



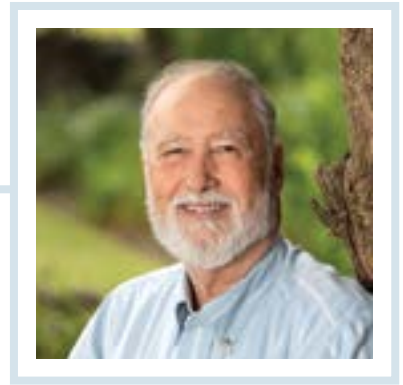
POPULATION CONNECTION

**NEW UN PROJECTIONS FORECAST 10.3
BILLION POPULATION PEAK IN 2084,
SHOW INDIA REMAINING LARGEST
COUNTRY THROUGH CENTURY**

Volume 56, Issue 3
September 2024

President's Note

John Seager
john@popconnect.org



“The brevity of our lives breeds a kind of temporal parochialism — an ignorance of or an indifference to those planetary gears which turn more slowly than our own.”

— Kathryn Schulz, “The Really Big One,” *The New Yorker*


Population Connection member and Seattle environmental attorney Rick Aramburu put me on to a terrifying 2015 *New Yorker* story about the Cascadia subduction zone, a coastal area from British Columbia through Washington and Oregon and into California. That’s where a massive earthquake, possibly 15 times greater than the largest potential quake along the San Andreas Fault, will take place — tomorrow, or perhaps some 800 years from now — an inconsequential time difference geologically, but a matter of life and death for inhabitants, human and otherwise. Examining the buildup of human population, the author observed that we are living in an “age of ecological reckoning.” She asked, “How should a society respond to a looming crisis of uncertain timing but of catastrophic proportions?”

Since 1800, our population has exploded as we’ve recklessly drawn down natural capital that took eons to accumulate. Call it overdraft, overshoot, or boneheadedness, this irrefutable truth has inevitable consequences.

Human population and greenhouse gas emissions have grown in tandem. Cataclysmic changes are already baked in, no pun intended. By 2050, we may see “a 20% weakening of the famous North Atlantic overturning circulation which keeps Europe’s climate mild,” according to one recent analysis. A separate study warns that failure of

this oceanic system “would disrupt the climate globally, shifting Asian monsoon rainfall patterns and even reversing the rainy and dry seasons in the Amazon.” Peter Ditlevsen at the University of Copenhagen states that “You cannot adapt to this. There’s some studies of what happens to agriculture in Great Britain, and it becomes like trying to grow potatoes in Northern Norway.”

India, the most populous nation on Earth, projects a ninefold increase in home air conditioning by 2050. As temperatures soar, coal-generated electricity in India is rising while renewable sources decline. We just witnessed the extinction in the US of the Key Largo tree cactus. It’s the first species we’ve lost due to sea level rise, but it won’t be the last. Modern *Homo sapiens* resembles an adolescent who hasn’t yet mastered impulse control, speeding down the highway, pedal to the metal.

We can do better. When women are educated, have access to reproductive health services, and have true reproductive autonomy, the vast majority choose smaller families. And we have scientific data (widely ignored by our friends in the environmental community) that investment in family planning is the single most cost-effective way to meet the twin challenges of population growth and the climate crisis. 

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By Marian Starkey

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By Amina J. Mohammed



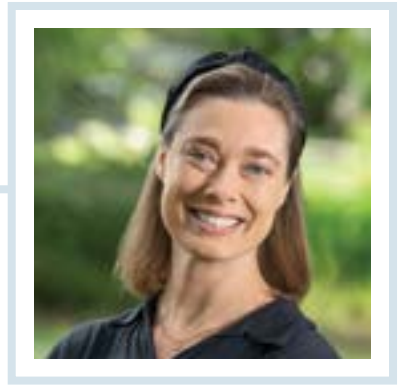
Cover image: Aerial view of Kolkata, the urban center of eastern India. The Kolkata metro area has a population of over 15 million people. (Photo by Debajyoti Chakraborty/NurPhoto via Getty Images)

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Editor's Note

Marian Starkey
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This has been a year of new United Nations (UN) involvement for Population Connection.

In April, we co-hosted a side event to the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development. Dr. Gladys Kalema-Zikusoka, a Population Connection board member and the Founder and Executive Director of Conservation Through Public Health in Uganda, was a panelist, along with Dr. Karen Hardee, a researcher and consultant with decades of experience working on population issues. Well over 100 people attended!

We've also delivered three oral statements at UN events, which I describe in more detail on page 16. Ours was the only statement at each of these events that focused on population challenges ... which is confounding, especially since one of them was a population conference. It has become undeniably clear to us at Population Connection that if we don't speak up about the critical need for population stabilization at meetings like this, the topic will be overlooked entirely.

On World Population Day, July 11, the UN Population Division released a new revision of its *World Population Prospects* estimates and projections, which are similar to those in the previous revision released in 2022. We presented key messages from this new data to our members and supporters during a virtual event that same day. Thanks to all who joined the conversation during the Q&A — it's always impressive (and a little intimidating!) to hear from our members during virtual events. You're all so thoughtful, knowledgeable, and accomplished.

For those who weren't able to attend, here are some highlights about where we might be headed: The UN now projects (in its medium variant) that the world population will peak at 10.3 billion in 2084, and that it will gradually decline to 10.2 billion in 2100. These figures belie the range of possible outcomes, however — UN demographers forecast that the population in 2100 has a 95% likelihood of being between 9 billion and 11.4 billion — a difference equivalent to the current combined size of Europe, Northern America, Australia, New Zealand, and sub-Saharan Africa!

If we endeavor as a global community to land at the lower end of the projection range, investments in addressing unmet need for family planning, from country governments and international donors, must rise to the occasion. The US could lead the way by funding international family planning at our "fair share" pledged amount of \$1.74 billion — nearly three times our actual investment of \$607.5 million, which has been stagnant for 14 years, not even accounting for inflation.

It would be helpful in our push for increased funding for family planning if agencies such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and environmental organizations such as pretty much all of them would get back to making the connections between family planning shortfalls, population growth, development obstacles, and environmental crises. Because however disappointing, it's clear that, on its own, women's health isn't enough of a priority to get members of Congress to pony up. 🌍

Letters to the Editor

The cover of the June issue caught my eye as it looks just like one of the many photos I have taken myself on the shores of Lake Victoria. After studying Zoology at the University of Nairobi and then serving two years in the Peace Corps in Tanzania, I continue to go to East Africa (especially Tanzania) on a regular basis — taking folks on safari with the help of Africa Joy Tours, a locally owned Tanzanian company that we support (it's not easy to find a safari company that isn't owned by foreign interests). From the nearby Serengeti National Park, we always make a special side trip to Lake Victoria to learn about the efforts being made there by local women who are working hard to provide educational and employment opportunities for themselves and for their children. Our visits help fund these programs, and I wish more tour companies would do the same.

Here at home in Palm Desert, California, I've been teaching college conservation classes for 30 years, and population growth is always the number one issue that I emphasize when it comes to impacts on and connections to the environment. The most successful conservation programs in developing countries such as Tanzania are the ones that also focus on what I call the “three E's” — education, empowerment, and employment — for women.

