



United Nations Population Fund

In May, a bill was introduced in the House of Representatives that would end funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) -- the UN agency working to reduce poverty and to ensure that every pregnancy is wanted, every birth is safe, every young person is free of HIV, and every girl and woman is treated with dignity and respect. The legislation, HR 2059, will be brought up by the House Foreign Affairs Committee at some point this summer under the You Cut program, an online poll conducted by Members of Congress looking for cuts to our federal budget.

ASK:

- **Support UNFPA and the important work they do to help women worldwide.**
- **Vote no on H.R. 2059**

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) promotes the health women and children in 150 countries around the world; and helps some of the world's poorest nations, including countries with high levels of maternal death, HIV/AIDS, and child marriage. UNFPA's programs help women survive childbirth, have healthy babies, enable women to determine the number and spacing of their children, and reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections. The U.S. is the largest bilateral donor to women's health. UNFPA, leveraging U.S. contributions, is the largest multilateral donor to programs that save women's lives. The U.S. strategically provides assistance to women via both approaches – increasing its reach and impact on the lives of women, their families, and communities. **UNFPA does not provide assistance for abortions, abortion services, or abortion-related equipment and supplies as a method of family planning.**

- **UNFPA works in post-conflict and disaster situations when young people become more vulnerable to HIV infections and sexual exploitation; and women and families are often left without basic necessities.** During humanitarian crises UNFPA is on the ground providing post-rape care, lifesaving medicines, and emergency obstetric care. The needs of 63,000 pregnant women in the aftermath of the January 2010 earthquake in Haiti were met with UNFPA's support through the dissemination of safe delivery kits. Additionally, UNFPA delivered 20,000 dignity kits to women in Haiti, which contained items such as sanitary napkins and anti-bacterial soap.
- **UNFPA and UNICEF are working together to end female genital mutilation (FGM).** Every year, 3 million women and girls in Africa face the prospect of FGM, while 100 to 140 million worldwide have already undergone the practice. Three years into the joint program, more than 6,000 communities in eight countries have already abandoned the practice.
- **UNFPA is working to end fistula through prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.** Obstetric fistula is a debilitating condition that leaves women incontinent and ashamed.

Fistula is both preventable and treatable, but continues to plague millions of women throughout the developing world. Between 2003- 2010, at least 20,000 women with the devastating birth injury, obstetric fistula, have been repaired and received care with assistance from UNFPA.

- **UNFPA promotes safe motherhood by improving access to family planning, training midwives and providing access to emergency care.** Having access to skilled birth attendants and emergency obstetric care are proven strategies to improve maternal health and could save up to 75-80 percent of the women dying in childbirth.

TRUTH BEHIND THE MYTHS

Myth: UNFPA uses American money to fund abortions.

Truth: **UNFPA does not provide assistance for abortion, abortion services, or abortion-related equipment and supplies as a method of family planning.** UNFPA does support the provision of life-saving medical assistance to deal with complications of unsafe abortions, thereby saving women's lives. Since the 1970s, US law has prohibited any U.S. funds for international women's health be used to support abortion.

Myth: UNFPA programs in China enforce the "one child" policy.

Truth: UNFPA does not support the "one-child" policy. Rather, **UNFPA works to promote human rights by concretely demonstrating the advantages of the voluntary approach where individuals and couples make free and informed decisions on how often to have children.** UNFPA continues to work in China to support the one fifth of the world's population that lives there and are entitled to the same rights as people in other parts of the world.

Myth: UNFPA promotes sterilization and abortion as a means of population control.

Truth: **UNFPA promotes voluntary family planning and opposes all forms of coercion, targets or quotas.**

UNFPA's projects require strict adherence to human rights standards grounded in informed consent. Other donors to UNFPA often cite UNFPA's work in this area as instrumental in changes in host government approaches toward citizen's reproductive health and rights.