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# Women's Health in Third World Countries

Hannah Haas  
*Chapman University*

Ian James  
*Chapman University*

Ryan Winnie  
*Chapman University*

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WOMEN'S HEALTH



WORLD CONNECTIONS

BY: Hannah Haas, Ian James, Ryan Wimmie

# AFRICA: reproductive health

32% of global burden of disease is due to poor reprod. health.

About 13% of married women use contraception

29% of neo-nat deaths occur in Africa.

Unsafe abortions account for 14% of maternal deaths

WWW.UNChronicle.org

# ASIA: reproductive health

In the Philippines over 1,000 women have illegal & unsafe abortions every day.

In Vietnam 60% of HIV carriers were adolescence in 2001.

In China couples with one or more kids are subject to social compensation fees and denial of state benefits.

## FGM- Female Genital Mutilation

### Cultural and Social Factors for Performing FGM:

- Social Convention
- Way to prepare for adulthood and marriage
- Aims to ensure premarital virginity and marital fidelity
- Associated with cultural ideals of femininity and modesty
- Local structures of power and authority, such as community leaders and medical personnel can contribute to upholding the practice

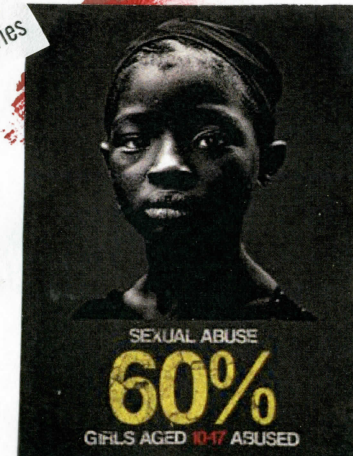
Common practice in Northern Africa, Middle East and Asia



### Long Term Complications:

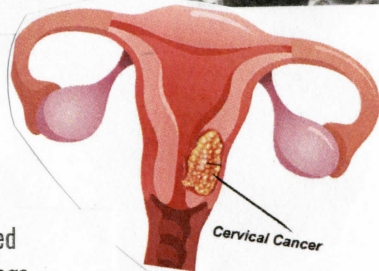
- Urinary problems
- Vaginal problems
- Scar tissue
- Increased risk of childbirth complications
- Need for additional surgeries to correct previous ones
- Psychological problems
- Health complications

More than 200 million girls and women alive today have been cut in 30 countries in the Middle East and Asia where FGM is most concentrated.



## Top 10 Issues Regarding Women's Health in Developing Countries:

**Cancer:** Most common types of cancer affecting women are breast and cervical cancers. Estimated that 1 million women die each year from these diseases. The majority is preventable with proper screening and prevention treatment.



**Noncommunicable Diseases:** In 2012, 4.7 million women died from noncommunicable diseases before they reached the age of 70, most in low or middle income countries. Helping girls and women adopt a healthy lifestyle is key to a long and healthy life.



**Reproductive Health:** 222 million women don't have access to the contraceptive services they need



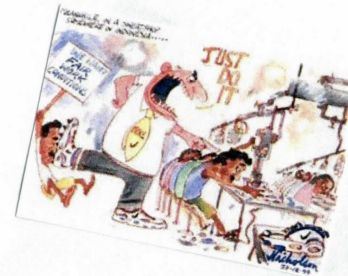
**HIV:** Young women in developing countries bear the brunt of this disease. Improper care and treatment results in a high rate of death for people with HIV.

**Violence Against Women:** 1 in 3 women under 50 have experienced physical or sexual violence by a partner or non-partner.