Kurt Leuschner

In the June issue, you asked for letters from readers who have had experiences in Tanzania. I have been to Tanzania three times, not as a tourist, but working in a school started by a religious sister, a native Tanzanian, who had studied in Duluth, Minnesota, where I lived. She returned to Tanzania in 2017 and opened a school with 21 students in January 2018. I went there with a retired doctor friend who had earlier served in the Peace Corps working at a medical school in Dar es Salaam. He wanted to go back for a short time, and I asked to go with him. He contacted the sister, who said she would be delighted to have me come because she was teaching the children in English. Having a native speaker in the school would be most helpful.

I was there for two hot months, from mid-February to mid-April, in a rural area about 50 miles from Dar es Salaam. I had a bedroom with a “modern” bathroom in the convent where three sisters also lived. I worked with five or six preschool-age children, teaching counting, the alphabet, and all the other things preschool children need to learn. There were few teaching materials — my friend and I had brought books, puzzles, crayons, paper, etc., but I also made many things.

We took several shopping trips to Dar es Salaam, where I experienced the crowds in the streets, the markets, and the traffic jams with buses, trucks, motorcycles, cars, and bikes. Quite a nightmare!

I returned to Tanzania two more times — in the summers of 2018 and 2019 — for one month each time. By 2019, the school had grown to almost 100 children. I have kept in contact with the sister. There are now over 600 children in the school. Since I have decided that I will not fly anymore due to the impact of air travel on the climate, I won't be returning to Tanzania, but I have wonderful memories of my time there.

Judy Sausen

Letters to the Editor, continued

My day brightens every time
I see an issue of *Population
Connection* arrive in the mail!

Nancy Power

As always, I appreciated
the June issue of *Population
Connection*, especially the
articles on Tanzania generally
and on Maasai Harmonial
specifically.

Joan Walsh

Global warming, microplastics,
herbicides, pesticides, wanton
greed, autocratic violence,
frankenfood, wars, tribalism,
etc. There is no need for
demographers to project world
population by the end of the
century — humans and most
other species will have perished
by then. Earth will abide and
hopefully so will some life
forms.

Kendrick Miller

I have been a member and supporter of ZPG and Population Connection since my college days, going back about 55 years. I became an active environmentalist after I read *Silent Spring* when I was about 14. In 1971 or so, I started a ZPG club at MIT, where I was an undergraduate student.

I liked John Seager’s “President’s Note” in the June issue, and his comment on knocker uppers brought back a strong memory from over 40 years ago: My grandaunt had told of her first profession as a teenager, over a century ago. She was employed as a hooker, which startled all of us, until we learned that her first job was affixing hooks to women’s garments!

Dr. Avi Ornstein

If you’d prefer to read the quarterly *Population Connection* magazine online, please visit our website at popconnect.org/magazine to see archives going back to 2020. The digital version of each issue contains links to sources, staff authors’ email addresses, and suggestions for further reading.



The Washington Post

... Two-thirds of the world's population lives in countries where the birth rate has fallen below replacement level. The EU's fertility rate stands at 1.46. Russia's is 1.5. India, home to 1.4 billion, dropped below 2.1 for the first time in 2020. But East Asia has seen the sharpest declines. In 1960, South Korea's fertility rate was around 6 children per woman. Today, it is the lowest in the world at [0.72].

There are exceptions to the rule of global population decline. They are just concentrated in one region. Population projections suggest that 8 in 10 people will live in Africa and Asia by 2100. Afghanistan is also an outlier. Conflict-ridden societies tend to have higher birth rates. Stable countries — particularly after sustained periods of economic growth — tend to revert toward the replacement rate. Then, eventually, they shrink.

These facts suggest that lower birth rates should not be wholly unwelcome. They reflect shifts toward delayed marriage, fewer teen births, less unintended pregnancy, lower child mortality, and smaller families, which are the product of higher living standards, mass education, and female workforce participation. Governments should not seek to reverse this progress, but to limit the trade-offs these positive trends bring. ...

If population growth fails to pick up, boosting productivity is the other way to stave off negative economic consequences. Investing in education and workforce training could help achieve that. Innovations in artificial intelligence and other new tools could, too. ...

– May 30, 2024

The Boston Globe

... The US Supreme Court delivered a victory to abortion access proponents and the federal government with its unanimous ruling Thursday throwing out a challenge to regulations of the drug mifepristone, keeping the most common method of abortion in the country available — at least in states where it hasn't been banned.

But the war being waged by antiabortion advocates is far from over. Threats to availability of the abortion pill as well as other forms of reproductive health care remain, particularly since the Court's *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health* decision, which resulted in a flurry of restrictive state laws as well as a renewed effort by conservative organizations to use federal law to further block access to abortions from coast to coast. ...

Other threats also loom. Project 2025, a broad agenda created by conservative groups should former president Donald Trump return to the White House, includes a plan to use the Comstock Act, an arcane federal law prohibiting the mailing of materials that are obscene or "intended for producing abortion," to block not only distribution of mifepristone but also other medical equipment. ...

Current guidance by the Department of Justice holds that the law only prohibits the mailing of anything used for illegal abortions, and the law has rarely been enforced. But a different presidential administration could bring not only new Justice Department leaders who could reverse such guidance but also new FDA officials who could reverse approval for abortion medication. ...

– June 14, 2024

A Timeline of 70 Years of

1954

World Population Conference

ROME, ITALY

The first World Population Conference was organized in Rome in 1954 to exchange scientific information on demographic variables, their determinants, and their consequences. This rather academic conference essentially resolved to produce more comprehensive information on the demographic situation of developing countries and to promote the creation of regional training centers which would help to solve population problems and to prepare specialists in demographic analysis.

1965

World Population Conference

BELGRADE, SERBIA

The second World Population Conference, held in Belgrade in 1965, emphasized the analysis of fertility as part of development planning policy. This conference was held at a time when expert studies on demographics of development coincided with the start of population programs funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

1974

World Population Conference

BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

In 1974, in Bucharest, the third World Population Conference was organized. The World Population Plan of Action, born out of this conference, stipulates, among other principles, that the essential objective is the social, economic, and cultural development of countries; that demographic variables and development are interdependent; and that policies and demographic targets are an integral part of socioeconomic development policies.



UN Population Conferences

1984

International Conference on Population

MEXICO CITY, MEXICO

At the International Conference on Population, in Mexico City in 1984, most aspects of the 1974 Bucharest conference agreements were reviewed and approved. In addition, the Global Population Plan of Action was expanded to incorporate the latest research findings and data provided by governments. Human rights, conditions of health and well-being, employment, and education were among the issues highlighted in the Declaration signed at this conference.

1994

International Conference on Population and Development

CAIRO, EGYPT

The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was held in 1994 in Cairo. During this event, a new Programme of Action was adopted as a guide for national and international action in the field of population and development for 20 years. This new agenda for action has emphasized the indissoluble relationship between population and development and focuses on meeting the needs of individuals within the framework of universally recognized human rights standards rather than simply responding to demographic goals.

2019

Nairobi Summit (ICPD+25)

NAIROBI, KENYA

In 2019, the International Conference on Population and Development+25 was organized in Nairobi. This conference mobilized political will and financial commitments to implement its Programme of Action. These commitments focus on achieving zero unmet need for family planning information and services and zero preventable maternal deaths, sexual and gender-based violence, and harmful practices against women and girls.



