New global evidence on SRHR: Abortion incidence and adolescent contraceptive needs

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New Guttmacher and WHO abortion incidence estimates

Abortion incidence between 1990 and 2014: global, regional, and subregional levels and trends

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Objectives

PRIMARY:

- To calculate subregional, regional and global levels and trends in abortion incidence in 1990 to 2014

SECONDARY:

- To calculate the proportion of pregnancies that end in abortion

- To examine whether abortion rates vary with the legal status of abortion
Abortion estimation: past and present

BASIS OF PRIOR ABORTION ESTIMATES:
- Available abortion data
- Informal inference to countries without data

BASIS OF NEW ESTIMATES:
- Available abortion data
- Data on factors associated with abortion incidence
- Hierarchical time series model
Key findings

ABORTION INCIDENCE IN 2010-2014:

- 56 million induced abortions occurred each year, on average
- There were 35 abortions per 1,000 women aged 15-44
- One in four pregnancies ended in abortion
- 73% of abortions were obtained by married women
- The average abortion rate was similar in countries with restrictive and liberal abortion laws
Key findings

ABORTION TRENDS SINCE 1990-1994:

- **The abortion rate**
  - fell in the developed world
  - did not change in the developing world

- **The percent of pregnancies ending in abortion**
  - decreased in the developed world
  - increased in the developing world
About 56 million abortions took place each year in 2010-2014
The annual number of abortions increased in developing regions
The global abortion rate fell slightly
The abortion rate fell significantly in the developed world, but not in the developing world.

This is reflected in the regional trends

Africa

Asia

Latin America

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
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<td>1995</td>
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<td>37</td>
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<td>2000</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The percent of pregnancies ending in abortion is increasing in the developing world

Developed countries

Developing countries

The abortion rate is similar in countries grouped by legal status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Abortions per 1,000 women 15-44</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prohibited altogether or to save woman's life</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woman's mental health</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-economic grounds</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On request</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Married women account for the majority of abortions

- World: Married 73%, Unmarried 27%*
- Developed countries: Married 69%, Unmarried 31%*
- Developing countries: Married 73%, Unmarried 27%*

ADDITIONAL FINDINGS

- 88% of abortions were obtained in the developing world
- The decline in abortion in the developed world occurred mostly among married women
- The abortion rate has increased in Western Europe
- Prior global abortion estimates were conservatively low
Adding It Up: Meeting the Contraceptive Needs of Adolescents

By JE Darroch, V Woog, A Bankole and LS Ashford

May, 2016
Background

- Adolescents constitute about 1 in 4 (27%) of the world’s population aged 10-49 in 2016

- This proportion is estimated to remain relatively unchanged (26%) by 2050

- Adolescents need supportive policies and programs to help them transition into healthy and productive adult lives.

- This study estimates the costs and benefits of helping adolescent women prevent unintended pregnancy.
Early childbearing among adolescents has far-reaching consequences

- Can alter women’s life prospects and those of their children

- Complications of pregnancy and childbirth second leading cause of death among 15-19

- Babies born to adolescent mothers face greater health risks than those born to older mothers

- Adolescent childbearing associated with lower educational attainment and can perpetuate cycle of poverty
Data from many sources combined into a coherent and consistent framework

- Numbers and characteristics of adolescents: UN, Guttmacher tabulations of >130 national surveys (DHS, MICS, CDC) and published studies

- Impacts of contraceptive use and unmet need: Guttmacher failure-rate analyses, pregnancy intention and abortion estimates; WHO maternal mortality

- Service costs: UN database of contraceptive donor costs; WHO salary estimates and UNFPA indirect program and systems cost estimates
Adolescent Adding It Up

- Estimates for female adolescents aged 15-19 in all countries in developing regions
- Compare different scenarios of contraceptive use by sexually active adolescents wanting to avoid pregnancy
- Put disparate research findings into the fuller context of women’s lives and highlight disadvantaged subgroups
Findings
Sexual activity, marriage and childbearing all increase with age and are more common among adolescents in Africa and LAC than in Asia.
In developing regions, 38 million—15%—of women aged 15-19 need contraception to avoid an unintended pregnancy...

- Married or unmarried and sexually active, and not in need: 74%
- Married/sexually active; want to postpone birth at least 2 years: 15%
- Unmarried and not sexually active: 11%

252 million women aged 15-19, 2016
...but more than half of adolescent women in need are not using effective contraceptives

38 million adolescent women who need contraception, 2016

252 million women aged 15-19, 2016

- Pregnant/postpartum from intended pregnancy; want a child soon; infecund
- Married/sexually active; want to postpone birth at least 2 years
- Unmarried and not sexually active

11%
15%
74%

Using modern contraceptives – 15M
Not using modern contraceptives – 23M
Unmet need for modern contraception is highest among adolescents in Asia and Africa

% of women 15-19 sexually active and wanting to avoid pregnancy

Asia: 69%
Africa: 68%
LAC: 36%

Unmet need for modern contraception
Unmet need for modern contraception is highest among poorer adolescents

% of women 15-19 sexually active and wanting to avoid pregnancy

- **Asia**
  - Poorest: 75%
  - Richest: 60%

- **Africa**
  - Poorest: 78%
  - Richest: 59%

- **LAC**
  - Poorest: 41%
  - Richest: 30%

[Bar chart showing unmet need for modern contraception by region and wealth status]
10 million pregnancies to adolescents in 2016 will be unintended

21 million pregnancies to women 15-19, 2016
Meeting all needs for modern contraceptives will cost $548 million more per year than current use

Costs in 2016 U.S. dollars (in millions)

- Current level of use: $222
- Improved care for current users: $313
- 100% of need for modern methods met: $770
Health benefits of meeting adolescents’ unmet needs for modern contraceptives

- 6 million fewer unintended pregnancies
  - 2.1 million fewer unplanned births
  - 3.2 million fewer abortions (of which 75% are unsafe)
  - 700,000 fewer stillbirths and miscarriages
  - 5,600 fewer maternal deaths
Broader benefits of meeting adolescents’ unmet needs for modern contraceptives

- Better long-term health benefits for adolescent women and their infants
- Improved ability for adolescent women to obtain education, employment and other opportunities by delaying marriage and motherhood
- Social and economic benefits for women, families and societies
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