



IPAS CASE STATEMENT

**FOR MORE THAN
40 YEARS, IPAS HAS
NEVER WAVERED:**

We work to ensure that
no woman or girl dies
or is injured as a result
of an unsafe abortion

Women will always need abortion, and every woman who decides to end an unwanted pregnancy comes to the choice from her own perspective. Ipas works to ensure that all women—wherever they live and for whatever reason—have access to safe abortion, have counseling and support, and learn how to prevent future unintended pregnancies.

We know that whether or not abortions are legal, women will still have them. Restrictive laws simply make abortion more likely to be unsafe. Lack of access to safe, legal abortion often leads women to resort to caustic chemicals, back-alley practitioners, or other dangerous methods. In fact, the countries with some of the most restrictive abortion laws have the highest incidence of unsafe abortion.

Ipas is an international non-governmental organization (NGO), or non-profit organization, founded in 1973. Our mission is to *improve sexual and reproductive health and rights through enhanced access to and use of safe abortion and contraceptive care*. We know that families and communities benefit when women exercise their right to decide when and whether to have a family. When women are denied that right, it is a social injustice.

cover photos: © Richard Lord



Ipas's Multi-faceted Approach: Health, Access, and Rights

Ipas has been a pioneer in asking the bold questions to ensure that the issue of safe abortion is included in discussions about reproductive rights, human rights, and social justice. Safe abortion is integral to each of these topics.

We know that death from unsafe abortion is preventable. When properly performed, abortion is a simple, safe, accessible and cost-effective procedure—even in the most challenging regions of the world. With our widespread international network, Ipas brings that knowledge to a growing number of countries and women. Because we continually evaluate our impact, we are adding to the body of research on this topic every year.

To advance our mission, Ipas uses a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach that incorporates work in the health, social, and legal (including policy) sectors. We build the skills of health-care providers and health systems to meet women's reproductive health needs. We work in communities to reduce the stigma of abortion. We partner with national and international groups to advocate for less restrictive laws.

HEALTH. Safe options save lives. In order to ensure safety and decrease deaths, Ipas trains doctors, midwives, and nurses how to perform abortions safely and respectfully, and how to provide and counsel about contraceptives. We help keep hospitals and clinics stocked with the necessary equipment and supplies. We work with governments' ministries of health to develop national standards and guidelines for safe abortion care. Through this work, Ipas has reduced deaths and injuries due to unsafe abortion by:

- **Training** more than 45,000 health workers in providing safe abortions since 2010
- **Serving** more than 20 million women through distribution of over 900,000 reusable Ipas Manual Vacuum Aspirator (MVA) instruments worldwide
- **Directly supporting** abortion-care services to 537,000 women through 3,400 Ipas-supported health facilities in 16 countries in 2015
- **Preventing** future unintended pregnancies; three-quarters of the women we serve receive modern contraceptives

ACCESS. Knowledge opens doors. In order for all women—including young women—to have and exercise their reproductive rights, it is important that their families and communities support them. For that reason, Ipas engages people where they live. We build the capacity of community-based organizations. We support growing, local movements to affect change on the ground. We train youth leaders to become reproductive health and rights champions in their communities. We work with these and other partners to diminish abortion stigma through education and awareness-raising. By doing so, in recent years, Ipas has:

- **Reached** 991,133 women in 15 countries to promote women's knowledge, skills, social support and ability to obtain a safe abortion
- **Provided** technical support to nearly 260 community-based partner organizations in 22 countries to empower women to advocate for their own sexual and reproductive health needs



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RIGHTS. Social injustice affects everyone. Public health and human rights depend on laws and policies that protect women's reproductive rights—all women's reproductive rights. Ipas educates policy-makers about the need for safe abortion and supports local groups that advocate for laws, policies, and practices that enable every woman to fully exercise her sexual and reproductive rights. With the goal of expanding women's access to comprehensive abortion care, including contraception and related reproductive information and care, since 2010 Ipas has:

- **Helped** reform and improve policy in more than a dozen countries
- **Improved** the environment for change through advocacy, community-based partnerships, and research at the national, regional and global levels

The Good News

For more than four decades, Ipas has worked with ministries of health, local health-care providers, policymakers, community organizations, and women's groups throughout the world.

