



# Family Planning

## The U.S. Role

Since 1965, U.S. investments in voluntary international family planning programs have enabled women and couples around the world to **plan** the number, timing, and spacing of their children.

USAID currently supports family planning and reproductive health programs in **45 countries** worldwide, including:

- » Training of doctors, nurses, and community health workers.
- » Work with local governments and organizations to improve services.
- » Research on improved methods.

The U.S. also contributes to the United Nations Population Fund, which coordinates donors and funds family planning and reproductive health activities in 150 countries, complementing U.S. bilateral efforts.

## Achievements

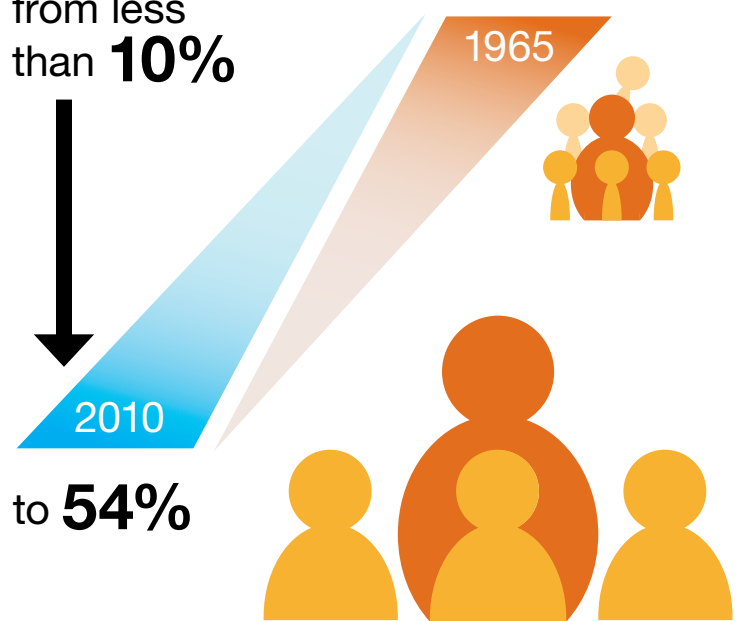
It is estimated that in fiscal year 2012, U.S. assistance made it possible to provide over 30 million women and couples worldwide with family planning – **preventing more than 9 million unintended pregnancies** and 4 million abortions, 3 million of which would have been unsafe. Through these programs, the deaths of more than 20,000 mothers were prevented.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1965 and 2010, use of **family planning** by women in the developing world\*

**dramatically increased**

from less than **10%**

to **54%**



As a result, the average **number of children** born to each woman has **declined** from **six** to **three**.<sup>1</sup>



## Why it Matters

Around the world, 222 million women would like to prevent pregnancy but are not using a modern method of family planning. This unmet need is estimated to result in:<sup>3</sup>

- » **1.1 million** infant deaths.
- » **79,000** maternal deaths.
- » **54 million** unintended pregnancies.
  - ◇ 26 million abortions, including 16 million unsafe abortions.
  - ◇ 7 million miscarriages.
  - ◇ 21 million unintended births.

Voluntary family planning can have life-changing benefits for individuals, families, and communities. USAID's family planning programs:

- » Protect the health of women by reducing high-risk pregnancies.
- » Protect the health of children by allowing sufficient time between pregnancies.
- » Reduce abortions by **preventing unintended pregnancies**.
- » Support women's opportunities for education and employment.
- » Protect environmental systems on which people depend by fostering more sustainable population growth.

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### Invest In Family Planning, Save On Development Costs

USAID data from seven countries across three continents shows that **family planning investments save money in other development areas** such as education, immunization, water and sanitation, maternal health, and malaria. For every dollar invested in family planning and reproductive health, savings in other development areas ranged from \$2 in Ethiopia to more than \$6 in Guatemala and Bangladesh, and to up to \$9 in Bolivia.<sup>4</sup>



Photo: Jake Lyell and PSI

### Success Story: Overburdened Mother Gains Access To Family Planning<sup>5</sup>

Kadija Bagayogo, a 39 year-old woman who lives in Bamako, Mali, was married to Seyba Fane when she was only 14. Since then, Kadija has been pregnant 11 times, with two sets of twins. Due in large part to poorly spaced births, three of Kadija's children died as infants and she had one miscarriage. Today the couple struggles to care for their surviving nine children. Seyba works as a driver but is currently unemployed. Kadija tends to the home and children, selling charcoal on the side. The children are unable to attend school because the family cannot afford it.

▲ *Kouma Fatima is one of many midwives that provide extra training to other midwives in long term family planning methods. Here, she speaks to women at a community health center in Bamako, Mali.*

Recently a neighbor told Kadija and Seyba about a family planning program at the nearby community health center funded by USAID and the Dutch Government through Population Services International (PSI). The couple eagerly attended a presentation where they learned about a wide array of options for the prevention of pregnancy including (among others) oral contraceptives, cycle beads, and implants. After in-depth consultation with a nurse, Kadija chose to get an implant for its long-term efficacy and low cost.

Today, Kadija is hopeful. She's confident that her children will grow up in good health and aims to send her youngest children to school. Kadija speaks often to her friends about the benefits of family planning. Through this type of program, thousands of women like Kadija are now able to better care for themselves and their families.

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#### Endnotes

- 1 "Family Planning Worldwide 2013 Data Sheet," Population Reference Bureau. "World Contraceptive Use, 2012", United Nations. Speidel et al. [Five former Directors of the Population and Reproductive Health Program of USAID], "Making the Case for U.S. International Family Planning Assistance," 2009.
- 2 "Just the Numbers: The Impact of U.S. International Family Planning Assistance," Guttmacher Institute, May 2012. These estimates are based on the amount of funding allocated for family planning in FY12, data on costs per user, and data on the rates of unintended pregnancies, abortions, and maternal deaths for women/couples using modern methods of contraception and for those using traditional or no contraception.
- 3 Singh S and Darroch JE. "Adding It Up: Costs and Benefits of Contraceptive Services – Estimates for 2012," Guttmacher Institute and United Nations Population Fund.
- 4 "Family Planning: The Smartest Investment We Can Make," Population Action International, 2013.
- 5 "Overburdened Mother Gains Access to Family Planning," USAID, 2013. [www.usaid.gov/results-data/success-stories/overburdened-mother-gains-access-family-planning](http://www.usaid.gov/results-data/success-stories/overburdened-mother-gains-access-family-planning).