

COMMUNICATION ON ENGAGEMENT (COE)



Ipas, Inc.

Period covered by this Communication on Engagement: July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2023

Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the Chief Executive or Equivalent

February 21, 2024

To our stakeholders:

Across more than 18 countries, Ipas collaborates with partners to advance access to abortion and contraception. We are committed to reproductive justice, bodily autonomy, and human rights. Ipas's work advances the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 3: Good health and well-being and SDG 5: Gender equality.

Ipas reaffirms its support to the United Nations Global Compact and its Ten Principles in the areas of Human Rights, Labor, Environment and Anti-Corruption. Our Communication on Engagement with the United Nations Global Compact is provided below. More information about our work is available at www.ipas.org.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Anu Kumar".

Anu Kumar, PHD, MPH
President and CEO

Part II. Description of Actions

HUMAN RIGHTS

- Ipas staff and partners adhere to a Safeguarding Policy, designed to protect people, particularly children, at-risk adults, and beneficiaries from harm that may be caused due to their contact with Ipas.
- At the 66th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), held in March 2022, Ipas submitted a written statement to provide evidence and recommendations on the impact of climate change on women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Ipas's advocacy, along with the Women's Rights Caucus, and with the SRHR and Climate Justice Coalition, resulted in the adoption by CSW of a statement that recognizes the gendered impact of climate change and promotes the fulfillment of women's and girls' rights, including SRHR.

- At the 67th CSW, held in March 2023, Ipas staff worked to ensure that governments stayed strong on their commitments to SRHR and comprehensive sexual education, and to represent the safe abortion agenda within the global feminist community.
- Within the UN system, Ipas works in partnership with SRHR and reproductive justice organizations and networks to document human rights violations and the gendered impact of public policies, especially those criminalizing sexuality and reproduction. During this period, Ipas led and contributed to various reports and statements, including:
 - A submission to the report by the Special Rapporteur on the right to physical and mental health in July 2022, focused on racism and the right to health in the United States, following the Supreme Court decision that eliminated the constitutional right to abortion.
 - A submission to the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and the Environment to contribute to their report on Women, Girls, and the Right to a Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable Environment in November 2022.
 - A submission to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination for the General Discussion on “racial discrimination and the right to health” in preparation for the drafting of General Comment 37.
- Ipas provided key recommendations to the *Guideline on abortion care*, released by the World Health Organization (WHO) in March 2022. The new Guideline recognizes abortion as a human right and has the potential to accelerate efforts to increase access to care for people most in need around the globe. Through trainings and outreach, we are now working across intervention countries to translate the Guideline into improved access to abortion care. Ipas also developed a free, multilingual resource—[Advocacy lens: 2022 WHO Abortion Care Guideline](#)—to support advocacy strategies grounded in global standards for public health and human rights.

LABOR

- Ipas practices shared leadership—an organizational philosophy that broadly distributes authority and responsibility and moves decisionmaking closer to where our work is done. As of July 2023, we operate as a locally-led, globally connected impact network. Our management structure—consisting of a Network Leadership Group, a staff Community Council, Country and Regional Directors, and the Ipas Board of Directors—reflects our aim to carry out our mission with attention to equity, power and accountability.
- Ipas strives to foster fair labor practices that support employees, eliminate discrimination, and prohibit child labor. Protected classes—including race, color, age, religion, national origin, sex (including gender, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity), physical or mental disability, and veteran status—are covered under Ipas’s policies and procedures. A mandatory “Culture of Respect” training increases staff understanding of, and prevention of, sexual harassment and bullying.
- Ipas’s compensation program is a management tool that is designed to support, reinforce, and align core values, business strategy, operational needs, and budgets. We periodically conduct a compensation review, including an assessment of market conditions in the countries where we operate and adjust salary bands and grades accordingly.
- As a partner, Ipas analyzes our interests, relative power, strengths, and limitations in any relationship and transparently communicates those to current and potential partners. We ask the same of all partners to build the most productive partnership possible. We ask partners for their feedback about the process, outcomes, and relationship—and are willing to give them feedback about these issues—and we incorporate that feedback into our future partnerships. Ipas also conducts an annual Partnership Survey to guide our collaborations.

ENVIRONMENT

- Ipas disseminated findings from [qualitative research](#) conducted between 2020-2021 in Zambezia, Mozambique, and Khulna, Bangladesh on the intersection of climate change and women's sexual and reproductive health. The research aimed to better understand how women's experiences with climate change impact their sexual and reproductive health decision making, behavior, and outcomes in cyclone-prone communities.
- Ipas generated findings on sexual and gender-based violence incidence, service, and responses in Ethiopia during drought. We organized one national and three regional dissemination and advocacy workshops, leading to fruitful discussion held among key partners about the intersectionality of climate change, gender, and reproductive justice.
- Ipas conducted a research study to assess the resilience of communities to access and health system to provide comprehensive SRHR during climate change-induced extreme weather in arid- and semi-arid lands (ASAL) in Northern Kenya. The study involved in-depth interviews with women and girls; focus group discussions with Maasai warriors, known as Moran; and key informant interviews with a diverse variety of health system experts, community group leaders, and local SRHR-focused women and youth groups. Findings concerning local adaptation strategies and health system risks will inform SRHR-integrated climate action to bolster the resilience of ASAL communities and health systems.
- Ipas conducted research to explore the effects of climate change on sexual and reproductive health in adult women, young women, and indigenous girls in rural Bolivian communities (Altiplano, Amazon, Chaco, and Valles). The study found that climate change affects the poorest families, increasing teenage marriages to alleviate the pressing shortage of economic resources and reinforcing women's economic dependence. Women have made the decision to avoid having more children due to climate impacts, so are increasingly using modern contraceptive methods.
- In Nepal, Ipas analyzed the complex relationships between climate change, gender dynamics, and sexual and reproductive health and rights. Our findings revealed visible impacts on household well-being and women's SRHR. Notably, climate change contributed to issues such as SGBV, economic insecurity, and compromised autonomy in SRH decision-making. We supported the development of Local Adaptation Plans of Action (LAPAs) integrating gender and SRHR considerations, which were endorsed by seven local governments.
- In Pakistan, Ipas conducted a research study in Sindh and ICT examining the link between the climate crisis and reproductive health, with a focus on postabortion care during the 2022 floods. The team then developed an advocacy toolkit on the intersection of the climate crisis and reproductive health in Pakistan.

ANTI-CORRUPTION

- Ipas's policies and procedures work against corruption in all its forms, including extortion and bribery.
- Ipas's Code of Business Ethics and Conduct sets out Ipas's expectations for compliance with legal, ethical, and other requirements that govern Ipas and its business.
- The Conflict of Interest and Disclosure policy requires an annual sign off by all staff to disclose activities such as a relative working at a vendor organization, or membership on the board of another organization. If a change takes place during the year, employees are asked to update this form more than annually.
- Ipas has an Ethics Hotline and related policies that allow staff, vendors, and contractors to report fraud, bribery, extortion, or other ethics violations anonymously to a hotline that is

available 24/7. A link for reporting is [available](#) on our public-facing website. There is also contact information for country program staff to report locally.

Part III. Measurement of Outcomes

Select Global Deliverables	Fiscal Year 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)	Fiscal Year 2023 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023)
# of policy changes that promote access to abortion	77	48
# of positive public statements/commitments supporting access to abortion	120	167
# of abortion access points supported by Ipas, including health facilities and abortion self-care access sites	7,080	9,242
# of abortions provided at Ipas-supported access points	471,283	456,917
# of contraceptive services provided at Ipas-supported access points	2,143,165	1,644,293