The results of our efforts, in combination with those of many partners, are encouraging: more than 30 countries eased restrictions on abortion in the past 20 years, mostly in the developing world. This has led to even better news: more and more women around the world are claiming their right to make their own reproductive decisions, resulting in a decline in the number of women dying from unsafe abortion. Ipas works in many of these countries—and in others that are still lagging dangerously behind—to make sure that all women have access to safe abortion.



NEPAL: A SUCCESS STORY

Ram Maya Tamang says that when she found out she was pregnant again, she would wake up in the night with terrible nightmares about giving birth to a sixth child. Taking care of her five children was tough sometimes; she couldn't afford the cost of education and food for one more. So she went to a local health facility and chose medical abortion. "I feel relaxed now," she said.

Before 2002 when abortion was illegal in Nepal, women were imprisoned, half of all hospital admissions were due to complications from clandestine abortions, and hundreds of women died each year.

Things are very different now. Ipas worked with the government and a wide array of partners to make abortion safe and accessible. Nepal's women and health professionals say the impact has been profound. Safe abortion services are available across the country in all districts and the number of women who are dying due to unsafe abortion complications has been cut in half.

from *Safe abortion in Nepal: A success story*

A black and white photograph of a woman looking through vertical metal bars, with her hands gripping them. The image is used as a background for the top section of the page.

WHEN ABORTION IS A CRIME

According to a study by Ipas and the Great Lakes Initiative for Human Rights and Development, *When Abortion is a Crime: Rwanda*, almost one quarter of women in five Rwandan prisons are incarcerated on abortion-related charges. The study recommends that the Rwandan government take steps to release all women, girls, and health-care professionals unjustly imprisoned on abortion-related charges and take action to remove the legal barriers that make it “nearly impossible” for Rwandan women to get safe, legal abortion care.

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The Bad News

Still, every year, unsafe abortions often lead to death or debilitating complications. These are the sobering statistics:

- An estimated 22 million women—nearly all in developing countries—undergo unsafe abortion annually, and nearly seven million women seek treatment for resulting injuries, the Guttmacher Institute confirms.
- Of the 44,000 women who die each year due to complications from unsafe abortion, 99 percent are in developing countries, according to the World Health Organization.
- Women who are poor, young, live in rural areas or urban slums—and those in racial or ethnic minorities—face the greatest risk, according to the Guttmacher Institute.

Even after restrictive abortion laws are eased, women often continue to face barriers to accessing care. Many women live too far from services or clinics, are intimidated, face threats and social stigma, or simply lack information about their legal right to safe abortion. This single issue—safe abortion—continues to be the most marginalized and neglected area of women’s health.

Ipas's Impact

Ipas operates with offices in 18 countries and supports programs and projects in nearly 10 more. Our country-based programs are led by respected, local experts who bring their extensive networks and deep cultural knowledge to our mission. All of our country offices share their best practices with each other, and after regional modifications, our programs produce an increase in effectiveness and success.

In 2015 alone:

- Ipas reached 991,100 women in 15 countries and promoted women's knowledge, skills, social support, and ability to obtain safe abortion care.
- Nearly 537,000 women received safe abortion care in 3,400 Ipas-intervention sites in 16 countries where Ipas-trained health workers provided technical assistance and supported infrastructure upgrades.
- Mozambique liberalized its abortion law, Uganda adopted standards and guidelines to combat unsafe abortion, the Sierra Leonean Parliament voted to legalize abortion, India and Malawi worked to loosen legal restrictions, and Nepal made abortion not only legal and safe, but also free for poor women.
- We informed 567,000 young people about their sexual and reproductive health rights in order to help decrease stigma about abortion.