IN THE NEWS

By Olivia Nater, Communications Manager

New UN projections released on World Population Day

On World Population Day (July 11), the United Nations Population Division released new data, *World Population Prospects 2024*, which project a peak of 10.3 billion people in 2084 — slightly lower and earlier than the 10.4 billion peak in 2086 that was projected in the previous revision published in 2022. Like in the 2022 revision, human numbers are expected to stay above 10 billion through the end of the century.

The UN demographers now estimate the likelihood of the population peaking this century at 80%, compared to only 30% a decade ago. The main reason for the slightly earlier and lower peak is lower-than-expected fertility rates in recent years in some of the world's largest countries, particularly China. The global fertility rate is now estimated at 2.25 births per woman.

The UN estimates that the populations of 63 countries, including China, Japan, Italy, and Germany, have already

peaked. More than 1 in 10 countries, most of them in sub-Saharan Africa, still have very high fertility rates of four or more births per woman. The trajectories in the nine fastest growing countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Niger, and Somalia, will influence the size and timing of the population peak at the global level.

US and other areas hit by extreme heat

Summer temperatures have broken new records across the globe. According to NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information, June 2024 was the hottest June ever recorded and the 13th consecutive record-warm month. This has been the hottest summer on record for many US counties too, with some recording over a hundred possible heat-related deaths so far. Las Vegas, Nevada, endured seven consecutive days of temperatures 115°F or higher in July, including an all-time high of 120°F.

Heat deaths reached catastrophic levels in Saudi Arabia, where over 1,300 people

collapsed and died during the Hajj, with temperatures in Mecca reaching 125°F on June 17. According to Mexico's health ministry, as of late June, at least 125 people had died due to excess heat this year. In the south of the country, hundreds of howler monkeys have been recorded falling dead out of trees due to heatstroke. In Greece, several tourists succumbed to extreme heat, while Japan added “most severe” to its existing heatstroke index. The new category applies to people with a core temperature of 40°C (104°F) or higher and an inability to communicate.

Earth 1.5°C hotter than pre-industrial era for a whole year

Data from the European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service confirmed that by July 2024, the world had experienced 12 consecutive months of temperatures 1.5°C (2.7°F) above the 1850–1900 pre-industrial average. Under the Paris Agreement, nations committed to limiting global warming to 1.5°C because the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

warns that exceeding this threshold will likely lead to very severe climate change impacts.

The 1.5°C target is based on the average temperature of the planet over a 20- or 30-year period, so despite this worrying 12-month streak, it does not yet mean the Paris limit has been exceeded. The IPCC warns, however, that greenhouse gas emissions must peak before 2025 in order for us to have a more than 50% chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C. Unfortunately, emissions are still rising.

Birth control prescriptions down in abortion ban states

A study published in *JAMA Network Open* revealed that states with abortion bans saw significant declines in the number of birth control prescriptions filled following the Dobbs decision that overturned the constitutional right to abortion in June 2022. In the study period after the ruling, in 12 of the states that enacted the most restrictive bans, monthly fills for oral contraceptive pills declined significantly. Texas had the most pronounced decline, at 28%.

The researchers also looked at prescription-fill rates for emergency contraceptives,

and found a marked increase starting around December 2021, when the Supreme Court was weighing the Dobbs case, likely due to patient stockpiling in anticipation of abortion restrictions.


The fill-rate for emergency contraception peaked in July 2022 (immediately after the ruling), but plummeted a year later. Kentucky saw the biggest decrease, with emergency contraception prescription fills dropping by 78%. The lead author of the study told *Mother Jones* that the decline in prescriptions for emergency contraception is likely linked to confusion around its legality due to anti-choice groups falsely claiming it causes abortions.

According to the Guttmacher Institute, abortion bans led to the shutdown of 63 clinics in the 14 states with total bans, making it more difficult for many people to access other reproductive health services, including family planning.

High-level UN event in September to chart a better path

World leaders will convene in New York in September for the Summit of the Future — a major UN event that is intended to help set a path toward a more sustainable,

prosperous future. In light of the majority of the UN Sustainable Development Goals — including zero poverty and hunger, gender equality, and a healthy environment — being off-target for their 2030 deadline, the Summit will lead to the creation of a new “Pact for the Future” to increase international cooperation toward sustainability and peace and security.

In collaboration with Population Matters and Population Media Center, Population Connection delivered oral statements in two virtual consultation meetings on early versions of the Pact, urging the inclusion of the need to end population growth through empowering solutions. 

Visit our blog to read more about some of these news items: popconnect.org/blog

The digital version of this article includes hyperlinked sources: popconnect.org/article/in-the-news-September-2024

SUMMER PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

Interviews by Stephanie Wolfe, Membership Relations Coordinator

We are thrilled to present the winners of our third annual Summer Photo Contest! Participants from across the country shared their breathtaking photos showcasing the scenic landscapes, rich cultures, and diverse wildlife that drive their commitment to working toward a sustainable future. Congratulations to our winners, and thanks to all who sent in photographs. Your creativity and passion continue to inspire us!

1

First Place



Karl Leck, Chadds Ford, PA

Population Connection member since 2004

A white horse and sheep graze in the foothills of the Southern Alps near Wanaka, South Island, New Zealand

Why population stabilization matters to Karl

Population increase continues to take over land and water resources. Places get developed to serve a growing population, and scenes like this can disappear. Humanity needs to address its rapid population growth to preserve natural resources and the beauty of our world.

I believe that children are the future and, as such, should be considered in

family planning decisions, with an eye toward what the future will be like if the population continues to grow. Children need care, love, food, and education. Each person born is a new user of man-made infrastructure and Earth's resources, which need continual preservation and replenishment.

Find all of the incredible photo entries our members and supporters submitted on our website at popconnect.org/photo-contest-2024.

2

Second Place



Eric Cullen Hackler, Ocean Township, NJ

Population Connection member since 2024

A lone bald eagle floats atop an iceberg at the foot of Margerie Glacier in Glacier Bay National Park (Sit' Eeti Gheeyi)

Why population stabilization matters to Eric

For better or worse, we are the current stewards of this planet, and with that power comes a great responsibility to celebrate and protect it. What I've always found most

beautiful about the ecosystems of our world is the balance between everything. For example, seasonal temperature changes cause calving glaciers to create essential iceberg habitats for otters, eagles, and seals. When we caught sight of this eagle floating by the boat, I didn't expect to find a model so willing to pose. This little friend kept shuffling between positions, holding just long enough to get its picture taken each time.

With the rapid deterioration we've caused over the last 200 years, I believe the need for art that shares the delicate interconnectedness of the world has never been stronger. Otherwise, we will end up floating along, oblivious to the truth that the ground is melting under our feet.

3

Third Place



Kathleen Raffel, San Francisco, CA

Population Connection member since 2023

Crissy Field, at the base of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California, a popular place for people to stroll and for birds to hunt

Why population stabilization matters to Kathy

Addressing population issues is important so we can find ways to keep people well-fed and healthy without decimating wildlife populations. Growing cities and communities put pressure on natural habitats and threaten the health of animals, plants, and people. Urban parks provide essential habitat for both humans and wildlife.

