

SCORRA

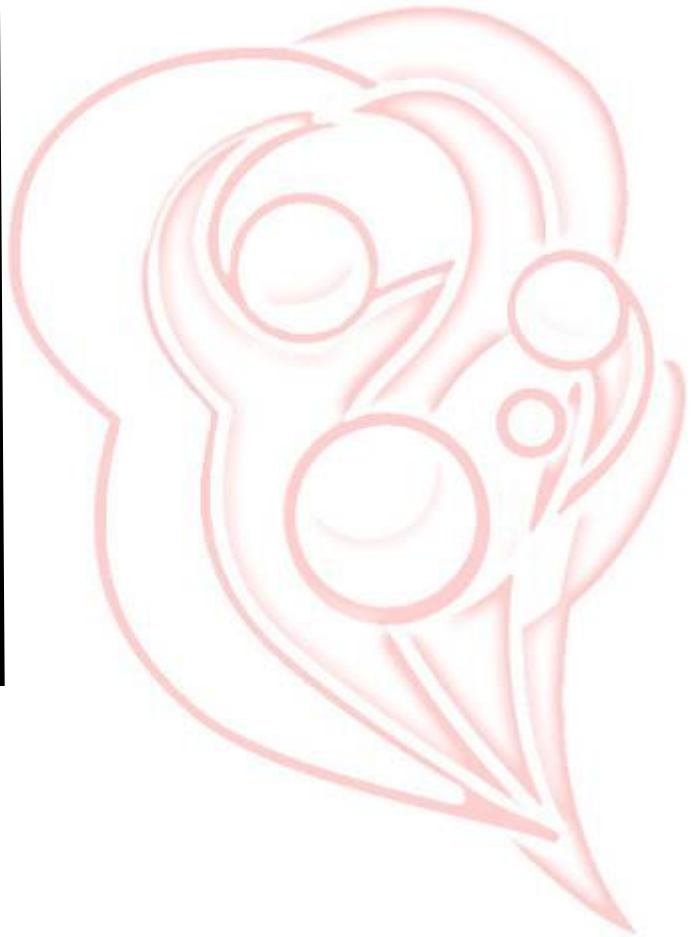


IFMSA

www.ifmsa.org

Organizing

International **Woman's** Day



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Abbreviations

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| AIDS | Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome |
| FGM | Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting |
| GA | General Assembly |
| HIV | Human Immunodeficiency Virus |
| IFMSA | International Federation of Medical Students' Associations |
| IPET | International Peer Education Training, preGA |
| IWD | International Woman's Day |
| LORA | Local Officer on Reproductive Health including AIDS |
| NMO | National Member Organization |
| NORA | National Officer on Reproductive Health including AIDS |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals by UN |
| MM 2007 | IFMSA March Meeting 2007, Mandurah, Australia |
| PLWHA | People Living with HIV/AIDS |
| PreGA | Pre General Assembly workshop |
| SCORA | Standing Committee on Reproductive Health incl. AIDS |
| SCORA D | Director on Reproductive Health including AIDS |
| SCORA LO | Liaison Officer to SCORA |
| SCORA RA | SCORA Regional Assistant |
| SRHR | Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights |
| STI | Sexually Transmitted Infection |
| UN | United Nations |
| VCT | Voluntary Counseling & Testing Center |
| WAD | World AIDS Day |
| WLWHA | Women living with HIV/AIDS |
| YFS | Youth Friendly Services |

International Woman's Day

International Woman's Day is a traditional international day that focuses on raising awareness about problems related to girls and woman all across the globe. In this part of the Manual, you will have the possibility to explore the history and specific themes related to this event, as well as get few pointers on International Woman's Day in IFMSA.

→ History behind International Woman's Day

International Woman's Day (March 8) aims to honor the achievements of women and promote women's rights. A national holiday in numerous countries, it has been sponsored by the United Nations (UN) since 1975 under the name United Nations Day for Woman's Rights and International Peace.

International Women's Day is an occasion marked by women's groups around the world. This date is designated in many countries as a national holiday. When women on all continents, often divided by national boundaries and by ethnic, linguistic, cultural, economic and political differences, come together to celebrate their Day, they can look back to a tradition that represents at least nine decades of struggle for equality, justice, peace and development.

International Women's Day is the story of ordinary women as makers of history; it is rooted in the centuries-old struggle of women to participate in society on an equal footing with men. In ancient Greece, Lysistrata initiated a sexual strike against men in order to end war; during the French Revolution, Parisian women calling for "liberty, equality, fraternity" marched on Versailles to demand women's suffrage. The idea of an International Women's Day first arose at the turn of the century, which in the industrialized world was a period of expansion and turbulence, booming population growth and radical ideologies.

