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JUST THE NUMBERS

The Impact of UK International Assistance for Family Planning and HIV, 2024

Investments in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR), including contraception and HIV services and programs, are lifesaving and have far-reaching and measurable benefits. Improving SRHR enables women and girls to have control over their bodies and their lives, promotes their health and well-being, and contributes more broadly to gender equality, strengthened health systems, economic development and resilience to climate change.[1] Investing in SRHR is widely considered one of the most cost-effective development interventions governments can make, returning up to US$120 for every US$1 spent.[2]

The United Kingdom's Support for SRHR

The UK government has long been a global leader in supporting SRHR as a core pillar of global health, gender equality and human rights. It has a strong track record of robust investment delivering high-impact, rights-based services for women and girls worldwide. Through sustained, strategic funding, the United Kingdom has improved access to contraception, safe abortion care and maternal health services, including in humanitarian crises. The United Kingdom has filled a critical need for SRHR programming with its focus on equity, health systems strengthening and prioritization of neglected issues, such as comprehensive sexuality education and eliminating female genital cutting. Consistent funding has positioned the nation as a trusted and credible partner in SRHR and has strengthened its partnerships with multilateral institutions and governments around the world.

In 2022, the United Kingdom was the single largest European donor to global SRHR initiatives, and it ranked fourth among European countries in SRHR disbursements as a percentage of overall official development assistance (ODA).[3] The UK government's comprehensive investments in SRHR include critical funding to support family planning in low- and middle-income countries. In 2024, it disbursed £232 million dedicated to SRHR, including at least £107 million for family planning.*[4] The government's overall investments in SRHR include significant funding for the UNFPA Supplies Partnership (£60 million in 2024)[4] and the Women's Integrated Sexual Health program (£274 million from 2018 to 2024), which reached approximately 16.9 million women and adolescent girls across 27 countries.[5] It has similarly maintained a strong commitment to funding HIV programming and services. In 2022, it pledged £1 billion over three years to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), equating to an annual contribution of £333 million in 2024.[6]

This critical SRHR funding is now at grave risk. Recently announced funding cuts to ODA would reduce the UK aid budget from 0.5% of gross national income (GNI) to 0.3% of GNI in fiscal year (FY) 2027–28.[8] These cuts amount to an estimated £0.5 billion in FY 2025–26, £4.8 billion in FY 2026–27 and £6.5 billion in FY 2027–28.

They are also out of line with commitments made by the Labour Party. Prior to winning a majority in the UK general election in 2024, the Labour Party published *Change—Labour Party Manifesto 2024*, which included a chapter expressing the party's commitment to rebuilding Britain's leadership in international development, particularly for gender equality, stating: "We will renew expertise and focus, especially in priority areas such as…empowering women and girls…."[7]

Any cuts to SRHR programs will result in deaths and the closure of critical health services. Funding cuts will also hamper progress on key priorities of the UN's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such as achieving gender equality and broader health and development goals, and tarnish the United Kingdom's reputation on the global stage.

*This represents a minimum amount of family planning funding estimated using the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee purpose code 13030.[4] It is likely that a greater share of funding, through both multilateral and bilateral channels, went to supporting family planning programming.

