

# Knowledge Is Power

## ENSURING A HEALTHY FUTURE FOR YOUTH IN ADDIS ABABA

Ethiopia is a youthful nation, and its young people will see positive impacts—now and in the future—from access to reliable sexual and reproductive health (SRH) information.

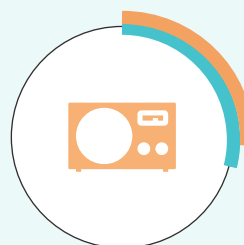


More than one in five people in Ethiopia are between ages 15 and 24.<sup>1</sup>

### With SRH information, young Ethiopians can:

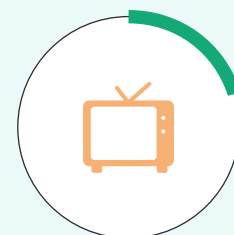
- ▶ Make positive and informed decisions about their sexual behavior.
- ▶ Protect themselves from harmful situations such as unintended pregnancies and STIs.<sup>2</sup>

Many young people ages 15 to 24 rely on radio and television as their main sources of family planning information.<sup>3</sup>



26% of women and 29% of men receive family planning messages from the radio.<sup>4</sup>

20% of women and men receive family planning messages from television.<sup>5</sup>



### Even so, focus group discussions reveal...

- ▶ Young girls are using emergency contraception as a regular contraceptive.
- ▶ According to their peers, girls who drop out of school often don't have information about family planning and face unintended pregnancies that result in unsafe abortions.<sup>6</sup>

Youth at this time are not being made aware of HIV/AIDS and family planning... In television and other medias, awareness is not made.

- YOUNG ETHIOPIAN WOMAN, AGE 18-24

With accurate SRH information, youth are more likely to make safe decisions about their health.<sup>7</sup>

- ✓ Delays initiation of sex.
- ✓ Decreases frequency of sex and number of sexual partners.
- ✓ Increases condom use and appropriate contraception choice.
- ✗ Increases sexual activity.
- ✗ Increases sexual risk-taking behavior.
- ✗ Increases STI and HIV infection rates.

## Evidence shows that exposure to health messages via mass media can change behavior.

Mass media interventions to improve public awareness or knowledge about family planning methods have been effective at increasing the desire to use contraception in Nigeria, Kenya, and Senegal.<sup>8</sup>

In Burkina Faso, radio health campaigns contributed to increased visits to health providers for issues addressed by those campaigns.<sup>9</sup>



## What can decisionmakers in Addis Ababa do to protect the future of young Ethiopians?

The Addis Ababa Regional Health Bureau and Ethiopian media institutions should work together to dedicate prime-time airtime to the sharing of SRH information tailored to young people.

By providing Ethiopia's young people with reliable SRH information, we can help empower them to make positive decisions for their futures.



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**Note:** In 2018, Population Reference Bureau and the International Youth Alliance for Family Planning conducted interviews and discussions with youth and key stakeholders to assess the status of youth-friendly family planning services in Ethiopia. This fact sheet presents the results of this research related to gaps in youth-friendly service delivery.

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