## Factory Safety Oversight

- Approximately 80% of the 4 million garment factory workers in Bangladesh are women, and about 15% are between the ages of 16 and 30



- In one factory, women were forced to work 100 hours a week during peak production periods, and supervisors punched and slapped them. The victims included pregnant women, and at least one miscarried because of the treatment

- Inspection found that many factories in Bangladesh lacked adequate fire doors, sprinklers, fire alarms, and fire hoses, among other deficiencies



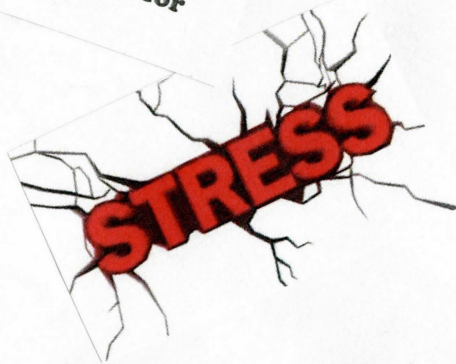
- Around one-third of textile workers in India suffer from respiratory diseases contracted at work

[http://inthesetimes.com/working/entry/18066/out\\_of\\_sight\\_erik\\_loomis](http://inthesetimes.com/working/entry/18066/out_of_sight_erik_loomis)

## Work Stress & Reproduction

- Occupational stress including high job strain, exhaustion, and stress related to working conditions was a risk factor for gynecologic pain

- The high job strain and poor job security are associated with an increased risk for dysmenorrhea



- Compulsory overtime and exhaustion were associated with increased non-cyclic pelvic pain

- Working overtime and exhaustion were associated with increased dyspareunia

"Gynecologic pain related to occupational stress among female factory workers in Tianjin, China". Sznajder



## List of Factory Disasters



- May 10, 1993: Kader Toy Factory fire. A fire started in a poorly built factory in Thailand. Exit doors were locked and the stairwell collapsed. 188 workers were killed, mostly young women.

- April 18, 2007: Qinghe Special Steel Corporation disaster. A ladle holding molten steel separated from the overhead iron rail, fell, tipped, and killed 32 workers, injuring another 6.

- February 1, 2008: Istanbul fireworks explosion. An unlicensed fireworks factory exploded accidentally, leaving by some reports at least 22 people dead and at least 100 injured.

- September 11, 2012: Karachi, Pakistan, 289 people died in a fire at the Ali Enterprises garment factory, which made ready-to-wear clothing for Western export.

- November 24, 2012: Dhaka Tasreen Fashions fire. A seven-story factory fire outside of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, killed at least 112 people, 12 from jumping out of windows to escape the blaze.



- April 24, 2013: 2013 Savar building collapse. An eight-story factory building collapsed on the outskirts of Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, and killed 1129 people. The building contained five garment factories that were manufacturing clothing for the western market.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_industrial\\_disasters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_industrial_disasters)

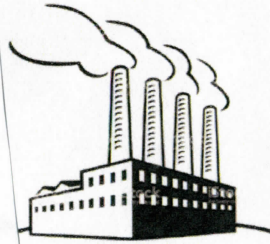
# Common Employee Outcomes

TOY FACTORY  
WAGES OFFICE



• Women working in electronics assembly plants have reported serious eye damage due to prolonged periods of squinting through microscopes checking minute parts for defects

• Women working in textile and garment factories have reported respiratory illnesses due to inadequate ventilation systems



• There are so few older women on these factory lines because management retires child-bearing workers, but also because of the prevalence of debilitating diseases which force women to quit at an early age

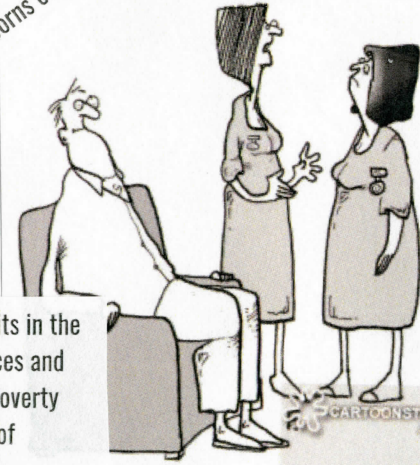
• A 24-year-old woman is likely to be called "grandma"; by her co-workers  
<https://www.cultural-survival.org/publications/cultural-survival-quarterly/third-world-women-factories>

Maternal Health: In 2013, almost 300,000 women died from complications in pregnancy and childbirth. The same resources that are available to women in developed countries are not available for most women in developing countries.



