

# Overpopulation Notes

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- The world's population *increases* by 2.5 people per second.
- By 2050, the world's population will be 9.1 billion and China & India will account for half of that.
- At current growth rates, the world's population in 2150 will be 244 billion... and in 2300 will be 134 trillion.
  
- At least 150 million couples throughout the world want, but do not have, access to reproductive health services.
- 1.45 billion women are in their childbearing years
  - 210 million of these women become pregnant each year
    - 63% of pregnancies result in live births
    - 22% in abortions
    - 15% in miscarriage
- 1/3 of the population growth in the world is the result of incidental or unwanted pregnancies.
  
- What are the contributing factors to overpopulation?
  - Cost of and accessibility of birth control
  - Cultural barriers (religion; little choice for women; men wanting many children; preference of having boys; religious beliefs)
  - High death rates, so overcompensation with the number of births.
  
- Why so many children?
  - Parents expecting some of their children to die at an early age would have 8 to 10 children, hoping 5 or 6 would survive.
  - Reducing infant and child mortality makes parents more open to the idea of smaller families, eliminating the need for an insurance effect.
  - Many people still want more than enough children to replace themselves.
  
- What are some consequences of overpopulation?
  - Famine
  - Urbanization
  - Shortage of jobs
  - Poverty
  - Shortage of space
  - Shortage of natural resources
  - Pollution
  - Conflict / war
  - Lack of provision of government services
  
- During the 20th Century, the US population tripled in size.... while the US' consumption of resources increased itself by *17 times!*

- Population Density Comparison by Country
  - United States 75 people per square mile
  - India 750
  - Japan 800
  - Bangladesh 2250
  
- Population Density Comparison by City
  - Los Angeles 9000
  - New York 11,000
  - Mexico City 40,000
  - Mumbai 127,000
  
- What are some solutions to overpopulation?
  - Technology and innovation
  - Sex education
    - Abstinence
    - Rhythm method
    - Birth control
  - Liberalizing abortion
  - Improved education of women
  - Improved access to birth control
  - Laws limiting number of children people can have
  
- In both the developing and the developed world, the number one solution to overpopulation is the **education of women**:
  - Women not in the labour force have fertility rates more than twice that of women in the labour force
  - High income women have half as many children as low income women
  - A woman with a college degree will have half as many children as a woman who did not graduate from high school
  
- Reducing the desire to have large families
  - This requires social marketing, such as popular TV soap operas that now air in many countries with educational messages on the virtues of small families.
  - Government can play a key role as well:
    - Government of Mexico is conveying the message that it is less macho to have 10 children with one pair of shoes amongst them than three children each with shoes, clothes and schoolbooks.
    - The Iranian government announced in 1992 they will deny subsidies and other benefits for newborn children if parents already have three children
    - In China, a couple who pledges 1 child only will receive more land, free medical and schooling and reduced taxes.
    - Chinese couples who have additional children without permission can be fined, reduced salary, no additional housing, no free medical or schooling

for the child. (Compulsory abortions are seldom done. The abortion rate in China is 40% *less* than the U.S. rate.)

- It took 60 years for the average American family size to shrink from 6 to 3.5 children, but it took only 23 years to accomplish the same transition in Indonesia and only 8 years in Thailand
  
- Solutions right here at home...
  - Government support is needed...US Government only spends 68¢ per person on family planning
  - Religious teachings must adapt... today's 6 billion people create very different circumstances and needs than those in Biblical times
  - Unplanned pregnancies are fairly rampant... but the pill is 97% effective, a condom is 80% effective. SO....