



REACHINGout

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Contraceptive Crisis: Overwhelming need and dwindling funds.

The world is hurtling towards a contraceptive crisis. An estimated 200 million women around the globe lack contraception at a time when funding for sexual and reproductive services has dropped dramatically. The result, experts say, could be keeping poor women around the world from exercising their basic right to determine whether and when to get pregnant, with a resulting population surge that would jeopardize the health of millions of poor families, threaten food and water supplies and reverse fragile humanitarian gains made in developing nations.



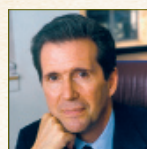
On the surface, Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) stand out as shining examples of what dedication and financial support for sexual and reproductive services can accomplish. Contraceptive use in the region has reached an average 71 percent—equal to most developed regions—the number of service delivery outlets offering sexual and reproductive health services has risen, as well as the number of women accessing those services. But looks can be deceiving. “Enormous progress in certain countries, regions and segments of the population” has obscured problems in areas where the poor continue to be neglected,

explains Carmen Barroso, Regional Director at the International Planned Parenthood Federation/Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR). For example, in Brazil contraception use hovers around 79 percent, compared to Haiti, where it strives for 25 percent.

Great strides in some parts of LAC have prompted governmental organizations and donors to funnel funding for family planning to Africa and Asia, thinking the region no longer needs the same level of support. Population assistance from USAID to Latin America and the Caribbean plunged from over \$80 million in 1996 to only about \$37 million in 2007. The consequence is even sharper inequalities in reproductive health along economic lines, skyrocketing adolescent fertility rates, high maternal morbidity and mortality due to unsafe abortions and overtaxed organizations like IPPF/WHR and its Member Associations, which stepped in to pick up the financial slack.

The urgency of the problem only becomes clearer when you consider what lies ahead. “Global demand for contraception is projected to grow by 40 percent over the next 15 years,” explains IPPF’s director-general Gill Greer. Given ample resources, this bump in demand would be a positive sign of progress. Deciding when and how many children to have is not just a basic human right and a health benefit to women and their families, it is an essential ingredient in human and economic growth.

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“give till it hurts”



Medicine on the Move

Mobile health units in Bolivia bring medical care to the country's most marginalized people.

Gloria Rivera Parada has come a long way from her childhood on a hacienda in Bolivia. Back then, like many indigenous Guarani, Parada's family lived in servitude to a patrón. "We were like slaves," she remembers. "My parents did not earn a wage; they were paid only in clothes and food. When someone tried to run away, the patron would hunt him down and punish him." Today, Parada still serves but as a nurse on one of three mobile health units in the country. Instead of enriching a patrón, her labors now bring sexual and reproductive health services to Bolivia's most isolated and marginalized people—many of whom are fellow Guarani.

Rich in natural resources, Bolivia remains one of Latin America's poorest nations. Indigenous people comprise 71 percent of the population, yet they remain largely neglected by medical and social services due to extreme poverty, geographical isolation, political alienation and numerous cultural challenges. The lack of sexual and reproductive services is particularly notable in areas inhabited by the poorest Bolivians, where only 7 percent of women have access to contraception, fertility rates hover at a high 7.4 children per woman, and maternal mortality rates are among the highest in the world. This critical need has inspired International Planned Parenthood/Western Hemisphere Region (IPPF/WHR) and their Member Association in Bolivia, CIES, to reach out to remote and impoverished communities via mobile health units (MHUs).

The generous support of the Erik E. and Edith H. Bergstrom Foundation and IPPF/WHR allowed MHUs in Bolivia to reach more than 18,000 marginalized people last year and provide 21,684 clinical services—the highest amount since the project began in 1997. "The issue of health is very central for us," says Guarani leader Marcial Simon. "We have been a bit abandoned when it comes to health education. We have had virtually no medical assistance for our people, so the CIES workshops are vital for our communities."

Life on the MHU is equal parts grueling and rewarding. The MHU team—comprised of a physician, nurse, driver and educator—travels 22 consecutive days every month, journeying miles over treacherous terrain to reach a different rural village each day. Arriving early in the morning, the team sets up a makeshift exam room to provide private quality service even in places with the most limited resources. The team's

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— Marcial Simon, Guarani leader



CIES provides health care and education to Bolivia's most vulnerable populations.



success depends on local community volunteers who spread the word during the days leading up to a visit. On a typical day, a team will work

from morning to night to see more than 30 clients, who have made their own journey across not only physical distances, but also cultural divides and religious obstacles, to receive treatment, advice and education. Dionicia Olimbo Vega, 45, walked two hours with her 5-year-old daughter to reach the mobile health unit near her home in Totorenda de la Montaña to see a doctor about her recent symptoms. "I feel comfortable with the MHU doctor," she says, "so now I make sure to come every time the MHU comes to visit."

Building trust and fostering an open dialogue about sexual and reproductive issues is as paramount to the MHU as quality health care. "These are not issues that are easily discussed," says Alcides, an MHU educator. "There's fear, but little by little, the people open up. The CIES workshops offer that moment of opening, socialization and trust." Leonidus Calderon Zelaya, a health promoter in Chapimayu in charge of notifying the community of an upcoming MHU visit, says that trust has fostered real progress. "People like that the MHU is stable, everyone knows when they will arrive, and that they sell medications at low cost, or for free," he says. "The changes we've seen since the MHUs started

arriving four or five years ago is that now people don't have as many children as before. There's family planning."

The rewards of the MHU program don't stop with the clients, however. For MHU team member Rosario Cervantes, a doctor who works with Parada on one of the MHUs, serving neglected communities has been life-changing. "My work with CIES has made me feel more human," she says. "I didn't value life as I should have before starting this work, and now I do."