In the early 20th century IWD was aimed to promote women's rights, especially suffrage. In its campaign for female enfranchisement, the Socialist Party of America in 1909 held the first National Woman's Day, which was highlighted by mass meetings across the United States; the day was observed until 1913. Encouraged by German activist Clara Zetkin, the International Socialist Congress agreed in 1910 to create an international version of the U.S. holiday, and on March 19, 1911, the first IWD was held in Austria, Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland. More than one million people attended rallies marking the day. In the ensuing years the IWD was celebrated in additional countries and on varying dates. On March 8 (February 24, Old Style), 1917, women in Petrograd (St. Petersburg), Russia, marked the day by staging a strike to protest food shortages, poor living conditions, and World War I. This strike for "bread and peace" helped give rise to the Russian Revolution of 1917, which led to the abdication of Nicholas II on March 15 (March 2). In 1921 the date of the IWD was officially changed to March 8.

In the following decades, the success of the suffrage movement contributed to a decline in the popularity of the IWD. However, aided by the growth of feminism in the 1960s and UN sponsorship (1975), the IWD experienced revitalization in the late 20th century. Today, it is an important occasion for promoting women's issues and rights, especially in developing countries.

→ Role and Support of the United Nations

Few causes promoted by the United Nations have generated more intense and widespread support than the campaign to promote and protect the equal rights of women. The Charter of the United Nations, signed in San Francisco in 1945, was the first international agreement to proclaim gender equality as a fundamental human right. Since then, the Organization has helped create a historic legacy of internationally agreed strategies, standards, programmes and goals to advance the status of women worldwide.

Over the years, United Nations action for the advancement of women has taken four clear directions: promotion of legal measures; mobilization of public opinion and international action; training and research, including the compilation of gender desegregated statistics; and direct assistance to disadvantaged groups. Today a central organizing principle of the work of the United Nations is that no enduring solution to society's most threatening social, economic and political problems can be found without the full participation, and the full empowerment, of the world's women.

→ International Woman's Day Themes

Ever since 1996 UN has selected a special theme for IWD in order to put a special focus on one aspect of empowerment of women all across the globe.

| | |
|------|---|
| 1996 | Celebrating the Past, Planning for the Future |
| 1997 | Women at the Peace Table |
| 1998 | Woman and Human Rights |
| 1999 | World Free of Violence against Women |
| 2000 | Women United for Peace |
| 2001 | Women and Peace: Managing Conflicts |
| 2002 | Afghan Women: Realities and Opportunities |
| 2003 | Gender Equality and MDGs |
| 2004 | Woman and HIV/AIDS |
| 2005 | Gender Equality beyond 2005 – Building a more Secure Future |
| 2006 | Women in decision making – Meeting Challenges, Creating Change |
| 2007 | Ending Impunity for Violence against Women and Girls |

→ Theme: Ending Impunity for Violence against Women and Girls

Why is the IWD theme again focusing on violence acts against girls and woman? Actually, violence against woman should not be tolerated, no matter the culture or country. Unfortunately impunity of those acts is a daily practice that should be addressed. UN has decided to give special attention to the fact that violence against girls and woman can not be stopped and prevented if serious measures are not implemented to insure enforcers of violent acts do not escape punishment for their acts.

The most severe practices, in which girls and women are either killed, beaten, raped, mutilated, sold, forced to prostitution more than often are undetected, not sanctioned and their doers not punished. Policies and laws should be gender sensitive as well as gender mainstreamed and most importantly enforced into everyday practice – so that acts of violence does not go unpunished.

IFMSA & International Woman's Day

Within IFMSA International Woman's Day will address the International IWD 2007 theme "**Ending Impunity for Violence against Women and Girls**" and will issue a statement prepared by SCORA and SCORP members. The specific message is to be used to target our beneficiaries and to bring the international theme something beneficiaries can relate to easier. On March 8th, medical students all over the world try to raise awareness through numerous activities, such as lectures, exhibitions, plays, movie airing, distribution of pamphlets, charity concerts etc.

→ IWD & Standing Committee on Reproductive Health including AIDS

One of the major focuses of the Standing Committee on Reproductive Health including AIDS (SCORA) is the empowerment of youth and woman to take initiative when it comes to reproductive health and rights. An attempt to truly address issues that have roots in social gender inequality and inequity, as well as special physical and pathological processes that affect girls and woman should be addressed by a pallet of activities though joined efforts of medical students worldwide.

Unfortunately, even though medical students have organized and celebrated International Woman's Day within SCORA ever since very beginnings in 1998, this was never a large scale action, nor was it reported on in a joined international report – which hopefully will change. For tips on how to organize such an event please do consult our Step-by-step World AIDS Day Manual (uploaded under files in the SCORA yahoo group) as well as tune up on the SCORA list for discussions and plans by SCORA members or send an e mail to the current SCORA-D (scorad@ifmsa.org).

→ IWD and IFMSA March Meeting 2007

International Woman's Day coincides this year with the MM 2007, because of which SCORA members are dedicated to the idea of commemorating March 8th. A well-deserved stress was put on girls & women's health and rights thought the SCORA sessions for the whole duration of the IFMSA General Assembly, while the 2nd International Peer Education Training preGA will also deal with addressing the problem of domestic violence. IFMSA members from other Standing Committees such as SCORP and SCOPH in a joined effort will help to rise to the occasion and the importance of addressing burning issues that are a result of gender inequity and inequality – unfortunately on the global scale.

