The Universal Access Project works to achieve universal access to reproductive health care -- Millennium Development Goal 5 -- which leads to healthier women, stronger families, and more stable, prosperous communities.

About the Universal Access Project

Every girl and woman deserves the opportunity to determine her own future. Yet, 225 million girls and women around the world who want to delay or avoid pregnancy are not using modern contraceptives. This unmet need has severe consequences: when you can’t plan your family, you can’t plan your life.

That’s why the United Nations Foundation’s Universal Access Project seeks to strengthen U.S. leadership on international family planning and reproductive health. Leadership by U.S. policymakers is critical because the United States is the largest bilateral donor to international family planning programs and a primary funder of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the largest multilateral provider of international reproductive health services.

U.S. support is necessary to provide girls and women around the world with the cost-effective and life-saving family planning information, tools and services that they want and need. In turn, girls can stay in school, women can pursue an income, and both can have children if and when they are ready, helping to break the cycle of poverty.

The Universal Access Project works with a diverse group of international family planning advocates to educate policymakers on the importance of international reproductive health and to raise awareness about the need to invest in the health and empowerment of girls and women around the world.

About Reproductive Health

| There are over 225 million women in the developing world who want to control the timing, number, and spacing of their children but are not using effective contraceptives. |
| Women who can delay & plan childbirth are more likely to receive an education, raise their standards of living, and climb out of poverty. |
| 40 percent of pregnancies worldwide were unintended in 2012, and nearly 300,000 women died from pregnancy- and childbirth-related causes in 2013. |
| Fulfilling the unmet need for family planning and providing quality maternal and newborn care would reduce maternal deaths by 67% and newborn deaths by 77%. |
| Every $1 invested in family planning can save between $4 and $31 across other sectors, including education, food, health, housing, and sanitation. |
| Meeting the demand for family planning could slow and even reverse CO2 emissions by 2050 – equivalent to ending worldwide deforestation beginning today. |

What We Do

The Universal Access Project and our partners seek to raise awareness with U.S. policymakers and the public on the importance of international family planning through a variety of actions:

- Hosting briefings on Capitol Hill
- Organizing trips to the United Nations to learn more about the UN’s critical work on reproductive health and women’s empowerment
- Increasing awareness of broader sexual and reproductive health and rights, including family planning, through social media outreach and events
- Coordinating learning trips to examine international family planning programs at work
- Placing stories, op-eds and blogs in targeted media outlets highlighting the importance of international reproductive health
- Hosting high-level events underscoring the need for international family planning in Washington, D.C.; New York, NY; Los Angeles, CA; Austin, TX; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and elsewhere.

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