



FONDS DES NATIONS UNIES POUR LA POPULATION
UNITED NATIONS POPULATION FUND

Statement on the Occasion of World Population Day 2008
United Nations Population Fund, UNFPA
World Population Day
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Today as we commemorate World Population Day, it is time to focus on an essential public health intervention—family planning. The decisions we make about childbearing are some of the most important decisions in our lives. And the benefits of family planning extend beyond our own lives into our families and nations. Today we would like to draw your attention to three good reasons for family planning.

First, family planning saves lives. It is a high-impact intervention that improves the health of women and mothers. Family planning enables women and couples to space their children and to avoid unwanted pregnancies. Along with skilled attendance at birth and emergency obstetric care, family planning is a proven intervention to achieve Millennium Development Goal number five to improve maternal health as world leaders have agreed.

Second, family planning is essential to women's empowerment and gender equality. When a woman can plan her family, she can plan the rest of her life. Information and services for family planning allow individuals and couples to realize their right to determine the number, spacing and timing of their children. The right to sexual and reproductive health is fundamental to women's empowerment and equality.

Third, family planning is an effective means in the fight against poverty. Parents can plan ahead and devote more of their resources to the education and health of each child, which benefits the family, community and nation.

Today, on World Population Day, UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, pledges its commitment to support health and equal opportunity for all.

We call on all governments to re-energize their commitment to family planning and to ensure universal access to reproductive health by 2015. This will require political commitment and financial investment. It is time to make reproductive health, including family planning, a priority.

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