I am very involved in bird conservation and am particularly interested in finding ways that animals and humans can thrive together.



Rebecca Weiner, ZPG Society Member, and her husband, Mike, in the Black Hills of South Dakota

PLAN FOR YOUR LEGACY

By including a gift to Population Connection in your will or trust, you can ensure that our work continues as long as overpopulation threatens the quality of life for people everywhere. After providing for your loved ones, you might consider designating a remainder gift, or a percentage, to Population Connection. Make your legacy one that protects people and our planet well into the future.

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VIRTUAL EVENTS

Summer Heats Up with Exciting Virtual Events

By Natalie Widel, Director of Digital Marketing

Population Connection members and supporters flocked to join us for virtual events throughout the steamy summer months. We hope you'll join us again soon — or for the first time! Another interesting event is always around the corner. See what's next at popconnect.org/virtual-events/

Summer 2024 Virtual Events

JUNE

World Rainforest Day

Several of our Global Partners work in and around vital forest areas, including Conservation Through Public Health in Uganda, Lemur Love in Madagascar, and Women for Conservation in Colombia. All three organizations focus on preserving their local forests through public health initiatives and education and empowerment programs for those living in communities bordering the forests, particularly women and girls. Representatives from each organization met for a panel discussion in late June to celebrate World Rainforest Day and to discuss how their work is helping to preserve these critical ecosystems.

JULY

World Population Day

To mark World Population Day on July 11, Vice President for Communications Marian Starkey and Communications Manager Olivia Nater discussed new demographic estimates and projections from the *World Population Prospects 2024* report, just released by the UN Population Division hours earlier.

Marian and Olivia shared the 2024 updates to population projections at the world and regional levels and explored topics including fertility trends, age distribution, and the divergent projections made by other demographic research institutions.

AUGUST

Page Turners Book Club

Our quarterly book club met in early August to discuss Sir David Attenborough's 2020 memoir, *A Life on Our Planet: My Witness Statement and a Vision for the Future*. In it, Sir Attenborough chronicles the environmental changes he has witnessed over his long career and life (he turned 98 in May). The book serves as a personal narrative and a call to action, highlighting humans' profound impact on the natural world. It sparked a lively and engaging discussion amongst the Population Connection members in attendance, many of whom had long admired the renowned naturalist.

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE MEMBER

Scott Lambros

By Sydnie Stocks, Special Gifts Officer



Scott enjoying the view during a trip to Karpathos, Greece

Scott Lambros, a Population Connection member since 2021, has long held a deep-seated passion for philanthropy and supporting causes that improve society. Although Scott was familiar with Population Connection in its early days, when the organization was still known by its founding name, Zero Population Growth, or ZPG, his interest in population issues grew after watching various documentaries describing

the wide-ranging impacts of population booms throughout history.

Scott was born on Earth Day (April 22) and was raised in Randolph, New Jersey, with his three sisters. While earning a BS in Mathematics from Rutgers University, Scott found his curiosity about the world expanding. He left his first job out of college, engineering at Bell Laboratories, to backpack around the globe for a year.




“I’m so impressed with all you do to stabilize population at a manageable level. I hope you can continue to raise awareness to help people make the connections between population, women’s health, and climate change.”

“I flew to London from John F. Kennedy Airport and then just kept going east until I made it back to New Jersey. That’s a thing of mine; I like seeing different places,” he said. On his trip, he visited Greece (where he met distant family members for the first time), Israel, India, Hong Kong, and the Philippines. While in Israel, he spent over a month working on a kibbutz, immersing himself in the community.

Scott’s passion for exploration and learning led him to his role as an aerospace engineer at NASA. With over 30 years of experience, he actively serves as the Instrument Systems Manager for the James Webb Space Telescope, which is the most advanced telescope to ever launch into space. He has also worked on shuttle missions, Small Explorers Missions (highly focused space science investigations), and Earth science cooperative efforts with Japan.

When he can secure some downtime, Scott enjoys playing piano, having fun with his labradoodle, Ryder, and volunteering for humanitarian causes. He has volunteered with

The Hunger Project, and he helped found his local Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) program for abused, neglected, and abandoned children.

When Scott became a member of Population Connection, one of his goals was to continue to work with organizations making a difference. When asked why he supports Population Connection, Scott said, “I’m so impressed with all you do to stabilize population at a manageable level. I hope you can continue to raise awareness to help people make the connections between population, women’s health, and climate change.” 

We are so appreciative of Scott’s dedication to making our world a better place! His investment in our programs, through his President’s Circle support, expands our reach and contributes to a more sustainable future. If you would like to learn more about our giving societies, contact our Development team at giving@popconnect.org.

POPULATION CONNECTION PARTICIPATION

at the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD57)

By Marian Starkey, Vice President for Communications

There hasn't been a major international convening on population challenges for 30 years, since the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994. Before that, there was a UN population conference every decade, going back to 1954.¹

The UN does, however, have a Commission on Population and Development (CPD) that meets each year at the UN headquarters in New York. We gave an oral statement at the 57th Session (CPD57) in April, which placed special emphasis on 2024 being the 30th anniversary since Cairo. We teamed up with colleagues at two like-minded population organizations to craft and deliver the statement.

Population Matters is a UK-based organization that conducts research and produces reports, advocates for international family planning funding in the UK, and spreads awareness about the benefits of a sustainable population through social media and press outreach. Our talented Communications Manager, Olivia Nater, came to us from Population Matters when she moved to the United States two and a half years ago, and we are most fortunate to have her.

Population Media Center is a US-based organization that develops radio serials and TV dramas that use storytelling to influence social norms around

population, sustainability, and gender equality in developing regions (in close collaboration with people from each program's respective country). This unique and influential organization was founded by Bill Ryerson, who is presently transitioning into the role of President Emeritus. Bill has been a member of Population Connection since the very beginning and prides himself on having a full archive of *Population Connection* magazines (and the magazine's predecessor, *The Reporter*)!

Working with dedicated staff from each of these two organizations, we wrote a statement that we were enthusiastic to deliver (shared in full on the facing page). We've since worked together on two statements in response to first and second drafts of the Pact for the Future, an international agreement that's meant to eventually supplant the Sustainable Development Goals' 2030 Agenda.

Our groups will continue to look for opportunities to share our perspective on population challenges at similar meetings going forward. After all, if we don't, it seems that no one will.



P.S. If you missed our official side event to the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development, hosted along with Population Matters and Population Media Center, please view the recording at popconnect.org/CPD57-side-event.



1. There was a meeting in 2019 — the Nairobi Summit, also known as ICPD+25 — but it was to mark the 25th anniversary of the Cairo conference and to reaffirm the 1994 Programme of Action.

Joint Statement

Oral statement delivered at the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD57) on May 3, 2024, at the United Nations headquarters in New York, NY

Thank you, Madam Chair, for the opportunity to contribute to this session. My name is Simone Filippini, representing Population Matters, Population Connection, and Population Media Center. We're all NGOs with ECOSOC status¹, focused on achieving sustainable development through empowering population solutions for the benefit of people and planet.