MEXICO

CENTRAL AMERICA

EL SALVADOR,
GUATEMALA,
NICARAGUA

BOLIVIA

Experience and Capacity

Ipas has been advancing women’s sexual and reproductive rights globally since 1973. With origins as the innovator of transformative abortion technology, we have grown into a multidisciplinary global team dedicated to ensuring that women have the services, policies, and social support they need to safely prevent or terminate a pregnancy. We integrate woman-centered comprehensive abortion into national health systems, with emphasis on quality of care, capacity-building, and sustainability.

Ipas’s achievements have contributed to important positive changes in the global landscape of abortion. These include: improved availability and quality of safe abortion services; reductions in abortion-related maternal deaths and injuries; greater engagement of a wide range of actors, including community-based organizations and development partners, in addressing the need for safe abortion; an improved global and regional enabling environment; liberalization of abortion laws and policies; and a more robust body of evidence to guide programs and policies.



IPAS COUNTRY PROGRAMS

FRANCOPHONE SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF
CONGO, BENIN, CÔTE D’IVOIRE,
BURKINA FASO, MALI, NIGER

SIERRA LEONE

GHANA NIGERIA

ETHIOPIA

AFRICA ALLIANCE

KENYA,
UGANDA

ZAMBIA MALAWI

MOZAMBIQUE

PAKISTAN

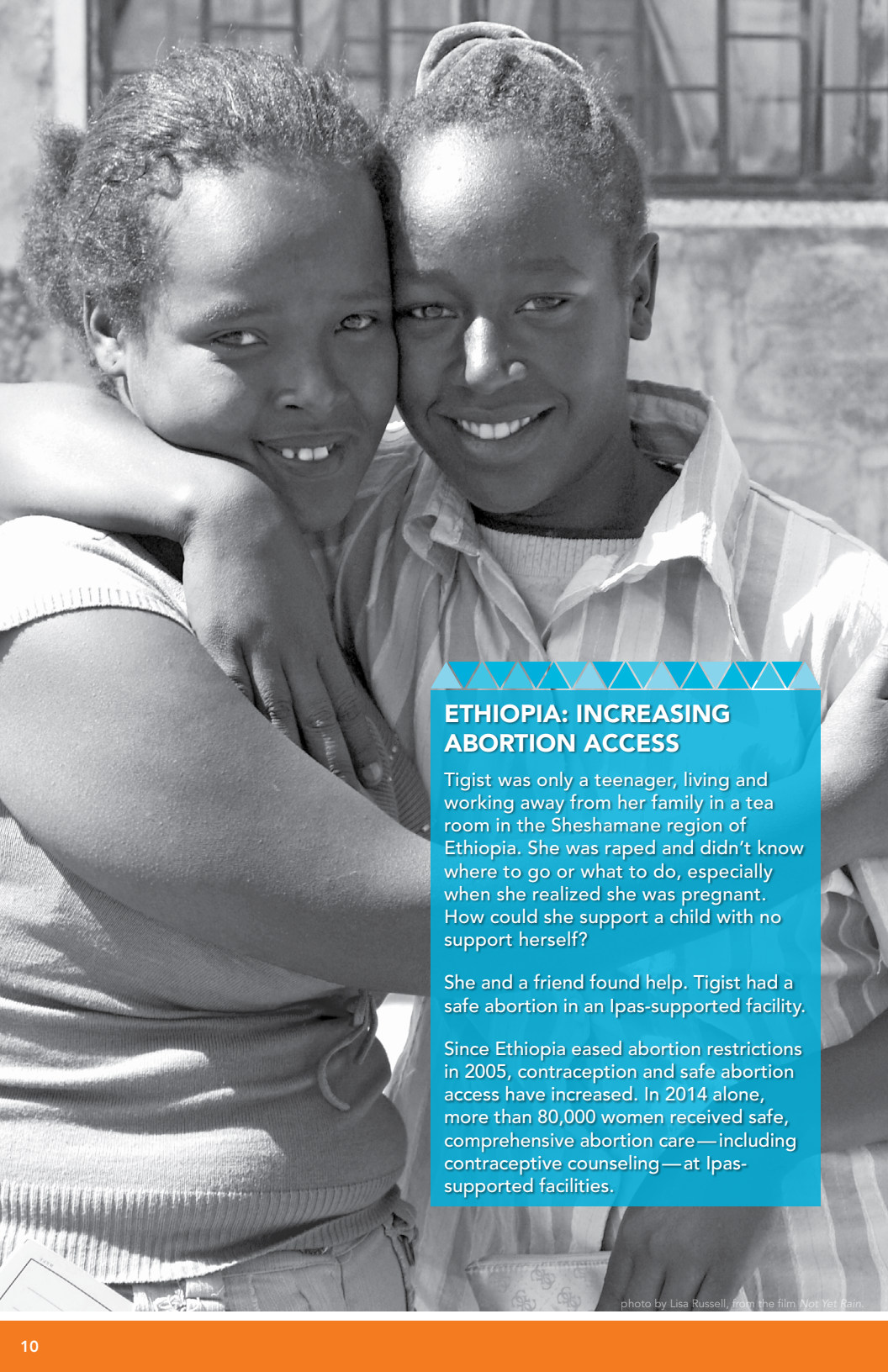
NEPAL

INDIA

BANGLADESH

MYANMAR

INDONESIA



ETHIOPIA: INCREASING ABORTION ACCESS

Tigist was only a teenager, living and working away from her family in a tea room in the Sheshamane region of Ethiopia. She was raped and didn't know where to go or what to do, especially when she realized she was pregnant. How could she support a child with no support herself?

She and a friend found help. Tigist had a safe abortion in an Ipas-supported facility.

Since Ethiopia eased abortion restrictions in 2005, contraception and safe abortion access have increased. In 2014 alone, more than 80,000 women received safe, comprehensive abortion care—including contraceptive counseling—at Ipas-supported facilities.

photo by Lisa Russell, from the film *Not Yet Rain*

Case for Support

All of the work Ipas undertakes requires financial partnership. We have strong, standing programming in many areas but know that there is more we need to do in certain critical arenas. Ipas is poised to tackle three specific areas of tremendous need—second-trimester abortion, youth leadership and engagement, and humanitarian relief—and we need your support. With your backing, Ipas will meet these challenges, allowing women and girls access to the care they need, and the futures they deserve.

