Greetings DKT Supporter,

The International AIDS Conference in Durban, South Africa, provides a stark reminder that we are not out of the woods regarding HIV/AIDS.

The incidence of new HIV infections worldwide has slowed dramatically. This is a triumph. But it also raises alarm bells. Complacency is replacing caution and awareness. HIV/AIDS no longer seems to be a major concern for sexually active youth. This is a grave risk.

Maintenance of the current low rate of infection is only possible by an increased - not diminished - awareness of the dangers of HIV/AIDS. If condom usage worldwide continues to decline, we will almost certainly see a reversal of the current positive trend.

We cannot allow this to happen in Ethiopia, especially given the progress that has been made in the last two decades. Condoms continue to be the most effective technology for preventing sexual transmission of HIV.

DKT stands ready to respond to this generational challenge.

- Rory Harrington

With global incidence of HIV leveling off and even increasing in some areas, concerted effort is required to sustain gains.
HIV/AIDS: NO TIME TO LET UP

Ethiopia’s success dealing with HIV/AIDS is one of the shining examples globally.

From 1999 to 2015, prevalence decreased from 3.4% to 1.2%, earning Ethiopia the designation of a country with “rapid decline” of the disease, one of the few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa to achieve this recognition.

At the same time, disconcerting trends globally spell the need to remain vigilant, a task made more difficult by the emergence of new health challenges.

"Ethiopia is essentially fighting a two-front battle against communicable and non-communicable disease,” says Rory Harrington, DKT Ethiopia’s Country Director.

“Both sets of diseases - including HIV - must be dealt with to build durable health in the population.”

The recently concluded International AIDS Conference in Durban, South Africa, July 18 - 22, was a cautious celebration of gains as well as reminder of the significant work required to eradicate the disease.

Speaking at the opening ceremonies, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon noted that gains against HIV/AIDS were “inadequate” and “fragile”.

Globally, new HIV infections among adults failed to decline since 2011 and are actually rising in some regions.

HOW DO DKT CONDOMS MAKE IT TO MARKET?

DKT Ethiopia is the largest distributor of condoms in Ethiopia. DKT’s brands - Sensation and Hiwot Trust - have been on the market since as early as 1990 and the organization has distributed 1.2 billion pieces since that time.
A report released ahead of the conference by the Kaiser Family Foundation, a US-based public charity, indicated that new infections among adults failed to decline since 2011 and that incidence is actually rising in some regions. There were about 2.1 million new infections in 2015. Globally, only 40% of people infected with the virus are receiving antiretroviral treatment. There are also concerns about drug-resistant strains developing.

**ETHIOPIA’S RESPONSE**

The first cases of HIV were identified in Ethiopia in the late 1980s. A decade later, the Government of Ethiopia responded with a comprehensive HIV/AIDS policy (1998) as well as the Strategic Framework for the National Response to HIV/AIDS, 2000-2004. [continued online at www.dktethiopia.org/news.]
Desta Gebrehiwot thinks the Ethiopian media must increase its reporting on HIV and family planning.

“Many papers lack journalists who are experts in the health sector,” says Desta, a Senior Reporter with The Ethiopian Herald and graduate of Addis Ababa University’s School of Journalism and Communication.

“Even journalists with the desire to write about HIV and family planning may not have the background or know how to frame the issues.”

“They also need editorial support.”

Desta, along with other leading Ethiopian journalists, has been a regular attendee at DKT’s Media Round Tables, quarterly gatherings of journalists to discuss HIV, family planning and other issues.

“The media is the critical bridge between Government mandate and public action,” says Fitih Tola, DKT Ethiopia’s Public Relations Officer.

“Journalists must tell the story that, while Ethiopia has made extraordinary progress, we must redouble our efforts to eradicate HIV and increase family planning.”

DKT will host its 10th Media Round Table in September.

Full audio of DKT’s interview with Desta will be available at www.dktethiopia.org/news.

2015/16: A YEAR OF SUSTAINED OUTPUT FOR DKT ETHIOPIA

DKT Ethiopia distributed 54 million condoms, 4.5 million cycles of oral contraceptives, 3.6 million injectable contraceptives, and 2.6 million emergency contraceptives, among other products, from July 2015 - June 2016.

Together, DKT’s product distribution amounted to 3.2 million CYP.

Servicing 15,000 pharmaceutical and clinical outlets on a routine basis, DKT Ethiopia’s national salesforce continues to meet and expand demand for the organization’s products.

“We have managed to meet the private sector’s demand for HIV-prevention and reproductive health products in much of Ethiopia,” says Abdu Ebrhim, DKT Ethiopia’s M&E Officer.

“There have been improvements in addressing unmet need for family planning and maternal mortality, yet the data still show considerable gaps.”

“We still have a lot of work to do.”

Find out more about DKT at www.dktethiopia.org/about