

Press Release



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Better Communication will Help Save Lives in Ethiopia

USAID's new activity will optimize the power of health communication to transform Ethiopia's public health system

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, February 8, 2016 – Following the opening of the first International Social and Behavior Change Communication Summit, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Ethiopia's Ministry of Health jointly inaugurated a new activity "Communication for Health" designed to strengthen evidence-based health communication in Ethiopia. This USAID activity will support the Ethiopian health sector to guide families in making better health choices in the areas of reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health; malaria; tuberculosis; water, sanitation and hygiene; prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV; and nutrition.

The five-year activity will work to improve knowledge, attitudes, and practices of individuals and communities, including their use of health services. The activity will serve as a catalyst to enhance the impact and sustainability of existing efforts through improved coordination, use of data and findings from state-of-the-art programming, technical capacity strengthening, and cross-sector integration.

Speaking at the activity launch, USAID Ethiopia Acting Mission Director Ramona El Hamzaoui said, "Five years from now, we expect to see more families and communities who are informed, empowered and choosing healthy practices and, as a result, are enjoying a better quality of life."

The Ministry of Health is a major stakeholder and will play a leading role in strengthening the implementation and coordination of health communication activities, including developing and endorsing tools and guidelines for harmonization and quality assurance.

USAID and its partners envision the creation of solid communication structures across all levels of the health system, coordination and harmonization of communication strategies and activities, and strengthened capacity for health communication leading to healthy individuals and communities.

Communication for Health, a \$22.2 million initiative funded by USAID, is led by Johns Hopkins Center for Communication Programs and implemented in partnership with the Ministry of Health and John Snow, Inc.

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