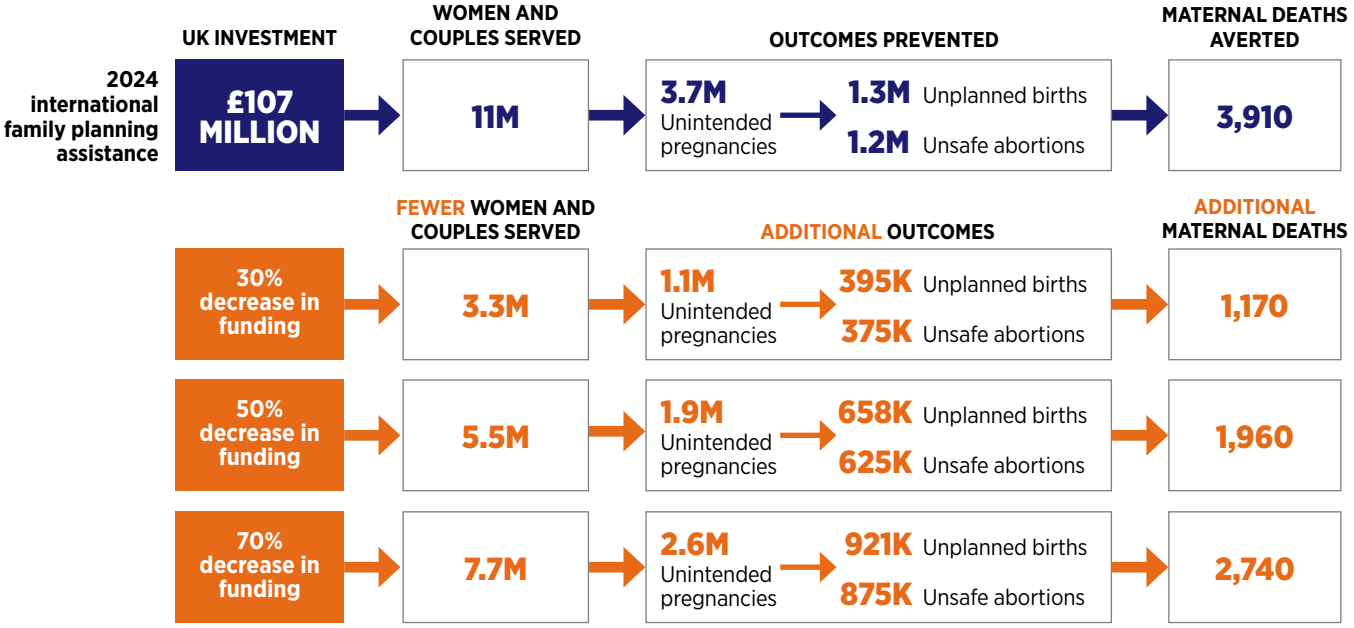
While the specific scope of these cuts is not yet known, modeling a 30–70% reduction of family planning funding, and modeling a £10 million and £100 million decrease in UK aid to the Global Fund, offers a probatory view into just some of the potential impacts.

Impact of UK Investment in Family Planning

In 2024, the United Kingdom's family planning funding of £107 million is estimated to have provided 11 million women and couples with modern contraceptive methods, resulting in 3.7 million unintended pregnancies prevented—and, consequently, 1.2 million unsafe abortions and 1.3 million unplanned births prevented. Ultimately, this investment is estimated to have averted 3,910 maternal deaths in low- and middle-income countries in 2024.

The graphic shows the benefits of 2024 UK investments and what is at risk with progressive decreases in funding. A 30% decrease in international family planning assistance would deny 3.3 million people contraceptive services, increase the number of unintended pregnancies by 1.1 million and fail to avert 1,170 maternal deaths. An alarmingly large cut of 70% would deny 7.7 million people contraceptive services, increase the number of unintended pregnancies by 2.6 million and fail to avert 2,740 maternal deaths. Any of these drastic cuts would be devastating for people's health outcomes, reproductive choices and bodily autonomy.

How current and potential UK investments in international family planning impact reproductive health outcomes



Notes: Impacts estimated using Adding It Up 2024 data. M=million. K=thousand.

Impact of UK Investment in HIV Services

The United Kingdom's annual investment of £333 million in the Global Fund is estimated to save 492,000 lives.[9] These funds are estimated to provide antiretroviral therapy to 626,000 people living with HIV, give 50,000 mothers medicine to prevent transmitting HIV to their babies, provide 37.6 million people with HIV counseling and testing, and reach 1.6 million members of key populations with HIV prevention programs.

Cuts to this funding would have consequential impacts. Every £10 million decrease in development assistance the United Kingdom provides to the Global Fund would result in 15,000 more deaths, 19,000 fewer people receiving lifesaving antiretroviral treatment and 2,000 mothers not receiving the medicines necessary to prevent transmitting HIV to their babies. Slashing investments by £100 million would result in 148,000 more deaths, 188,000 fewer people receiving antiretroviral treatment and 15,000 fewer mothers treated to prevent transmitting HIV to their babies.

