



## Extra Side support for contraception and abortion equipment to counteract the effects of the coronapandem

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**When covid-19 spreads among the poorest and most vulnerable, it is not only the virus itself that threatens people's lives and health. The closed boundaries and the focus placed on combating covid-19 hit several other health areas. Sida therefore goes in with an extra support of SEK 20 million to improve access to contraception, abortion products and counseling in eastern and southern Africa.**



Education in Mozambique. Photo: DKT International

When supply chains are broken and factories are closed down due to the corona pandemic, the production of contraceptives and products for safe abortions is reduced. Closed borders, travel and import restrictions limit access even more. In addition, the guidelines on social distance make it more difficult to reach the most vulnerable when opportunities to move outside and to meet are limited. Women are often particularly hard hit.

- The fight against covid-19 threatens access to vital products and access to maternal care. It is extremely important to continue working on sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Otherwise, we may see a sharp increase in HIV, unwanted pregnancies, unsafe abortions and increased maternal mortality, says Carin Jämtin, Sida's director general.

Sida's extra support of SEK 20 million to long-term partner DKT International gives you the opportunity to quickly expand their stockpiles of condoms, various contraceptives and equipment for medical abortions - before the effects of corona pandemic make it difficult to get hold of these. The support goes to six countries in southern and eastern Africa: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda.

DKT also works by educating and creating the commitment of health care professionals, youth and people with influence that can affect at the village level, such as teachers and traditional leaders. This work becomes even more important when the spread of covid-19 renders healthcare professionals uncertain because of the risk of infection. When more people are assigned to care for the infected, there is also a risk of negatively affecting ordinary care.

- Our program is especially important for vulnerable women and girls in the region, says Carin Jämtin. We need to address the effects of covid-19 quickly - in order for them to have their human rights safeguarded - and to decide for themselves, when and with whom they will have children.

As a result of Sida's program with DKT last year, 1.2 million unwanted pregnancies and 1.6 million unsafe abortions are estimated to have been avoided and 9700 women and girls saved to life.

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Facts:

DKT will use the increased support of SEK 20 million to do the following:

1. In the **Democratic Republic of Congo** , the Manual Vacuum Aspiration (MVA) budget is increased, an instrument used in safe abortion.
2. In **Ethiopia** , procurement of medical abortion products and long-acting contraceptives is increasing.
3. In **Kenya** and **Uganda** , the budget for emergency contraceptive pills and medical abortion products is increased. DKT also plans to utilize Sida's financing to buy condoms to fill the already existing market that is likely to grow in the near future.

4. In **Mozambique** , procurement of birth control pills, acute birth control pills and condoms, and medical abortion products is increasing.
  5. In **Tanzania** , more condoms and medical abortion products are purchased, and the stock of contraceptives is increased.
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About DKT International:

DKT International works in Africa, Asia and Latin America to provide safe and affordable sexual and reproductive health and HIV control products by building and strengthening supply chains to register, import and distribute SRH products. Campaigns and information create the demand for contraceptives and change behaviors.

This in turn contributes to social and economic development for the most vulnerable. DKT works primarily in areas that reach poor people, especially vulnerable women and young people, so that they can access sexual and reproductive health services.

Sida has supported DKT International since 2017 through two programs, one in southern and eastern Africa and another covering French-speaking West and Central Africa. Together, these programs cover 21 countries. Sida finances up to SEK 489 million - a funding that is expected to prevent over 10 million unwanted pregnancies, 12 million unsafe abortions and save 63,000 women and girls' lives.

## Keyword

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abortion

assistance;

Maternal Health Care

Contraceptive

SRHR

Development

cooperation

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## Pictures

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Education in Mozambique. Photo: DKT International

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