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PFHS 380.665 FAMILY PLANNING POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

**Unwanted Fertility and Induced Abortion
Implications for Family Planning Programs**

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A. The context of unwanted pregnancies and fertility (1999 estimates)

	World	LDCs	MDCs
Women of childbearing age	1.38 billion	1.127 billion	0.253 billion
Pregnancies	210 million (100%)	182 million (100%)	28 million (100%)
Miscarriages/stillbirths	31 million (15%)	27 million (15%)	4 million (15%)
Induced abortions	46 million (22%) rate 35/1000	36 million (20%) rate 34/1000	10 million (36%) rate 39/1000
---Legal abortions	---26 million	---17 million	---9 million
---Illegal abortions	---20 million	---19 million	---1 million
Live births	123 million (63%) rate 89/1000	118 million (65%) rate 105/1000	14 million (49%) rate 55/1000
---Wanted births	---99 million (47%)	---89 million (49%)	---10 million (36%)
---Unwanted births	---33 million (16%)	---29 million (16%)	---4 million (13%)

B. Measures of unwanted fertility

The World Fertility Surveys (WFS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) generally included questions on:

- desired family size
- whether more children are wanted or not
- the wanted status of the most recent (or every) birth or pregnancy
- the number of additional children wanted

A number of direct and indirect indicators of desired family size or wanted fertility can be derived from responses to these questions on reproductive preferences. Unfortunately several of the estimates are severely biased because of factors conditioning the types of responses including rationalization of the current situation, non-numeric responses, etc. (see Bongaarts, 1990).

C. Demographic indicators of unwanted fertility

Three common indicators are:

1. The Total Wanted Fertility Rate (TWFR) constructed like a TFR by deleting all birth that were reported as unwanted or ill timed in each age group.
2. The percent of recent births that were wanted then, not wanted , or wanted later.
3. The percent of women saying that they want no more children generally tabulated according to number of living children.

D. Empirical observations on unwanted fertility from developing countries (See Charts and Tables from Ross, Stover and Willard, 1999)

1. Relationship of TWFR to TFR
2. Regional indicators of excessive fertility

E. Trends in unwanted fertility with development and rising contraceptive prevalence. (Bongaarts, 1997)

Unwanted fertility *increases* with increasing socio-economic development, as desired family size diminishes, even though contraceptive prevalence increases. The reasons for this paradoxical finding are:

1. An increasing proportion of women wanting fewer children who therefore have a longer exposure time for risk of pregnancy.
2. Incomplete "preference implementation" in terms of successful contraceptive use because of economic, social and psychological obstacles.
3. Contraceptive failure.
4. Restricted access to safe abortion services
5. Variations in other proximate determinants (marriage, breastfeeding)

F. Abortion - the incidence of abortion worldwide (Henshaw, Singh and Haas, 1999a)

1. Data sources
2. Measures of abortions - rates per 1000 MWRA vs. ratio per 100 live births
3. Legal status and abortions performed

G. Patterns of abortions by age, parity and marital status in different countries (Bankole, Singh and Haas, 1999)

H. Relationship of abortions to contraceptive use (Henshaw, Singh and Haas, 1999b; Marston and Cleland, 2003))

I. Sex-selective abortion (Junhong, 2001; Arnold, Kisher and Roy, 2002)

Required readings

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Marston, C and Cleland, J. Relationships between contraception and abortion: a review of the evidence. *International Family Planning Perspectives* 29 (1): 6-13, 2003.

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