Devastating for women and girls](#) – The Guardian (29.04.21)  
Also on [1<sup>st</sup> news](#)
- [Aid workers describe the devastating impact of the U.K. government's cuts to foreign aid](#) – Sky News (29.04.21)  
Also on [Hot World](#)
- [Foreign aid: U.K. cuts its pledge to UN family planning by 85%](#) - BBC News (29.04.21)
- [A tragic blow for many of the world's most marginalised people - 200 UK NGOs condemn government cuts to aid budget](#) – Bond (21.04.21)
- ['Out of Trump playbook': UK accused of 'abandoning' women with cuts to aid](#) – The Guardian (12.04.21)
- [UK aid cuts: IPPF clinic closures will mean 2.7 million unsafe abortions](#) – Devex (07.04.21)