Second-Trimester Abortions [The Tough Stuff]

Within the reproductive health field, Ipas is known for charging toward tough issues, especially when we see an opportunity to help more women. Women will always need abortion, and women who need abortion in the second trimester tend to be the most vulnerable—poor, sick, rural, young, survivors of violence—and disempowered. To meet the needs of these women, Ipas trains health-care professionals to perform more technically demanding second-trimester abortions safely.

Our commitment to decreasing maternal morbidity and mortality must include safe options for second-trimester abortions; poorly performed second-trimester abortions account for the majority of abortion-related death and disability. Yet, when done to World Health Organization standards by trained professionals, such abortions are less risky than childbirth.

In one recent training session in Ethiopia, we learned that a quiet and studious nurse was paying especially close attention because she was dedicating her career to providing safe second-trimester abortions. Why? Because her mother, sister and aunt had all died of complications from unsafe abortions later in pregnancy. She sees this as a public health imperative. We agree. Most people don't want women to die.

Implementing safe second-trimester services on the global scale, where demand is much larger than the current number of trained providers can accommodate, is a tremendous undertaking. Ipas

has a unique role—we are the global leader in addressing second-trimester care, and have flagship programs ongoing in Nepal, Ethiopia, and a graduated program in Vietnam. The ability to provide this service safely requires a full system overhaul—a long-term improvement to infrastructure including buy-in from ministries of health, health-care providers, and support staff, as well as competency-based training and support.

THE NEED: Undaunted funders who will help Ipas bring training and long-term infrastructure change to more countries.

Young People as Patients, Advocates, and Activists [The Feel-good Stuff]

As global data demonstrates, young women suffer the majority of deaths and injuries from unsafe abortion. Pregnancy and child-birth-related complications, including unsafe abortion, continue to be one of the leading causes of death for adolescent girls 15–19 years old. Adolescents who want to end their pregnancy often take longer than adult women to realize they are pregnant, and they consequently have abortions later in pregnancy. Also, they are more likely than older women to seek abortion services from untrained providers or to self-induce, and they typically know less about their rights concerning abortion and postabortion care.