Mental Health: Helping sensitize women to mental health issues and giving them the confidence to seek assistance is essential in reducing the number of suicides that occur every year from women in developing nations.

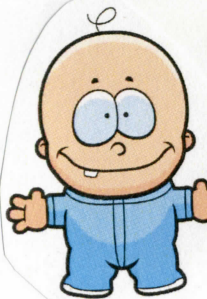
STI's: Untreated syphilis is responsible for more than 200,000 stillbirths and the death of more than 90,000 newborns every year.



Getting Older: Older women have less access to benefits in the workplace, less access to health care and social services and a higher rate of conditions of old age, like dementia. Poverty combined with old age makes women at a higher risk of abuse and poor health

Luckily he has dementia so he's got some imaginary friends coming in to look after him.

Being Young: About 12 million adolescent girls (under 20) give birth every year. Complications from those pregnancies and childbirth are a leading cause of death for those young mothers.



# Maternity and Menstruation

Developing Countries:  
1 in 76 lifetime risk of maternal death

Developed Countries:  
1 in 8,000 risk of maternal death

Women in developing countries are 300x more likely to die in childbirth or from pregnancy related complications than women in developed countries.

99% of global deaths arise from pregnancy related issues occur in the developing world.

Girls and women are subject to restrictive rules disallowing them from participating normally in society for up to 60 days every year

"Every year, more than half a million women die as a result of pregnancy or childbirth complications, including about 70,000 girls and young women aged 15-19." -Ann Veneman, UNICEF Executive Director

For every woman who dies, another 20 suffer illness or injury, oftentimes with lasting complications

## Why invest in sexual and reproductive health in the developing world?

Providing women the care they need would cost just

**\$25** per woman per year

...and each year would prevent:

- ▶ 52 M unintended pregnancies
- ▶ 14.9 M unsafe abortions
- ▶ 194,000 maternal deaths
- ▶ 2.2 M newborn deaths
- ▶ 121,000 HIV infections among newborns

**225 million** women have an unmet need for modern contraception



**43 M** don't give birth in a health facility



**21 M** don't receive care for pregnancy or delivery complications



**550,000** HIV-infected women don't receive medicine to prevent mother-to-child transmission



**33 M** newborns don't receive needed care for complications

## Reproductive Health in Third Countries vs. The United States of America

Americans are fortunate enough to have easy access to programs that educate young women of their bodies and sexual organs. Developing countries like Asia, Africa and the Caribbean are not as lucky. These third world countries have little education for important things like family planning.

Subsequently this has left places like Guyana with the highest rate of young adolescent births with a 97 to 1,000 births ratio, while Jamaica has a 72 to 1,000 ratio. The United States have designated mandates for states that insist on sexual education, while third world countries lack the education. According to the Guttmacher Institute, "the proportion of all pregnancies in Africa ending in abortion each year, estimated at 15% in 2010-2014". Third world countries that try and legalize child marriages have proved unsuccessful. According to the UNFPA in Asia a third of young women in the region are married by 18, and 1 in 8 are married by 15 years old. They also stated that "girls living in rural areas, those with less education, are girls from poorer households are more likely to be married...". Due to this lack of education it can easily be inferred that these young girls know little about their reproductive organs and has been proven to increase risk of early pregnant, STIs and gender-based violence. I see these statistics as a change for the United States to step up and end even more aid than the limited amount that is currently being provided in numerous third world countries and help those who need it.

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" WE CANNOT  
CONFRONT

THE MASSIVE

CHALLENGES of  
POVERTY, DISEASE  
& ENVIRONMENTAL  
DESTRUCTION

UNLESS WE ADDRESS  
ISSUES of POPULATION  
&

REPRODUCTIVE  
HEALTH."

~Thorya Obaid