

Why do women seek 2nd Trimester Abortions?

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At present there are only 3 options to prevent an unwanted pregnancy



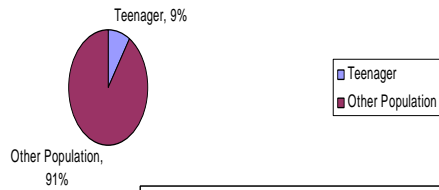
While we understand that not all women are helpless victims,

we must also accept that their biology and gender roles makes them more vulnerable

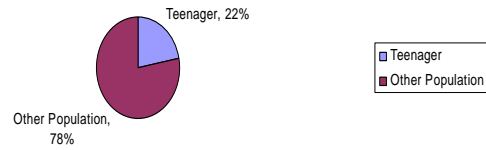
Challenges of Addressing Vulnerable Groups

Adolescents

Population Distribution



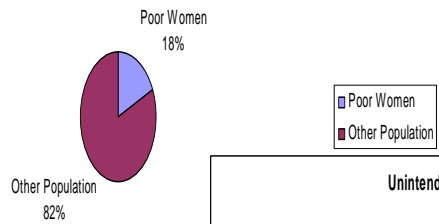
Unintended Pregnancies



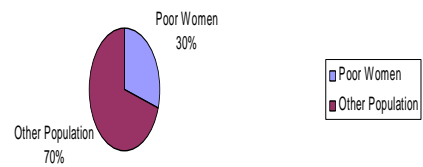
Religious and Political Opposition

Poverty

Population Distribution



Unintended Pregnancies



India at a Glance



- Population 1027 Million
- Maternal Mortality Ratio 540 per 100,000 live births
- Couple protection rate 48%
- PHCs offering safe abortion 3%

The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 1971

- The MTP Act does not allow abortion as a right or just on the request of the seeker.
- The MTP Act lays down the conditions under which a pregnancy can be terminated, as well as the persons who are qualified to perform terminations, and the places where they may be performed.

Who can provide abortions, where and why...

- Gynecologists and trained General Practitioners
 - ✓ Risk of death or grave physical or mental injury, or risk of fetal impairment
- At sites established, maintained or approved by the Government
 - ✓ Pregnancy is caused by rape
- Permitted up to 20 weeks if
 - ✓ Pregnancy due to contraceptive failure in married women

FPA India: 37 Clinics across the country



FPA India Clinic

Second Trimester Abortions

- Second trimester is defined as more than 12 weeks and up to 20 weeks of gestation.
- In India abortions are legal only up to 20 weeks.
- However, a pregnancy can be terminated at any time if the mother's health is in danger, for medical reasons, but not with the intention of delivering a non live fetus . For eg. in a woman suffering from eclampsia.

Domestic Violence

**At
18 weeks
the Baby
started kicking.
At
22 Weeks
so did
the
Father**

Reasons for late abortions

- Do not suspect the pregnancy
- or attempt to conceal it until the pregnancy becomes evident.
- Menstrual irregularity / peri-menopausal
- Ambivalence about the decision to abort are often associated with delay.
- Lack of knowledge about options
- Lack of money to pay for the procedure
- lack of transportation to a provider
- Antenatal fetal diagnosis for Down's syndrome and other genetic abnormalities
- Rarely cancer.

Guilbert E, Marcoux S, Rioux JE. Factors associated with the obtaining of a second trimester induced abortion. Can J Public Health. 1994;85:402-406.

The continuing need for late abortion. David A. Grimes, JAMA, 1998;280:747-750

Contd.....

- Incest and rape victims
 - Women who are mentally handicapped/ institutionalized.
 - Approximately 32,000 pregnancies result from rape each year in the United States.
 - About half receive no medical attention and one third do not discover the pregnancy until the second trimester.
 - Unmarried adolescents
 - women who are illiterate
 - living in rural areas
- are also likely to face more abortion related complications because they seek late abortions or use the services of unqualified abortion providers.

Holmes MM. Rape –related pregnancy Am J Obstet Gynecol. 1996;175:320-324

Ganatra, 2000; Jejeebhoy, 1996; Johnston, 2002; Malhotra et al., 2003

Delays in reaching a provider

- An average **27 days** from missed period to suspecting a pregnancy
- From suspecting to testing another **15 days**
- From testing to decision **16 days**
- From taking decision to calling the clinic and arriving takes another **15-20 days**.
- Include emotional factors, financial problems and logistic difficulties with access and we have an average delay of **100 days**.

If late abortions are restricted or eliminated, the alternatives that would remain are

- **illegal** abortions, **unsafe** abortions
- **abandoning** the newborns,
- more **babies being institutionalized** in foster homes,
- women bringing up **unwanted children**,
- possibly as **single parents**,
- **social stigma**,
- **interruption of education**,
- **closure of opportunities** for betterment,
- sometimes even **suicide**.

- **Almost half of all pregnancies are unplanned.**
- **Almost half of these are unwanted.**
- **Women risk their lives both times : to terminate an unwanted pregnancy, or to carry it to term.**

There is no doubt that first trimester abortions are easier, safer and to be preferred.

BUT

Is there always a choice??

- The **need for 2nd TM abortions** will never be eliminated
- Improving access to 1st and 2nd TM safe abortions will play a crucial role in **reducing maternal mortality**.

**As early as Possible,
As late as Necessary**

Thank you

ICMA, London, March 2007