The 1994 Cairo Programme of Action was clear on the benefits of slowing population growth and the urgent need to empower all women and girls, yet the world has failed them. Almost half of partnered women in low- and middle-income countries still have no decision-making power over their own bodies, while one in five girls today is married before she turns 18, gender-based violence still affects one in three women globally, and 257 million women have an unmet need for modern contraception.

While we've seen important progress in reducing the proportion of women affected by some of these injustices, in many cases, the total number of affected women is still growing due to population growth outstripping development efforts.

International funding for reproductive health and rights

To be concerned about population is to be concerned about people, their needs, their rights, and those of future generations.

sadly falls far short of what is needed to fulfill the basic rights of all women and girls. This is a tragedy, both because it is a moral failing and because investing in women and girls is key to advancing all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As noted in the Report of the Secretary-General, "The continuing high levels of fertility that drive rapid population growth in many low- and lower-middle-income countries are both a cause and a symptom of slow progress in development." Drawing the links between population, health, environment, and poverty is key to demonstrating the unmatched power of women's empowerment.

However, we've seen misguided attempts at censoring population concern within some circles. Intentionally obscuring the enormous returns on investment generated by funding family planning and women's empowerment in terms of health,

socioeconomic, and environmental benefits makes it much harder to close the funding gap.

As noted by Dr. Musimbi Kanyoro, former CEO of the Global Fund for Women, "When we leave the P out of the ICPD, we cannot achieve the goals of the ICPD."

Our three organizations would like to see a recommitment to the Programme of Action and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that embraces the critical linkages between population and the SDGs, and that emphasizes the crucial importance of investing in women and girls.

To be concerned about population is to be concerned about people, their needs, their rights, and those of future generations. We must end the siloing of environment and reproductive health and rights: the two are inextricably linked and synergistic.

We stand ready to collaborate with the UN and other stakeholders to ensure the Programme of Action remains a vital framework for achieving sustainable development in a world of 8 billion plus people.

Thank you for your consideration, and we look forward to a continued dialogue on these critical issues.

1. The UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) offers consultative status to eligible non-governmental organizations.

Remarks from the Deputy Secretary-General

By Amina J. Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations

Statement delivered at the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Population and Development (CPD57) on April 29, 2024, at the United Nations headquarters in New York, NY



Portrait of Amina J. Mohammed courtesy of UN Photo

This year marks the 30th anniversary of the adoption of the Programme of Action for the International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo in 1994.

As we take stock of progress and lessons learned, we must also seize the opportunity to accelerate action on the SDGs as well as look ahead to set priorities for the next 30 years.

In 1994, the world's population stood at 5.6 billion. It is now over 8.1 billion, and it keeps growing. We must prepare for continued population growth in sub-Saharan Africa — and slow growth or decline in much of Asia, Europe, and Northern America, and later, in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Excellencies, we have achieved great progress in 30 years, and we must celebrate the glass that is some full: Fewer women are dying in pregnancy and childbirth; child mortality risks have fallen — across developed and developing countries; we have expanded access to reproductive health care services, including modern contraceptives; and rates of adolescent pregnancy have declined.

However, progress has been masked by those who have been left behind. Many countries still fall short of life expectancy targets, and many developing countries face significant challenges in reaching the SDG target for child mortality. Around the world, 164 [million] women of reproductive age — 8% — have no access to family planning services.¹

While all countries are on the path toward longer lives and smaller families, some continue to face the challenge of rapid population growth. Others are grappling with the consequences of population aging, sometimes population decline. And we see our health systems struggling.

1. 164 million is the estimated number of women in developing regions who have an unmet need for any method of family planning. The figure we typically use instead is 218 million, which is the estimated number of women in developing regions who have an unmet need for modern contraception. The difference is made up of women who don't want to become pregnant but are using less effective traditional methods of family planning. There is another figure, 257 million, used in our statement on page 17, which is the estimated number of women globally who have an unmet need for modern contraception.

Excellencies, we must fully recognize the megatrends that are reshaping our world — climate change, demographic shifts, urbanization, digital technologies, and inequalities — as well as their critical connections to the Sustainable Development Goals.

We must remain vigilant and continue to address situations where sexual and reproductive health and rights are being rolled back. We must respond and push back when women's rights are being eroded, and when migrants and other vulnerable populations are mistreated.

We must continue to uphold the dignity of all people, ensuring that no one is left behind. And we must support rights-based approaches in our population and development policies.

Major population trends for the coming decades are clear: continuing gradual reductions in fertility and mortality, the progressive aging of populations, and their ongoing concentration in urban centers both large and small.

Population aging requires a life course approach to health and to education. This means focusing on preventive care and lifelong learning to enable everyone to remain active and integrated in their communities. The inevitable rise in demand for longterm care calls for new policies and public funding that ensure decent conditions for care providers — most of whom are women.

Ensuring universal access to reproductive and health care services and the unimpeded exercise of reproductive rights will help meet the needs of family planning. At the same time, we must anticipate and provide for a growing need of assisted reproductive technologies, for the increasing numbers of young women and men who are having fewer children than they desire.

As we approach the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2025, we must accelerate progress toward gender equality and the empowerment of women in all spheres of life. We cannot achieve our common goals if we leave half of humanity behind.

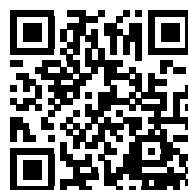
Looking ahead to the Summit of the Future, we must prioritize the needs of future generations. This means pursuing a green and sustainable development pathway so that they inherit a livable planet.

While all countries are on the path toward longer lives and smaller families, some continue to face the challenge of rapid population growth.

In a mobile and interdependent world, the international community must cooperate at all levels to facilitate an inclusive and rights-based approach. Youth, women, civil society, local communities, and small and medium size enterprises must be part of the process.

The Local 2030 platform supports the delivery of the SDGs on the ground and can help bring the transformative change that is needed. A strong political declaration by this Commission would galvanize action toward the full implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action.

Together, we can contribute to safeguarding rights, agency, accelerate the SDG progress, and support a sustainable future for people and planet, this keeping the promise of the 2030 Agenda. And leaving no one behind, let me add my voice to the tragedies that we see in Sudan, in Gaza, where the suffering of women and children should no longer be tolerated. We need to find our moral compass and come back to the rights of all women and young women and children in these tragic times. Thank you.



Ms. Mohammed's speech begins at minute 12 of this CPD57 plenary session recording: webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1l/k1ljkxkyk

GLOBAL PARTNERS

Hope for Kenya Slum Adolescents Initiative

By Marian Starkey, Vice President for Communications



If you've subscribed to this magazine for a while, you've heard about Melvine Ouyo. We met her when she was the Clinic Director at Family Health Options Kenya, soon after FHOK lost US funding in 2017, thanks to Trump's Global Gag Rule. She has been a consultant to the advocacy program for our sister organization, Population Connection Action Fund, since then. She joined the Board of Directors of Population Connection in 2021 and is now the Vice Chair.

In 2018, Melvine founded Hope for Kenya Slum Adolescent Initiative (HKSAL), which works to advance opportunities for low-income Kenyan adolescent girls living in slums through investments in their education, health, skills training, life skills, and job prospects. Melvine serves as HKSAL's Executive Director.