The numbers are shocking:

- Of the 22 million women worldwide who have an unsafe abortion each year, nearly all are in developing countries, and almost 50 percent are young women aged 10 to 24.
- Adolescent girls aged 10 to 19 make up 70 percent of all hospitalizations from unsafe abortion complications.
- Young women aged 10 to 24 account for approximately 46 percent of unsafe abortion-related deaths each year.
- Adolescents are disproportionately affected by sexual violence.

These devastating numbers are why Ipas embraces the mantra “nothing for us without us”—we believe that young people know their needs better than anyone else does. We partner with youth-

led and youth-focused community organizations across Africa, Asia, and Latin America and place young leaders at the center of this work because it affects them and their peers the most. With our partner groups we educate people on sexual and reproductive health, train health-care providers on youth-friendly safe abortion and contraceptive services, and develop the next generation of advocates for young people's sexual and reproductive rights.

Our goal is to invest in young leaders—advocates and activists—because they have a better chance at getting needed and accurate information to their peers. These strong leaders will continue to make governments uphold and strengthen the laws that protect reproductive rights, and will keep working to rectify restrictive policies or lack of access in other places.

THE NEED: Funding to continue reaching young people before they need us. Your generous contributions will be the fuel that ignites this inclusive next-generation movement.



Growing Humanitarian Need [The Gut-wrenching Stuff]

During humanitarian crises, the need for abortion services is high due to many factors that increase the incidence of unintended pregnancy: interruptions to regular health services and supplies, disrupted family and social structures; loss of livelihoods and assets, and increased levels of exploitation; sexual violence; and transactional sex. However, at this time when women need comprehensive reproductive health care so badly, many essential services, such as long-acting contraception, sexual violence care, postabortion care, and comprehensive abortion care, are not available.

In conflict settings, international humanitarian law (the Geneva Conventions) dictates that abortion should be legal in cases of rape, incest, and to preserve the life and health of the mother. Still, to date, few resources have been invested to overcome the barriers to abortion care in humanitarian settings, leaving women in dire need. Key reasons include:

- Lack of knowledge about the magnitude and consequences of unintended pregnancy and unsafe abortion
- Widespread misinformation about organizational policies, global and national legal frameworks (on public health, human rights, and humanitarian situations) that support women's rights, and access to postabortion and comprehensive abortion services
- Conflicting personal values and beliefs
- Stigma around this issue
- Little to no funding for abortion programs and services in humanitarian settings

Ipas is a trusted and sought after source to address knowledge gaps and provide clinical training for our partner service-delivery organizations that work in these settings.

THE NEED: Unrestricted funds to bring safe abortion to women in areas of conflict and crisis.



Please Give

If you agree with Ipas

...that NO woman should have to resort to using sharp objects, caustic chemicals, or back alleys ever again; be imprisoned due to regressive laws; have to risk her life, health, fertility, well-being, or her family's well-being because she lacks safe reproductive health care, including safe abortion

...and that ALL women should be able to make their own decisions about whether and when to have a family and have access to safe abortion, postabortion care, and contraceptives

...then support Ipas today. Your gift helps Ipas to:

- Educate and inform policymakers to liberalize the repressive laws that punish women who make their own choices
- Train health-care workers in comprehensive abortion care
- Collaborate with local advocates—including journalists, activists, and entertainers—to create compelling and informative stories to effectively obliterate the stigma of abortion
- Help decrease the number of unwanted pregnancies

Thank you!

GIVING LEVELS

When you make a donation to Ipas, you give the gift of a future to countless women and families across the globe.

LEADER	\$50,000+
CHAMPION	\$10,000–\$49,999
PATRON	\$5,000–\$9,999
ADVOCATE	\$2,500–4,999
FRIEND	\$1,000–2,499
ACTIVIST	UP TO \$999



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