



Health

Health is a fundamental human right. Every single person should be able to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health.

Investments in health are critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to fulfilling the global commitments of Agenda 2030, in particular SDG 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Health is a priority for the Swedish Government and Sida. Many global health challenges are linked to inequalities between men and women, most notably sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). In 2021, Sida disbursed approximately SEK 2.88 billion for global, regional and country level programs, representing about 10.8 percent of Sida's total development assistance.



MAIN AREAS OF SUPPORT

Sweden has a leading role in global health with a focus on health systems, maternal and child health and SRHR. Sida's health support focuses on increased awareness of and access to SRHR; equitable health with a focus on women, adolescents and children; resilient and sustainable national health systems and institutions; and healthier populations (figure 1). Access to clean water, sanitation and hygiene is an integrated part of the health portfolio.

Sida's total support to SRHR¹ amounted to approximately SEK 1.8 billion or 64 percent of Sida's development assistance for health in 2021. Geographically, the majority of Sida's health support benefits countries in Africa (figure 2).

Sida works with partners that enable all individuals to make informed decisions about their bodies. This includes support to prevent unintended pregnancies and diseases such as HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, through access to information, products and services including access to safe and legal abortion and menstrual health management. Sida also supports programs that aim to prevent gender-based violence including female genital mutilation and child marriage and to protect the rights and service needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex & Queer (LGBTIQ) persons. Engaging boys and men to change social norms and behaviour related to health and SRHR is also a priority.

Sida's support to essential health services includes programs in several countries in Africa and Asia (Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Somalia, South Sudan, Uganda, and Zambia).

Health is also a target in the Strategy for Global Social Sustainable Development. SRHR is an expected output in over 20 bilateral strategies and the regional SRHR strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2021, SRHR was included in the new regional strategies for Latin America and Eastern Europe.

Resilient, green, integrated and person-centered health systems including safe water, sanitation and hygiene, are a prerequisite for equitable health. Sida supported programs include activities to strengthen national health systems and the availability of specialized midwives to reduce maternal and newborn mortality.

Within Sida's research support, there are health programs with focus on vaccines, diagnostics, health policy and systems research, artificial intelligence for health and antimicrobial resistance.

Sida's humanitarian assistance also includes health interventions such as provision of health services to the most vulnerable and services to those having experienced gender based violence in humanitarian and conflict settings.

¹ In 2022 Sida revised its method of calculating SRHR to better reflect the Lancet-Guttmacher Definition of SRHR.

THE GLOBAL GOALS

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development include everyone - and we can all contribute. The goals are interdependent and therefore indivisible. Sida's main contribution is to implement development cooperation, thereby reducing poverty and saving lives. Together we can build a better future where no one is left behind.



Results

DEVELOPMENT IN THE WORLD

The global health situation has developed positively in recent decades; the number of women dying in childbirth decreased by 38 percent between 2000 and 2017² and child mortality halved, from 14 percent to 7 percent, in the two decades prior to 2020³. Fewer children were reported to have contracted HIV⁴.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to have an unprecedented global impact in 2021. The pandemic reversed decades of progress in reducing poverty, with about 100 million more people pushed into extreme poverty in 2020⁵. Likewise, the pandemic has put an enormous pressure on health systems, particularly in poor settings, to care for those falling ill while maintaining the provision of other essential services. Sida supported health organisations made adjustments in their programming to mitigate increase in maternal and child mortality, child marriage, gender based violence (GBV), and unintended pregnancy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the backlash against SRHR in particular the right to safe abortion, and gender equality. Human rights have worsened in 80 countries and this includes attacks on women rights defenders and LGBTIQ activists who fight for access to SRHR⁶. During the year Sida has contributed to global and regional dialogues on safe abortion and equal health.

In the midst of a pandemic, alterations in the climate and environment have had devastating effects on human health. Air pollution caused respiratory and cardiovascular diseases. Overexploitation of natural resources led to loss of biodiversity and ecosystems services, which are essential for human health. The pandemic and the climate crisis have further showed the importance of building resilient and green health systems.

SIDA'S SUPPORT⁷

Sida's health portfolio includes many sub-areas, as reflected in Figure 1. The following are examples of results from contributions 2021:

- Through support to WHO's regional office in Africa, the organization contributed to ensure continuation of maternal- and child health care during the covid pandemic. For example, access to protective equipment, incubators and delivery beds in 13 health care facilities were provided in Cameroon.
- UNFPA provided access to SRH services through the program *Women and Girls First*. The community outreach in

2 WHO (2019), Maternal Mortality <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>, downloaded, June, 2022
 3 World Bank (2021), 2021 Year in Review in 11 Charts: The Inequality Pandemic (worldbank.org), December
 4 UNICEF (2021), UNICEF 2019 Annual Report, Regular Resources, June
 5 World Bank, Annual report (2021), From Crisis to Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Recovery, September
 6 Newlines Institute for Strategy and Policy (2021). Violence Against Women Human Rights Defenders Imperils Security, July
 7 Sida's Annual Report 2022

Myanmar covered integrated SRHR, gender equality and GBV information for different target groups including men and adolescents.

- Through the support to DKT international and Population Services International (PSI), 2.1 million unsafe abortions were prevented thanks to access to contraceptives and medical abortion products in Africa.
- In a program on rural development in Guatemala, SRHR was an integrated part in the work to improve women's and girls' economic empowerment.
- In Zambia, Ipas contributed to the establishment of 269 public health care facilities which reached over 10,000 young women with abortion care. Ipas also played an important role in assisting the Ministry of Health in the Democratic Republic of Congo to approve standards and guidelines for abortion care.
- As a response to COVID-19, UNFPA in Bangladesh provided distance learning for health care staff on guidelines of maternal- and child health care and COVID-19. In addition, UNFPA placed 60 mobile midwives in the refugee camps of Cox's Bazaar which had a positive effects on the number of safe deliveries.
- In Somalia, 9,200 households in more than 30 refugee camps and health care facilities received hygiene articles. In addition, 6.3 million people in 41 countries received clean water through water pumps driven by solar energy.
- Antibiotic resistance continues to be a challenge in achieving equal health. The support to React contributed to increased global attention on antimicrobial resistance.

FIGURE 1: DISBURSEMENT BY SUB-SECTOR WITHIN HEALTH 2017-2021 (MILLION SEK)

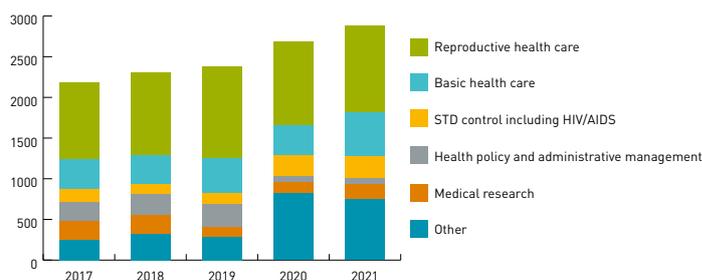


FIGURE 2: GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF DISBURSEMENT IN 2021 (%)

