



What Will \$1 Billion Buy?

Security. Stability. Survival.

Despite increases under the Obama administration, United States funding for international family planning remains 30% below the 1995 level when accounting for inflation. At the same time, the number of women of reproductive age in the developing world has grown.

Today there are more than 200 million women in the developing world who want to prevent but aren't using modern contraception. This unmet need for family planning leads to approximately 74 million unintended pregnancies each year.

Unintended pregnancy and resulting population growth contribute to a host of devastating consequences: resource insecurity, conflict and instability, and maternal and child death. To meet these and other 21st-century challenges, the United States must make a commitment to real investment in family planning and reproductive health.

The U.S. must invest at least \$1.2 billion per year in international family planning and reproductive health programs. This figure represents the United States' fair share of the total cost of meeting unmet need worldwide, and it will bring enormous returns for people everywhere.

Maternal and Child Survival

Every year, millions of women suffer serious complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, and more than 300,000 of them die as a result. Nearly all of these deaths occur in developing countries (though it remains a challenge in the United States too), and at least 90% are preventable. Researchers estimate that, by itself, universal access to modern contraception would reduce maternal deaths by nearly 30%.

Unintended pregnancy leads all too frequently to unsafe abortion. Of the 36 million abortions in the developing world each year, 20 million are unsafe, and about 8 million of these lead to significant health complications. Meeting unmet need for family planning would reduce these numbers dramatically.

Lack of access to family planning also increases the risks to newborns. Women who cannot appropriately space or time their pregnancies are at increased risk of having birth complications or low-birth-weight infants. Every year, 2.7 million babies die in their first month of life, and a similar number are stillborn. Robust commitment to family planning and reproductive health would save infant lives.

Real investment in family planning will save the lives of women and children around the world.

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 214 million women in the developing world have an unmet need for family planning.
- Unsafe abortion kills 47,000 women every year.
- Researchers estimate that eliminating unmet need for family planning would prevent 76,000 maternal deaths and 480,000 newborn deaths every year.

EVERY HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS INVESTED IN FAMILY PLANNING RESULTS IN:

- 4.4 million women gaining access to contraceptives,
- 950,000 fewer unintended pregnancies,
- 440,000 fewer unplanned births,
- 380,000 fewer abortions (300,000 of which would be unsafe), and
- 2,000 fewer maternal deaths.

Resource and Climate Security

Population growth around the world puts pressure on climate and natural resources. This pressure leads to environmental damage and increased human suffering. Growing demand for farmland, food, fuel, and water leads to the destruction of forests and the pollution and over-fishing of oceans and waterways. This environmental strain exacerbates food and water shortages. Slowing population growth through increased access to voluntary family planning is one way to help ease this pressure.

Real investment in family planning can help protect the environment and relieve stress on climate and natural resources.

BY THE NUMBERS:

- 663 million people do not have access to a source of clean drinking water.
- There are 795 million chronically undernourished people in the world, including nearly a quarter of people living in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Slowing population growth could provide 16–29% of the emissions reductions necessary by 2050 to avoid dangerous climate change.

Peace and Stability

Today's generation of young people is the largest in history, with over 3 billion people under the age of 25. Nearly 90% of these young people live in the developing world, many of them in countries unable to meet the needs of their citizens. This reality places much of the developing world at a major crossroads. Giving young people the tools they need to expand their opportunities for education, employment, and a healthy, productive future will not only make their lives better, it will also strengthen the economic and social stability of developing nations.

Failure to address the needs of this “youth bulge,” however, is likely to open fast-growing countries up to the risk of civil unrest and conflict, and to have dramatic consequences for the stability of the world for decades to come.

Real investment in family planning will encourage social progress and decrease the risk of conflict and instability.

BY THE NUMBERS:

- Due in large part to the “youth bulge” in the region, 28.2% of young people in the Middle East and 30.5% in North Africa are unemployed, increasing strife in already conflict-prone areas.
- The East Asian “demographic dividend”—a temporary period when the share of working-age adults was much higher than the share of dependents—accounted for a significant portion of the success of the “Asian tiger” economies, helping them reduce their reliance on foreign aid and become donors themselves.
- In the developing world, complications from pregnancy and childbirth are a leading cause of death of young women ages 15–19, and young people are twice as likely as older people to have an unmet need for family planning and reproductive health services.

Real investment in family planning can have an enormous impact not only on quality of life for families around the world, but also on the world itself. Helping empower women to limit and space their pregnancies will decrease maternal and child deaths, leading to healthier families and communities. Slowing population growth will ease pressure on the climate and natural resources. Ensuring that young people have the tools and information they need to build a healthy, productive future offers nations an irresistible economic opportunity and lessens the potential for conflict.

Real investment in family planning can create a more just and humane world, and a healthier, cleaner, safer future for all.