As a young girl growing up in a small village in Busia County, Kenya, Melvine saw girls drop out of school because of teen pregnancies and then struggle to gain employment and financial freedom for themselves and their children. Born to a 16-year-old mother, she went through a similar experience herself.

“Defying all odds, I promised myself to work to reverse structural biases that expose women, girls, and other vulnerable

individuals to such vices and depravities as gender inequities, early and forced marriages, gender-based violence, and lack of education, by providing them with opportunities for social and economic empowerment.”

Hope for Kenya Slum Adolescents Initiative works with Kenyan adolescents, with a special focus on girls, who are living in slums in and around Nairobi, Kenya's capital and largest city. The organization helps teens


attain high quality educations through scholarships and provides technical skills training to improve their job prospects. HKSAL even offers financial resources and information about entrepreneurship to help young people start their own successful small businesses.

“Scholarships for basic secondary school and technical and vocational education and training colleges have impacted these girls' lives and those of their families

in ways and magnitude we are thrilled about. Their mindsets have changed for the better, and they have applicable skills that no one can take away from them. Those who didn't see a chance of joining secondary school now appreciate the miracle that came and are now in high school, working and walking toward independent, healthy, and dignified lives for themselves and their families. The young mothers who previously slept hungry with their babies can now put bread on their tables thanks to our entrepreneurship program.”

HKSAI provides counseling and mentoring services to empower young people with the information they need to lead healthy and dignified lives. The program covers adolescent sexuality and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, and substance abuse.

The organization also creates a space for young people to help advance social justice through community dialogues that engage policymakers on issues affecting young people, including sexual and reproductive health and rights, early and forced marriage,

female genital mutilation (FGM), and gender-based violence. Finally, HKSAI lobbies for progressive policies on matters relevant to adolescents, including sexual and reproductive health. 

If you'd like to learn more about Hope for Kenya Slum Adolescents Initiative, you can read a longer interview with Melvine on our website (popconnect.org/blog/qa-with-hksai). You can also visit the HKSAI website directly at hopeksai.org.

Thank you to all of our generous donors who make our Global Partners program possible! Without you, we wouldn't be able to support the incredible work of the 19 small but impactful organizations currently benefiting from your contributions.

“Investing in girls’ education and providing women with access to reproductive health information and services slows down population growth, easing pressure on natural resources and helping to mitigate the climate crisis.”

—Melvine Ouyo



Abortion Bans Evidently Aren't Enough

By Becca Rosenzweig, Stanback Government Relations Fellow

House passes devastating Appropriations Bill

On June 28, the House passed the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Bill for Fiscal Year 2025 by a party line vote of 212–200.

The bill cuts funding for international family planning by 24%, bans funding for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), reinstates the Global Gag Rule, and restates the harmful and archaic Helms Amendment which denies aid for safe, legal abortion. House Republican leaders blocked floor amendments in support of family planning programs.

When the bill was considered by the Appropriations Committee, Reps. Barbara Lee (D-CA) and Grace Meng (D-NY) each introduced amendments to eliminate bans on family planning funding. Congresswoman Lee's proposed amendment struck a section that prohibited funding to UNFPA and any foreign non-governmental

organization that performs or provides information about abortion. Further, it struck the expansion of the Global Gag Rule.

Congresswoman Meng's amendment called for no less than \$575 million in bilateral funding for family planning and reproductive health in FY 2025 and eliminated the ban on UNFPA funding. Like Congresswoman Lee's proposal, this amendment would remove the codification of the Global Gag Rule. She said, "We cannot achieve US global health targets, address unacceptably high global maternal mortality rates, support healthy families, or promote gender equity if they cannot access family planning or contraceptive services." Both amendments were defeated on party line votes.

Senate kills the Right to Contraception Act

On June 5, Senate Republicans voted almost unanimously to block the Right to Contraception Act, a bill that would protect access to

contraception nationwide. The bill failed on a vote of 51–39, short of the 60 votes needed.

The Act would enshrine a federal right to obtain and use the contraceptives that best meet individuals' needs. The bill prohibits any requirement that impedes the provision of contraceptive methods or information and protects relevant health care providers. Specifically, the Act forbids any government, federal or state, from prohibiting or restricting the sale, provision, or use of contraception. It further protects individuals who help others obtain or use contraception.

The past few years have indicated that the right to contraception is under palpable threat. In the Dobbs decision, Justice Clarence Thomas stated his intent to revoke Americans' right to contraception with an explicit call to overturn the 1965 case establishing the constitutional right to birth control. In courts throughout the nation, we have already seen attempts

to restrict access to essential methods such as emergency contraception and IUDs. The Right to Contraception Act would stop these extreme attacks on reproductive health care in their tracks.

After the bill failed in the Senate, House Democrats opened a discharge petition to bring it directly to a floor vote. Reps. Kathy Manning (D-NC) and Katherine Clark (D-MA) are urging their Republican colleagues to sign this petition and support Americans' choice to use birth control.

Undeniable progress, but also shortcomings, since ICPD

It's been 30 years since United Nations member states and representatives from civil society met in Cairo at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and agreed to its groundbreaking Programme of Action. It's a cornerstone document which recognizes that investments in family

planning are central to sustainable development.


On June 14, US Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra hosted an event to commemorate the 30-year anniversary of ICPD. He was joined by leaders from across the government and by representatives from non-governmental organizations. The Secretary noted the importance of the 1994 agreement and crucial advancements made since. Other speakers included Jennifer Klein, the Executive Director of the White House Gender Policy Council, and Dr. Natalia Kanem, the Executive Director of UNFPA.

While progress has been undeniable, it's equally undeniable that the promise of Cairo has never been met. The agreement and the pledges were truly groundbreaking, but the promises have gone unfulfilled. And no country has fallen shorter than the United States.

Had funding simply kept pace with inflation since it

peaked in 2010, today we'd be providing \$1.03 billion — still shy of the \$1.74 billion US "fair share" needed to address the unmet need for family planning of 218 million women in developing regions. Instead, current investment is \$607.5 million, a cut of nearly 40% in today's dollars.

Supreme Court fails to resolve two abortion challenges

The Supreme Court rejected two challenges to abortion access on technical grounds, setting up possible repeat cases in the future. First, the Court rejected an effort to undo updated FDA guidance on mifepristone by deciding that the organization filing the case lacked standing. Later, the Court sent a challenge to the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act (EMTALA) by the state of Idaho back to a lower court. By failing to decide the case on its merits, the Court simply pushed the decision into the future, after the upcoming election. 

FIELD + OUTREACH

#Fight4HER Summer Highlights

By Annika Aristimuno, Stanback Field Fellow

Over the past few months, our 2024 #Fight4HER organizers in Arizona, Nevada, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Pennsylvania have continued guiding our reproductive health and rights campaign with impactful local events, ambitious petition gatherings, and dedicated planning for the end-of-summer regional HER Summits.

Melvine Ouyo, a member of our Board of Directors, an independent consultant for Population Connection Action Fund, and the Founder and Executive Director of Hope for Kenya Slum Adolescents Initiative (HKSAI), which is profiled on page 20, shared her experiences and insights with audiences while joining our organizers on a recent tour of our target locations.

