

Building Families, Saving Lives: Trends and Challenges in International Family Planning

Thursday, October 2, 2003, Washington, DC - Access to modern methods of contraception and family planning around the globe is key to reducing the reliance on abortion as a primary method of birth control. As the prevalence of modern methods of contraception and family planning increases in countries where abortion was the major - if not the principal - method of birth control, data shows abortion rates falling along with decreases in infant and maternal mortality. This program illustrated the demands and challenges for family planning around the globe and linked those demands with trends from twelve countries of the former Soviet Union. Although there have been increased preferences for very small families, abortion rates in eight of these countries have declined, accompanied by steady increases in the use of modern methods of contraception. In two countries, modern contraceptive prevalence has barely changed and abortion rates have increased. And in the two remaining countries, where the number of children desired is extremely low and unintended pregnancies have increased, both abortion and contraception have increased.

Welcome:

Jane De Lung, President, The Population Resource Center

Introduction:

The Honorable Mark Steven Kirk (R-IL)



Speakers:

Barbara Seligman, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of Population and Reproductive Health, Global Health Bureau, [U.S. Agency for International Development](#)

Charles F. Westoff, Professor of Demographic Studies and Sociology, Emeritus, [Princeton University](#)

Co-Sponsors:

The offices of Representatives Danny K. Davis (D-IL), Jim Greenwood (R-PA), and Mark Steven Kirk (R-IL)



Factoids:

"If women with an unmet need (about nine percent of all women) were to adopt modern contraception, abortion rates would be reduced by an average of 32 percent." *Charles F. Westoff, Professor of Demographic Studies and Sociology, Emeritus, Princeton University*

"Abortion rates could be reduced by as much as 56 percent on average if both traditional method users as well as women with an unmet need for family planning were to become users of modern methods."

Charles F. Westoff, Professor of Demographic Studies and Sociology, Emeritus, Princeton University

Downloads: (see Presentations web page)

[Barbara Seligman's Power Point Presentation](#)

[Charlie Westoff's Power Point Presentation](#)

In Attendance:

The Offices of Representatives:

Michael E. Capuano (D-MA)

Danny K. Davis (D-IL)

Jim Greenwood (R-PA)

Sue Kelly (R-NY)

Mark Steven Kirk (R-IL)

Fortney Pete Stark (D-CA)

Federal Agencies:

National Center for Health Statistics

United States Agency for International Development

Other Organizations:

Alan Guttmacher Institute

DDB Bass & Howes

Futures Group International

General Board of Church and Society

George Mason University

Georgetown University

Global Health Council

Johns Hopkins University – Bloomberg School of Public Health

National Abortion Federation

Natural Resources Conservation Service

National Wildlife Federation

Planned Parenthood Federation of America

Population Action International

Population Connection

Population Institute

Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice

Sexuality Information and Education Council of the US

Woodrow Wilson Center