

INSIGHTS INTO SRH FINANCING IN ETHIOPIA

Investing in sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services is not only a moral imperative but also an economic necessity. Research shows that every dollar spent on SRH can yield substantial economic returns by enhancing productivity, reducing healthcare costs, and empowering individuals, particularly women. According to the World Bank (2016), investments in SRH services can generate returns of up to \$1 spent, primarily through increased labor productivity and decreased health expenditures. Furthermore, the Guttmacher Institute (2017) highlights that every dollar spent on contraceptive services can save \$2.20 in pregnancy-related costs.

Ethiopia's healthcare system has undergone significant transformation aimed at achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). However, the allocation of financial resources for SRH services has often fallen short of addressing the population's needs. The National Health Accounts (NHA) framework provides valuable insights into how healthcare funds are distributed and managed, revealing areas where investment can yield the most significant health and economic benefits (FMOH-NHA, 2022) where this approach is used to diagnose financing for SRH in Ethiopia.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF INVESTING IN SRH SERVICES

- 1. Increased Workforce Productivity:** Healthier individuals contribute more effectively to the economy. Investments in SRH enable individuals to make informed choices about their reproductive health, resulting in a more stable workforce. The World Bank (2016) notes that healthy populations lead to increased economic productivity and growth.
- 2. Cost Savings on Healthcare:** Effective SRH services significantly reduce the incidence of unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), which translates to lower healthcare costs. It was identified that preventive measures, such as contraceptive services, can save healthcare systems substantial amounts of money by reducing the need for more expensive care associated with unplanned pregnancies.
- 3. Empowerment and Gender Equality:** Access to SRH services is crucial for women's empowerment. Women with control over their reproductive health are more likely to pursue education and enter the workforce, contributing to economic growth. The UNFPA (2019) emphasizes that investing in SRH can foster gender equality and promote economic stability.
- 4. Long-term Economic Growth:** WHO underscores that improved health outcomes from SRH investments contribute to sustained economic development. Healthier populations are better equipped to contribute to economic activities, creating a cycle of investment and growth (WHO, 2018).

CHALLENGES IN SRH FINANCING

Despite the clear benefits, several challenges hinder effective SRH financing in Ethiopia. The declining commitment (interms of total share) to SRH services, particularly family planning, poses risks to access and utilization. Additionally, a significant portion of SRH spending is directed toward administrative costs rather than frontline services, emphasizing the need to optimize resource allocation for effective service delivery.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCREASED FINANCING

- 1. An increase in financial allocation** will ensure that critical services are adequately funded.
- 2. Re-evaluate Family Planning Funding:** Addressing the decrease in funding for family planning programs is critical to meet the growing demand for these services.
- 3. Prioritize SRH Supply Procurement:** Investments in the procurement and distribution of essential SRH supplies should be intensified to support effective service delivery.
- 4. Strengthen Government Ownership:** Enhancing government ownership and sustainability of SRH programs is essential for the long-term success of these initiatives.
- 5. Balance Resource Allocation:** A balanced allocation of channel three resources among advocacy, demand generation, service delivery, and supply procurement activities is crucial for comprehensive SRH service delivery.



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CONSORTIUM OF REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH ASSOCIATIONS (CORHA)

The Consortium of Reproductive Health Associations (CORHA) is a member driven umbrella organizations of 87 foreign and local NGOs/CSOs committed to the provision of comprehensive, integrated and sustainable Reproductive Health (RH) information and services in Ethiopia

CORHA's strategic role is Coordination and Representation, Capacity Building, Advocacy, Knowledge Management and Resource Mobilization to ensure that member organizations are providing comprehensive, integrated and sustainable SRH information and services in the country;



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