Reflecting on her participation, Melvine says, “I think we reached new advocates for reproductive freedom who will, in turn, spread the message to their neighbors and friends. We helped more people understand our policy priorities and why the harmful Global Gag Rule and Helms Amendment must be permanently repealed.”

Melvine’s standout moment during her campaign tour was at the Juneteenth Ohio Festival in Columbus. “It was truly exciting and inspiring to see many Ohio participants sign up as volunteers for the #Fight4HER campaign and support the petition to pass the Global HER Act. Meeting us at this event helped deepen their understanding of our policy goals.”

Guy Dale Columbus, OH

Guy is a dynamic organizer who spearheads the #Fight4HER campaign in Columbus with remarkable dedication and strategic vision. His journey with us has been marked by significant milestones and inspiring interactions with volunteers

who share his commitment to reproductive rights.

At the Juneteenth Ohio Festival, Guy talked to festival-goers who approached his table throughout the day, and he collected over 200 new #Fight4HER pledges! Melvine and Grace, our Field Coordinator, took the stage to emphasize the importance of voting, ending the Global Gag Rule, and supporting the #Fight4HER campaign.

At the Columbus Book Festival in July, Guy gathered over 150 #Fight4HER pledges. His community-focused approach yields tangible results, expanding our base of campaign supporters in the Columbus area. Reflecting on the invaluable contributions of dedicated volunteers, Guy shared his appreciation for Iye Bako. Iye found the #Fight4HER campaign on Mobilize, a platform that connects activists with nonprofits, labor unions, political campaigns, and grassroots organizers, and signed up to volunteer at the



Guy and Iye collecting petition signatures at the Columbus Book Fair

Book Festival. Even though she only registered a week before the event, she was able to get three others to volunteer with her, and together they collected over 100 signatures! Iye has extended the time she'll work on our campaign so that she can be involved in the Columbus HER Summit.

Hannah Lammers Manchester, NH

Since she hit the ground in March, Hannah has collected 1,520 petition signatures toward her 2,000-signature

goal while organizing eight partner-led events with a total of 342 attendees.

Hannah recently mobilized a team of volunteers to table at a special Art in the Park market to celebrate Concord Pride. The event was hosted by Capital City Pride and Queerlective, an advocacy and education organization that uses art as a tool to create more inclusive spaces for queer, BIPOC, and other marginalized communities. That day, Hannah realized

the level of dedication of her volunteer team. “We had a volunteer scheduled to table with us. He was coming to Concord from Manchester, and, unfortunately, the bus system wasn't running on time. Instead of canceling, he biked 14 miles to be there! I was so moved by his drive (literally and figuratively) to be a part of our event and the #Fight4HER community.” That was a pivotal day, as the #Fight4HER campaign in New Hampshire reached the milestone of 1,000 petition signatures from people who also provided phone numbers.

Hannah's lead volunteers inspired her at Portsmouth Pride as well. “#Fight4HER had been put on the wait list for Portsmouth Pride, one of the largest pride events in the state. I met the person coordinating the entire festival at a networking event, and the next day, she told me she could take us off the wait list! Unfortunately, I had planned an out-of-state personal event long before, and knew

FIELD + OUTREACH, CONTINUED

#Fight4HER Summer Highlights



I couldn't make it, so my lead volunteers took it upon themselves to coordinate and table the event."

Jorden Lauterbach Tucson, AZ

Jorden has worked tirelessly to engage his community in the #Fight4HER. The oppressive heat has limited clipboarding opportunities in Tucson over the past few months. To overcome this challenge, Jorden has planned thoughtful volunteer meetings, created engaging social media posts, used Hustle (a peer-to-peer texting platform) to send messages to our activists, and sent targeted emails to recruit

new volunteers and potential partners.

Jorden is working closely with his summer fellows to plan the Tucson HER Summit in September and to engage with more volunteers while brainstorming creative solutions to beat the heat and maintain the momentum of his and his volunteers' advocacy efforts.


On June 19, Lucien Maggert, a lead volunteer and summer fellow who is working with Jorden, attended the 54th Annual Tucson Juneteenth Festival. He came out to educate community members about the US policies that affect global reproductive

health and encouraged everyone celebrating freedom from slavery to fight for reproductive freedom by ensuring access to contraception and safe abortion for all.

Looking ahead

As the #Fight4HER campaign continues to gain momentum, the collective efforts of our dedicated organizers and volunteers demonstrate the power of community engagement in the fight for reproductive rights. From Guy's astute leadership in Columbus to Hannah's exceptional organizing in New Hampshire to Jorden's creative community building in Tucson, every organizer involved in the #Fight4HER campaign makes a significant difference in their communities.

The journey ahead is filled with promise as we prepare for upcoming events, including the highly anticipated HER Summits. With new fellows ready to join our local organizers and the unwavering support of passionate volunteers, the campaign is expected to expand its reach and deepen its impact. We invite you to join us in this

vital work as we empower communities and champion the rights of all individuals, reminding people that together, we can create a world where reproductive health and rights are a reality for everyone, everywhere. 

Sign the Population Connection Action Fund #Fight4HER petition to urge Congress to permanently end the Global Gag Rule by passing the Global HER Act! bit.ly/fight4herform



Opposite: Congressman Chris Pappas (D-NH-2) posing for a photo with Hannah after stopping by our booth at the Art in the Park Concord Pride event to sign our #Fight4HER petition

Above: Hannah attending a rally in New Hampshire in June for the two-year anniversary of the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*

Left: Jorden and former #Fight4HER Phoenix organizer Natacha Chavez rallying at the Arizona State Capitol in April after the Arizona Supreme Court released its decision to reinstate a 1864 law banning abortion at any point during pregnancy

POPULATION EDUCATION

Cultivating Hope in a World of 8 Billion

Winners of the 2023–2024 Student Video Contest Announced

By Sally Watanabe, Student Engagement Fellow

Each year, the World of 8 Billion International Student Video Contest inspires us with hope as middle and high school students consider various global challenges. By participating, they become aware of these issues and think critically about sustainable solutions.


Over 3,100 videos were created by students from 58 countries and 46 US states and territories this year. Close to 400 teachers used the contest as a classroom assignment — some have been participating for all 11 years!

The three topics this year were chosen to explore climate-based displacement, ecosystem challenges, and human well-being — students created one-minute videos on climate migration, invasive species, or health. They were challenged to explain how a growing population affects their selected topic, and to identify a sustainable way to address a specific issue.

PopEd staff judged the first round, advancing 50 videos to a panel of 49 guest judges consisting of educators,

journalists, filmmakers, and topic experts. They determined our 18 winning videos. High school winners received \$1,200 for first place, \$600 for second place, and \$300 for honorable mention. The middle school winners received \$600 for first place and \$300 for second place.

Our student winners impressed us with their artwork, cinematography, and innovative solutions, and by making local connections to global topics. It was difficult to narrow down the selection of winners, as many videos demonstrated students' critical thinking, attention to detail, and creativity in crafting their message.

To celebrate the winners, we hosted a virtual film screening in early June. If you missed it, grab some snacks and watch this year's winning videos at worldof8billion.org/winners-2024, where you can also read about the students and what inspired them to create their incredible videos. 

Submission information for the 2024–2025 contest is now available at Worldof8Billion.org.