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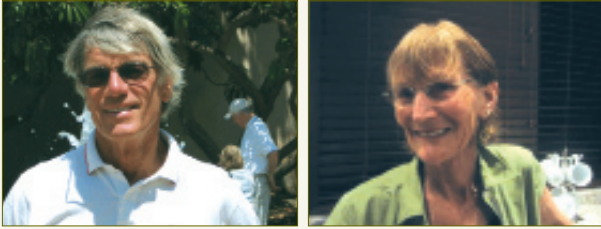
— Leonidus Calderon Zelaya, health promoter



Creating a Legacy of Choice while Securing your Financial Future

Donor Profile: The Saiers urge, “give till it hurts”

“To be responsible world citizens, we must be informed and give till it hurts,” declares Milton Saier, a University of California at San Diego biology professor who, with his musician wife Jeanne, are generous major donors.



The Saiers, both ardent environmentalists—for instance, Milton has no car and bikes 16 miles to UCSD—enthusiastically support IPPF/WHR programs to promote women’s reproductive rights and prevent unwanted births.

We are convinced that human overpopulation is the most critical problem facing humankind today and principal cause of poverty—but a solution is possible.

“I really feel very strongly that providing contraceptives for everyone in the world is the key. You don’t need to tell anyone to have fewer children, you just need to make it easier for them.”

— Milton Saier

He adds that it is feasible to provide free birth control to every person on the planet – and well worth the investment. “Eventually, the taxpayers will have to pay,” he predicts; “it is immoral not to support this.”

The Saiers have made the commitment to give over half of their income to nonprofit organizations such as IPPF/WHR that support women’s reproductive rights. That commitment is making a real difference in our programs, and we are very grateful for their passionate support.

For more information on making a tax-deductible gift to support our programs, please contact Nikki Speer at 212 214 0286 or by e-mail at nspeer@ippfwhr.org.

When you set up a charitable gift annuity (CGA) with IPPF/WHR, you receive fixed lifetime payments, as well as numerous tax benefits. Unlike falling bank interest rates, your CGA payout rate will be fixed, guaranteed, and at a highly competitive level. Your legacy gift supports our family planning and reproductive health work throughout the Americas and the Caribbean for all future generations.

Create a Charitable Gift Annuity

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Phone: 212 214 0286 or 866 IPPFWHR (477 3947 x 278)

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Fetal Personhood Laws



One of the United States' lesser known exports, but one of greater consequence for women, is the export of new anti-choice tactics by the Catholic Church and its allies that insists that all abortion be outlawed. The newest of these tactics is the Fetal Personhood Law.

Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) needed no help from the US in criminalizing abortion. The termination of a pregnancy has been highly restrictive or unobtainable in the region ever since nations were formed. Still, anti-choice activists in the US persist to criminalize abortion by invoking so-called Fetal Personhood Laws, which declare that the right to life extends from the point of conception, not just from birth, and that the right of the fertilized egg to life surpasses even that of the mother.

The Catholic Church has now taken this campaign to Latin America and the Caribbean. In reaction to the recent Mexico City law, allowing first-trimester abortions, about ten states in

Mexico have now passed laws protecting life from the moment of conception. The Dominican Republic (DR) recently amended its Constitution to state that the "right to life is inviolable from conception until death." By doing so, the DR has effectively outlawed abortion in all cases.

This battle has been most contentious in Chile. The Chilean Constitution states that "the law protects the life of those about to be born." Although abortion is prohibited without exception, we applaud the recently approved legislation which guarantees the right of the people to access all forms of contraception.

The Mexico City law was a move in the direction of decriminalizing abortion, and Chile's bill is at least a step in the right direction. Hopefully the shift to fulfill basic human rights, rather than US anti-choice tactics, will start to gain ground in LAC.

Alexander Sanger is the Chair of the International Planned Parenthood Council and author of *Beyond Choice: Reproductive Freedom in the 21st Century*. A former Goodwill Ambassador, he is the grandson of IPPF founder and reproductive rights pioneer Margaret Sanger.

Three of the many reasons to donate to IPPF/WHR:

- 1 89 cents of every dollar you donate is spent directly on programs to help the poor and marginalized.
- 2 Twice as many poor women – over 60% – have an unmet need for contraceptives compared to wealthy women. IPPF/WHR strives to guarantee that all women have access to contraceptives. A donation of \$100 pays for a one year supply of birth control for 21 women.
- 3 Our high quality services are grounded in the belief that health care is a basic human right for all people, regardless of their socio-economic status.

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International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), based in London, is the world's largest private sexual and reproductive health and rights organization. The Federation's health services are carried out by Member Associations located in 176 countries. All of its Member Associations are managed in accordance with local custom and law.

International Planned Parenthood Federation, Western Hemisphere Region, Inc. (IPPF/WHR), located in New York, is a tax-exempt, charitable organization, providing technical and financial assistance to 41 IPPF associations in the Western Hemisphere.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the Canadian Federation for Sexual Health (formerly the Planned Parenthood Federation of Canada) are separately incorporated IPPF/WHR Member Associations in the United States and Canada.

Opinions expressed in REACHING OUT do not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IPPF/WHR.

Last Year We Delivered 29,813,125 Essential Sexual and Reproductive Health Services.

Making Every Dollar Count

We are proud of the way we manage our funds. IPPF/WHR strives to operate with efficiency while minimizing its fundraising and management expenses. As a result, over 89 cents of every dollar we spend goes directly to our programs and services.

“A Rating”

American Institute of Philanthropy

“Highest Rating”

Charity Navigator

“Met all Standards”

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