



Biden-Harris Administration

YEAR 1: Policy Wins in 2021



Repealed the Global Gag Rule

On January 28, 2021, the Biden-Harris Administration finally repealed the Global Gag Rule as part of its [executive memorandum](#) on women's health in the United States and abroad. While meaningful, the action is not permanent and could be reinstated by another administration.



Funded the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)

The January 28th executive memorandum also called for the United States to restore funding to UNFPA. Subsequently, the President's budget included a \$56 million request for UNFPA – a [70% increase above prior year funding levels](#) – for fiscal year (FY) 2022.



U.S. co-sponsorship and signature withdrawn from the "Geneva Consensus Declaration"

The Geneva Consensus Declaration was a repressive and dangerous vision of sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) invented by the Trump-Pence administration. It sought other countries' endorsement to challenge the international consensus on protecting reproductive choice, sexual orientation and gender expression. The Biden-Harris Administration took prompt action to disavow this harmful declaration.



Publicly supported and embraced SRHR

In his January 28th memo, President Biden declared, "It is the policy of my administration to support women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights in the United States, as well as globally." This is the first time an administration has embraced the phrase "sexual and reproductive health and rights" at the time of taking office.



Committed to advancing SRHR

At the Generation Equality Forum, which marked the 25th anniversary of the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, the administration, represented by Vice President Harris, committed to "protect and advance sexual and reproductive health and rights." This commitment included meeting with like-minded countries to discuss expanding SRHR.



Created the White House Gender Policy Council and gender strategy

The White House established a Gender Policy Council in March 2021 to address domestic and international gender issues. In October, the Council released the [National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality](#), the first-ever U.S. gender strategy, which identified SRHR as a priority.



Nominated and confirmed progressive officials supportive of SRHR

- Antony Blinken, Secretary of State
- Samantha Power, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Administrator
- Linda Thomas-Greenfield, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations
- Isobel Coleman, USAID Deputy Administrator for Policy and Programming
- Dr. Atul Gawande, USAID Assistant Administrator for Global Health

YEAR 2: Policy Wins in 2022



Increased family planning and reproductive health funding

President Biden's FY 2023 budget request included a total of \$597 million to support bilateral family planning and reproductive health (FP/RH) programs. It also added \$56 million to the U.S. contribution to UNFPA, bringing the total request to \$653 million. This represents a modest, but important, \$13.3 million increase over his inaugural budget request.



Updated strategy to prevent and respond to global GBV

In December 2022, the Biden-Harris Administration launched a new [U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence \(GBV\) Globally](#). Building off previous GBV strategies released under the Obama Administration in 2012 and 2016, this strategy recognizes the importance of SRHR in effective GBV prevention and response. It also considers many of the SRHR and gender justice policy recommendations that PAI and other advocates advanced over the past year.



Publicly supported global reproductive rights post-Roe v. Wade

When the constitutional right to abortion – which had been in place for nearly 50 years under Roe v. Wade – was eliminated by the United States Supreme Court in the controversial Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization ruling, the administration was quick to respond and condemn the decision both domestically and globally. Just days following the ruling, Secretary of State Blinken released a statement acknowledging the global concern generated by the decision and affirmed the State Department's support for protecting and advancing reproductive rights around the world. At the U.N. General Assembly in September, President Biden also highlighted the importance of women and girls being able to exercise their "basic reproductive rights."

YEAR 3: Priorities for 2023



Increase funding for family planning and reproductive health

While the increases in funding for FP/RH in the administration's FY 2023 budget proposal were critical, they continue to fall far short of the estimated \$1.74 billion "fair share" that the U.S. should be contributing to address the unmet global need for contraception. If the administration is going to live up to its commitment to support global SRHR needs, the White House needs to prioritize increasing its funding request for FY 2024 and defending these increases in its interactions with Congress.



Support the repeal of the Helms amendment

In its annual budget requests to Congress in 2021 and 2022, the administration supported repealing the Hyde amendment, which would allow federal funds to be used for abortion services in the United States. In 2023, it should also champion the repealing of the 1973 Helms amendment, which restricts the use of foreign assistance funds to provide abortions abroad. The administration must also ensure that the United States is supporting access to abortion overseas to the full extent allowed under law.



Release updates to critical gender-focused strategies

The Biden-Harris Administration drafted updates to the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy and solicited feedback from civil society but has yet to release the final text. Meanwhile, other strategies need updating to align with the administration's stated values, including the National Strategy on Women, Peace and Security.



Implement newly created and updated gender strategies

While the administration released strong strategies to advance gender equity and equality, it must now implement these strategies on the ground to make them a reality. In 2022, federal agencies developed implementation plans that would operationalize the National Gender Strategy. However, few details of the implementation plans have been shared publicly, which is crucial for accountability. The administration should release these plans to the public as soon as possible, so that the implementation of this and other strategies can be monitored.



Expand leadership in multilateral fora

The Biden-Harris Administration has clearly stated that it intends for the United States to be a global leader on issues related to SRHR, including comprehensive sexuality education and gender equality. This has been no easy task after the prior administration actively undermined many of these issues at the United Nations and elsewhere. Now that the United States is fully back at the table and reestablishing its position supporting SRHR, it is time to step up and exercise greater leadership through both words and action.