High School Honorable Mentions

Climate Migration: Bioregional Planning

Andy Lin, South High School, Valley Stream, NY

Cultivating Hope: Sustainable Agriculture Mitigates Climate Migration

Parmida Farzad, Coppell High School, Coppell, TX

Stop FGM (Female Genital Mutilation)

Yashila Yadav, Copenhagen International School, Copenhagen, Denmark

Urban Heat Islands

Harper Hipps, Xavier College Preparatory, Phoenix, AZ

Pheromone Biocontrol: The Sweet Smell of Success

Surya Arunkumar, McNeil High School, Austin, TX

Selective Solutions to Invasive Infernos

Kyo Lee and Byeoli Chae, Laurel Heights Secondary School, Waterloo, ON

CLIMATE MIGRATION

1

1st Place, High School



Floods: Planting A Stable Coastline

Ruike Pan, Eastside Preparatory School, Kirkland, WA

Ruike is a talented artist who used her drawing and felting

skills to create a unique backdrop for her message on rising sea levels. She was motivated to create a video on this topic by having relatives who are affected by flooding. “Although our society places an emphasis on efficiency, we can improve a lot of things if we consider the long-term environmental impacts,” she reflected.

2

2nd Place, High School



Mangrove Forests

Imani Laird, Newton South High School, Newton, MA

Imani is fascinated by mangrove forests as a solution to coastal erosion. In producing

her video, she drew on things she had learned in her AP Environmental Science class and in her previous filmmaking experience. It was her first time creating animations for a video project, though, and her advice is to “just go for it and use your resources because there’s so much out there.”

1

1st Place, Middle School



Coastal Communities

Sahil Parasharami, Central Middle School, Eden Prairie, MN

Sahil focused his video on connections between rising sea levels and climate

change. Through his research, he learned that over 410 million people worldwide could be displaced because of coastal flooding by 2100. He combined this knowledge with his passion for video production to create a stop-motion film that advocated ways that government, industry, and individuals can make a difference.

2

2nd Place, Middle School



Climate Migration — The Plight of Displaced People

Hussein Rashed, Hassan El Hadidi, Omar Shenoufy, and Mahmoud Shalaby, El Alsson British & American International School, Giza, Egypt

These students worked together and were surprised to learn how many people flee their homes every day due to climate change. They each played a different role in script writing, narrating, and video editing.

INVASIVE SPECIES

1

1st Place, High School



Saving The Bosque

Jack Barkhurst, Corrales International School, Albuquerque, NM

Jack focused his video on changes to the Bosque, a forest bordering the Rio

Grande near his New Mexico home. He wanted to spread awareness about the invasive Siberian elms that are overcrowding the native cottonwood trees. He visited the forest twice a month, from late fall until early spring, to get a variety of clips to represent the delicate ecosystem at different times of year.

2

2nd Place, High School



Mediterranean's Most Wanted: The Crab Invaders

Grace Lee, Eastlake High School, Chula Vista, CA

Grace was inspired by her love of gardening to find new uses for

blue crabs. Climate change has led to rapid reproduction of this non-native species in the Mediterranean Sea, so she proposes eating them and using their shells as fertilizer. Through her research, she learned that ballast water from ships is one of the main ways many invasive species are transported in marine environments.

1

1st Place, Middle School



An Ancient Invasion

Daniel Taich, Hawken Middle School, Lyndhurst, OH

Daniel's love of building LEGOs influenced his video production, giving him an engaging

way to talk about invasive species and the damage they can cause to the ecosystems where they are introduced. Through his research, he learned that humans are the primary reason that invasive species have spread globally. Daniel built each scene of the LEGO animation from scratch, then used Adobe Premiere Pro to edit and bring his vision to life.

2

2nd Place, Middle School



Acoustic Telemetry: A Sustainable Solution to Manage Invasive Species

Benjamin Kurian, Olentangy Liberty Middle School, Powell, OH

Benjamin is a three-time World of 8 Billion winner, building on his video production and script editing skills each time. This year, he chose to tackle invasive species and to propose acoustic telemetry, a type of wildlife tagging, to track invasive aquatic species. He created his video using computer-generated imagery (CGI) with Blender, an open-source animation software.

HEALTH

1

1st Place, High School



Breathe Easy with Living Walls

Nila Arunkumar,
McNeil High School,
Austin, TX

Nila was a World of 8 Billion finalist in 2022 and 2023. This year, she was inspired to create a

health video after she saw a large living wall in a local grocery store, which sparked her curiosity about using plants as a solution to improve air quality. Nila is interested in sharing how prevention is key to most health problems caused by air pollution. She plans to pursue a career in STEM.

2

2nd Place, High School



Combating Health Disparities With Bioplastic Hygiene Kits

Ranye Ezenekwe, Peak to Peak Charter School,
Lafayette, CO

Ranye is actively

involved in many youth organizations and has taken a special interest in health literacy and sustainability. She came up with the idea of distributing hygiene kits made out of non-plastic, renewable materials in order to increase access to essential health supplies that many rural areas lack.

1

1st Place, Middle School



Hydroponics to Feed the Planet

Astrid Winterstein,
Mandela International
Magnet School, Santa Fe,
NM

Astrid is passionate about science and wanted to explore hydroponic farming as

a way to address hunger and malnutrition. She learned that the nutritional value of crops has decreased over the years due to increased CO₂ in the atmosphere. Astrid was already aware of the effects of population growth on food security, but newly learned through her research how much of an impact greenhouse gas emissions have on plant growth.

2

2nd Place, Middle School



Better Outlooks for Vaccinations

Darya Maksimov, Twin Oaks Middle School,
Prior Lake, MN

Darya is interested in health and medicine and chose to create a video on vaccinations

as she was shocked to learn that many people in the US are hesitant to receive them despite having access. She used Notability (a drawing program) to create her images and CapCut to edit her video. She says the most challenging part of the project was editing all the drawings to create a smooth animation.

CARTOON



"Son, it's time we have a talk about the declining populations of the birds and the bees."

CartoonStock.com

We are honored to include Kathy and Julian Donahue in our ZPG Society. In addition to having named Population Connection as a beneficiary of their trust, the Donahues have recently chosen to give through their IRA, by making an annual qualified charitable distribution to Population Connection.

Contact us or your IRA administrator to find out if a QCD is right for you!

*Kathy and Julian Donahue,
ZPG Society Members*



GIVE THROUGH YOUR IRA **TAX-FREE**

If you are at least 70 ½ years old, you can make a qualified charitable distribution and give directly from your traditional IRA to Population Connection. You can reduce your taxable income and make a difference by building a healthier, more sustainable future. You may also include Population Connection as a charitable beneficiary of your IRA! Contact your IRA administrator to find out how.



Visit popconnect.org/IRA or email giving@popconnect.org to learn how to make a qualified charitable distribution from your IRA.



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*Joyanne Bloom,
ZPG Society Member*

OUR PROMISE **PAYMENTS FOR LIFE**

With a charitable gift annuity, you can make a gift to Population Connection while receiving a fixed stream of payments for life, for you and/or another person. You can help protect Earth's resources while demonstrating your commitment to a more sustainable future.



To learn more, visit popconnect.org/legacy or email legacy@popconnect.org