



PRESS RELEASE

Mother and child project launched by the European Union and Government in Taita Taveta County

In close cooperation with County government and the Ministry of Health, the European Union today launched a project to improve maternal and child health and family planning in four districts of Taita Taveta, which is set to deliver access to healthcare and advice to almost 80,000 people.

Working through World Vision, International Medical Corps and St Joseph Shelter of Hope, the European Union will spend Shs 98 million over the next 3 years to benefit an estimated 35,000 mothers and children to improve their access to health care and advice during pregnancy and birth, and provide better nutrition in the early years of life.

Fifty youth promoters will also be recruited in order to spread information and advice about safe and healthy family planning, intended to educate a further 40,000 young people in the county.

The launch in Voi was attended by HE Eng. John Mruttu, Governor of Taita Taveta County; Hon. Jones Mwaghogho Mlowa, MP; and Dr. John Logendi, from the Ministry of Health. They were joined by Dr. Hjordis D'Agostino Ogendo from the European Union together with Country Directors Mr. Dickens Thunde, World Vision Kenya, and Mr. Ekin Ogotogulari, International Medical Corps.

The project will operate in Mwatate, Wundanyi, Taveta and Voi districts and is designed to address the combined effect of disease, higher than average poverty rate and poor nutrition, which has led to a reported high child mortality rate of 93 per 1000 live births in the local population. The project will address the low level of health services in the area.

Through training 500 health care workers, who will be employed by the Health Ministry at the county and district level, the project will teach mothers-to-be about antenatal care, safe birthing procedures, and better feeding and hygiene practices for young babies. The project is supporting Kenya's National Reproductive Health Strategy and Policy and will help build the ability of the local Health Ministry office to provide long-term health services.

Talking about the launch, the European Union Ambassador to Kenya, Lodewijk Briet, said,

"The health of mothers and new born children is a critical concern of ours at the European Union. Together with colleagues in government and partners on the ground, we are doing our bit to help achieve the Kenyan government's targets to reduce child mortality rates and improve maternal health in the poorest parts of the country.

"The European Union has been supporting projects aiming at improving child and maternal health in Kenya for almost 20 years."

This is one of 19 mother and child health projects being implemented around the country with funding from the European Union in partnership with communities, local and national government. The European Union is currently spending Shs 1.7 billion on child and maternal health in Kenya.

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Following the conclusion of training in early 2016 the Ministry of Health and community will be responsible for maintaining the delivery of services.

Notes to editors:

Current European Union funding is supporting 19 projects in maternal and child health around the country:

| | Child and maternal health project description | District/County location |
|----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | Support to provide mother and child health, nutrition and family planning services in arid and semi arid lands | Kajiado County, Kajiado Central and Mashuru Districts |
| 2 | Tana North District Integrated Maternal and Child Health Project | Bangale, Madogo and Bura divisions of Tana North district, Tana River County, Kenya |
| 3 | Reduced maternal, newborn and child mortality through improving reproductive, maternal, and child health | Kwale County, Kenya (Kwale District, Kinango District and Msambweni District) |
| 4 | Support to non-state actors and local authorities in Turkana County to deliver quality reproductive health and nutrition services | Loima, Turkana Central, Turkana South, and Turkana North districts of Turkana County |
| 5 | Accelerating a reduction in maternal and under-five mortality among marginalized populations | Mandera County (Mandera East, Mandera West, Banisa and Mandera North districts) |
| 6 | Putting African Mothers, Newborns and Children First: addressing social disparities in MNCH, nutrition and FP through a health related poverty initiative in Kitui County | Kitui County – Target Districts: Mwingi East, Mwingi central and Migwani Districts |
| 7 | Integrated Maternal and Child Health, nutrition and family planning services in Taita Taveta County | Taita Taveta County (Voi, Wundanyi, Mwatate and Taveta Districts) Coast Region |
| 8 | Increasing access to integrated maternal, newborn and child health services to the marginalised communities | Turkana West, Turkana County |
| 9 | Improving Maternal, Child Health and Nutrition in Samburu County (JAMII BORA) | Samburu County (Samburu East, Samburu North and Samburu Central Districts) |
| 10 | Strengthening Rural Health Systems for improved Maternal and Child Health in Narok County, Kenya | Narok North, Narok South, Transmara East and Transmara Districts of Narok County |
| 11 | Improving mother and child health status, increasing MCH, nutrition and reproductive health services | Isinya District and Kajiado North District |
| 12 | Stepping up Efforts to Safe Motherhood and Child Health Care | Kenya, Coast Province, Kwale (Msambweni District) |
| 13 | Delivering for Young Mothers | Kenya, Coast Province (Kilifi, Kwale and Mombasa Districts) |
| 14 | Strengthening Community Health Systems to Improve the Maternal Newborn and Child Health Outcomes | Kenya, Rift Valley Region, Samburu County |
| 15 | Accelerating reduction in maternal, neonatal and under-five morbidity and mortality among marginalized population of North Eastern Kenya | Kenya, North Eastern Province (Wajir East, Wajir South, Wajir West and Wajir North districts) |
| 16 | Strengthening Community Capacity to Improve Maternal, newborn and Child health in hard to reach areas of Kenya | Kitui North and Makindu Districts of Eastern province of Kenya |
| 17 | Effective Response to Mother and Child Health | Kenya, Eastern and Rift Valley Provinces. Makueni, Kajiado and Narok Districts |
| 18 | From Policy to Action: Providing Safe Motherhood and Reproductive Health Services to Young People | Kaloleni District in Coast Province and Korogocho-Mathare Informal settlements in Nairobi |
| 19 | Community based initiatives to improve maternal, newborn and child health in Kibera | Nairobi West District in Nairobi Province |

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