

Press Release



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U.S. GOVERNMENT AND ETHIOPIAN GOVERNMENT LAUNCH URBAN HEALTH PROGRAM TO REACH 1.6 MILLION HOUSEHOLDS

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 11, 2014 –Today, the U.S. Government through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with Ethiopia’s Federal Ministry of Health, launched the Strengthening Ethiopia’s Urban Health Program, which will promote greater health access and improved health status for more than 1.6 million households in 49 cities through high-quality health services.

The program will expand upon the existing partnership between USAID and the Government of Ethiopia (GOE), targeting key areas such as HIV, Tuberculosis and maternal and child health. USAID will provide technical assistance to the GOE to improve the quality of household-level health services, improve referral links across health facilities, and enhance urban sanitation and waste management.

Speaking at the launch event, Minister of Health H.E. Dr. Kesetebirhan Admasu stated: “Estimates suggest that a huge number of Ethiopians will live in urban settings in the coming decades, and so one of our priorities in the primary healthcare system is to focus on innovative community-based approaches to reach the growing number of urban dwellers. The Ministry of Health is committed to providing leadership and working closely with partners to address urban health disparities.”

The 2011 Ethiopian Demographic Health Survey indicates that the people living in urban settings have a strikingly low health status including an HIV prevalence rate of 4.2 percent—five times higher than the prevalence rate in rural areas—home delivery of about 50 percent and neonatal mortality of 41 per 1,000 live births. A considerable number of urban dwellers face hardships and inequalities accessing health, education, social services, and adequate water and food supplies.

“In partnership with the Government of Ethiopia, the private sector, and other relevant stakeholders, USAID will promote best practices to reach more than 1.6 million urban households with high-quality health services in the coming five years,” said USAID Mission Director Dennis Weller.

The five-year, \$20 million program, implemented by John Snow, Inc., and partially funded by the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for Aids Relief (PEPFAR), is a continuation of the previous USAID Urban Health Extension Program which supported government-led efforts in expanding urban health from 2009 to 2013.

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