



United States Failure to Adequately Address International Reproductive Health Needs

In 1994, at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, 179 countries, including the U.S., agreed to commit by the year 2005 \$18.5 billion annually to meet worldwide reproductive health needs. But every year since 1994, donor countries have fallen far short of the ICPD goals.

U.S. Retreats From Its Promises

“Since Cairo, the U.S. government has made a massive shift away from its former position as a leader in the global drive for [sexual and reproductive health and rights]. Responding to pressure from the religious right and other social conservatives, the Bush administration has instead joined the Vatican and a few conservative governments to oppose a rights-based approach to human sexuality and reproduction.”

--“Countdown to 2015,” Population Action International, Family Care International, Int.’l Planned Parenthood Federation, 2004.

The US is not doing its share to help close the gap between the need for international family planning assistance and funding from donor nations.

It is estimated that currently 200 million women around the world wish to either delay or prevent pregnancy, but lack access to contraceptives.

The United States Must Increase Funding To International Family Planning!

99% of all pregnancy related deaths occur in developing nations. For many women and girls of childbearing age, pregnancy remains the leading cause of death.

In March of 2009, President Obama signed into law the fiscal 2009 Omnibus spending measure. The \$410 billion measure, provides a total of \$545 million for bilateral and multilateral family planning and reproductive health programs worldwide. This is \$82 million over 2008 funding levels, an 18% increase, and a 66% increase over the Bush administration’s request.

Despite these positive increases in US assistance to international family planning, funding levels remains drastically short of what is needed to make family planning accessible to the world’s most vulnerable populations and save women’s lives. Even though millions of women worldwide are without access to safe and effective family planning and reproductive health services, the U.S. only contributes 1/3 or less of its share of the \$7.5 billion from donor nations promised annually at Cairo.

How do current U.S. International Family Planning Policies Affect Young People?

The costs to young women are enormous. According to the World Health Organization, an estimated 80,000 women and girls die every year due to complications from illegal and unsafe abortions worldwide, and experts estimate another 6-7 million are injured. The actual numbers of deaths and injuries are believed to be double due to under-reporting. Every minute of every day, most often in the developing nations, a woman dies from complications of pregnancy or childbirth—529,000 deaths per year. Some 16 to 26 million more women suffer from mostly preventable, childbirth- or pregnancy-related injuries every year.

International family planning programs provide women and girls with the necessary means to improve their reproductive health: to postpone pregnancy, to space the births of children, to avoid unplanned pregnancies, and to prevent women and girls from dying from preventable complications from pregnancy and childbirth.

Sources: Financial Resource Flows for Population Activities Report (FRFPAR), United Nations Population Fund, 2002; Progress and Promises: Trends in International Assistance for Reproductive Health and Population, Population Action International 2004; Countdown to 2015, Population Action International, Family Care International, Int.’l Planned Parenthood Federation, 2004; “Meeting the Need for Contraceptives” fact sheet, Family Care International & Communications Consortium Media Center, 2001; “Sharing Responsibility: Women, Society, and Abortion Worldwide,” Alan Guttmacher Institute, 1999.