

USAID Transform: Primary Health Care Activity Leaving a Legacy for A Healthy Future in Ethiopia

USAID Transform: Primary Health Care supports various government entities in Ethiopia through its performance improvement fund. The purpose of the fund is to build the skills of health managers, health workers (HWs), and health extension workers (HEWs) to provide sustainable life-saving maternal and child health services.

Yilmana-Densa woreda (district) located in Amhara region is one of the government entities that was awarded a performance improvement fund. Fasikaw Shibabaw is the head of the Yilmana-Densa Woreda Health Office (WorHO) and is responsible for coordinating activities. “We followed various steps to get the subgrant fund. First, activities to be implemented were listed in collaboration with program officers based in WorHO. Second, for each activity prioritized, a program officer was assigned as a focal person. Third, a proposal was developed and submitted to USAID Transform: Primary Health Care for approval. Fourth, approval was granted, and each program officer took responsibility for the implementation and follow up of activities.”

Mulat Ayalew is a Reproductive Health Program Officer at the WorHO level, who affirms that the subgrant award has increased the capability of staff. “The workload was stressful for a midwife at Adet health center (HC). The midwife reported the problem, and one additional midwife was assigned to the delivery room. As a result, they were able to assist with 105 deliveries in a month.”

Thanks to the performance improvement fund, the WorHO has been able to diversify its services over time. For example, in the second round of the award, the WorHO used the funds to furnish youth-friendly clinics in four HCs within Yilmana-Densa woreda.



Girls ages 11-12 years old enrolled in “Her Space.” Photo: USAID Transform Primary Health Care Activity

The four HCs supported 20,477 adolescents and youth to access sexual and reproductive health services. Adet HC is one of the four HCs that received support and trained peer educators to actively inform and refer their peers to the YFS clinic.

Additionally, USAID Transform: Primary Health Care introduced the “Her Space” initiative in target areas to equip young adolescent girls (11 to 14 years old) with knowledge about physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty. “Her Space” provides young girls with important life skills including negotiation techniques, identification of risks and vulnerabilities, and problem-solving. In the third round of the performance award, the Yilmana-Densa WorHO submitted its plan to expand and own the “Her Space” initiative. Within the woreda, in Kililt kebele (ward), “Her Space” was initiated after training mentors for a series of 12 days. The two cohorts of girls joined the sessions and visited the health center and police station. In Kililt kebele, the administration committee is working closely with the mentors and the recruited girls.