How UK investments in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria impact health outcomes

	UK INVESTMENT	PEOPLE PROVIDED ANTIRETROVIRAL THERAPY	MOTHERS TREATED TO PREVENT HIV TRANSMISSION TO THEIR BABIES	PEOPLE RECEIVING HIV COUNSELING AND TESTING	MEMBERS OF KEY POPULATIONS REACHED WITH HIV PREVENTION PROGRAMS	LIVES SAVED
Annual investment	£333 MILLION	626K	50K	37.6M	1.6M	492K
	For a £10 million decrease in funding	-19K	-2K	-1.1M	-47K	-15K
	For a £100 million decrease in funding	-188K	-15K	-11.3K	-466K	-148K

Notes: Impacts estimated using data from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, *Eighth Replenishment Investment Case,* 2025, https://www.theglobalfund.org/en/investment-case. Scenarios of funding cuts do not add up due to rounding. M=million. K=thousand.

The Substantial Risks of Further UK Funding Cuts

UK aid already faced devastating cuts under the previous government, with the ring-fenced international aid budget reduced from a legal commitment of 0.7% of GNI to 0.5% in 2021.[10] Analyses of these cuts, including the government's own equality impact assessment, found that the most marginalized people were severely and disproportionately impacted because of large reductions in funding to programs targeting women, girls and people with disabilities.[11] The consequences included an estimated 9.5 million fewer women and girls accessing contraception, leading to 4.3 million unintended pregnancies, 1.4 million unsafe abortions and 8,000 preventable maternal deaths.[12] The impacts from cutting SRHR funding are profound, yet this funding is again under threat of even further reductions.

The United Kingdom's investments in SRHR—and, in particular, family planning and HIV services and programming—have had significant, measurable impacts. They have saved lives, been a crucial aspect of the UK's humanitarian response, strengthened health systems and ensured that women and girls can decide if and when they want to have children. Planned cuts to ODA will undermine the UK government's reputation as a global champion of SRHR. Worse, however, is the risk to essential sexual and reproductive health care for those with the least ability to secure it.

Methodology and Sources

The impacts of current and decreased investment outlined in this analysis were calculated using the Family Planning Investment Impact Calculator.[13] The estimated level of UK funding for family planning in 2024 was generated using data from the International Aid Transparency Initiative, including both country-specific and cross-country disbursements.[4] For sources listing US dollars, the average annual exchange rate for 2024 was used to convert dollar amounts to pounds sterling.[14]

The Family Planning Investment Impact Calculator estimates the impacts of actual, planned or hypothetical investments in family planning and assumes that investments would go toward the total costs of providing contraceptive care—both family planning service delivery costs and associated programs and systems costs necessary to support the larger health system in providing this care. The calculator is designed to estimate the impacts based on the costs associated with the current service provision environment. The calculator does not account for the additional indirect costs that would be needed to scale up services to meet the needs of a large number of additional users—e.g., for new infrastructure development or workforce expansion.

To estimate the number of women and couples who would be expected to receive contraceptive care at any given investment amount, the calculator divides the entered annual funding amount by the average annual cost of contraceptive care per user from 2024. The average annual cost of contraceptive care is based on distribution of types of methods used and the cost for annual use of each method, as of 2024. To estimate the pregnancy-related impacts of the entered funding amount, the calculator uses ratios of impacts per contraceptive user served, taken from the Adding It Up 2024 project (forthcoming).

The modeling analyses underlying the Global Fund Investment Case were guided and supported by the Global Fund Modeling Guidance Group (MGG).[9] The MGG is chaired and cochaired by academics from Imperial College London and Harvard University, and it brings together modeling and health economics experts from a wide range of academic and technical partners, including WHO, UNAIDS, the Stop TB Partnership and the RBM Partnership to End Malaria. The full methodology and data sources for the work of the MGG are described in the Global Fund's Results Methodology.[15] Estimated impacts reflect contributions of Global Fund investments to national programs; these results are achieved together with national and international partners. Annual impacts were measured based on one-third of the total three-year funding commitment of £1 billion, or £333 million annually. The Global Fund uses an exchange rate of 1.1761 pound sterling to the US dollar.

Just the Numbers estimates for the United Kingdom in 2024 are not directly comparable to those in prior *Just the Numbers* analyses, which were based on older estimated impacts of family planning funding.

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This resource is also available at:
https://www.guttmacher.org/2025/05/just-numbers-impact-uk-international-assistance-family-planning-and-hiv-2024

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