Improving the lives of girls and women is dependant on even the smallest changes – like keeping the girls in schools by making it free of charge, allowing women to chose who and when to marry, changing laws by allowing women to their inheritance, criminalization of rape & trafficking, provision of primary health care and treatment where ever in the world.

To empower and educate a woman is a way towards the better future of whole nations. Let us as IFMSA do our part towards achieving the goal.

MM 2007 Theme: Rural and Remote Health and the International Woman's Day

Providing adequate and accessible health care in rural and remote regions is a challenge faced by many countries worldwide. Rural populations traditionally have poorer indicators of health than their urban counterparts, presenting a unique set of issues including access to medicine, increased costs and low numbers of health professionals.

The theme of the MM 2007 is of great importance when it comes to maintaining and improving health of girls & women in particular. Sadly there are numerous examples on how inaccessibility of medical care significantly influences the lives of women and their families. Lack of primary health care workers and medicines in rural and remote areas combined with lack of knowledge and traditional practices is the lead reason why we have sky rocketing morbidity, high prevalence of preventable fistulae and the spread of HIV/AIDS in remote and rural places. Making pregnancy and birth safer, households more sanitary and the community equipped with knowledge and skills in disease prevention some would say are activities of the past – while in fact the lack of those public health activities still are burning issues in the 21st century on the global scale.

IWD MM 2007 Activities

A part from the 2nd IPET addressing issues concerning Domestic Violence through the use of behavior change communication development and peer education, all SCORA workshops, presentation and open talks will be focused on issues concerning reproductive health and associated rights of girls and women. Workshops on “What influences the health of women?”, “Are women's rights equal to human rights?”, “Abstinence has a high failure rate...”, “Being slim is in, but is it healthy?” as well as the presentation on “Contraceptives and their effects” will try to educate the international community of medical students from different backgrounds and national policies, as well as to provide them with space and opportunity to share ideas, opinions and discuss. Special time is allocated to open talks (“Abortion”, “Laws and Policies”, “Masturbation”) that will allow medical students to openly talk about cross cutting and culturally sensitive issues.

A “Think Pink Day” will be held on March 8th where medical student will by wearing something pink try to show support to woman living with breast cancer. Also on March 8th an exhibit called “HerStory” will try to amend woman who have contributed greatly to history by initiating woman empowerment through science, medicine, woman's movement, politics, arts,... An info booth will be set on which we will collect personal pledges to support gender equality as well distribute info material accompanied by red, pink and green ribbons. On March 9th an exhibit of contraceptive methods from all over the world that medical students have collected will be presented.

→ Sex, Gender & Reproductive Health

Reproductive health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity, in all matters relating to the reproductive system and to its functions and processes at all stages of life (as defined by the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, Egypt, 1994).

Reproductive health therefore implies that people are able to have a satisfying and safe sex life and that they have the capability to reproduce and the freedom to decide if, when, and how often to do so. Women and men have the right to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility, which are not against the law. They also have the right of access to appropriate health-care services that will enable women to go safely through pregnancy and childbirth and provide couples with the best chance of having a healthy infant.

Gender refers to the economic, social and cultural attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female in a particular point in time. (Transforming health systems: gender and rights in reproductive health by WHO, 2001)

Sex refers to the biological characteristics that define humans as female or male. While these sets of biological characteristics are not mutually exclusive, as there are individuals who possess both, they tend to differentiate humans as males and females. In general use in many languages, the term sex is often used to mean “sexual activity”, but for technical purposes in the context of sexuality and sexual health discussions, the above definition is preferred.

Sexuality is a central aspect of being human throughout life and encompasses sex, gender identities and roles, sexual orientation, eroticism, pleasure, intimacy and reproduction. Sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, fantasies, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. While sexuality can include all of these dimensions, not all of them are always experienced or expressed. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors.

Reproductive health care is defined as the constellation of methods, techniques, and services that contribute to reproductive health and well being by preventing and solving reproductive health problems. It also includes sexual health, the purpose of which is the enhancement of life and personal relations, and not merely counseling and care related to reproduction and sexually transmitted diseases.

In support of this aim, WHO's reproductive health programme has developed four broad programmatic goals:

- Experience healthy sexual development and maturation and have the capacity for equitable and responsible relationships and sexual fulfillment.
- Achieve their desired number of children safely and healthily, when and if they decide to have them.
- Avoid illness, disease, and disability related to sexuality and reproduction and receive appropriate care when needed.
- Be free from violence and other harmful practices related to sexuality and reproduction.

Sexual health is a state of physical, emotional, mental and social well-being in relation to sexuality; it is not merely the absence of disease, dysfunction or infirmity. Sexual health requires a positive and respectful approach to sexuality and sexual relationships, as well as the possibility of having pleasurable and safe sexual experiences, free of coercion, discrimination and violence. For sexual health to be attained and maintained, the sexual rights of all persons must be respected, protected and fulfilled.

→ Sex, Gender & Reproductive Rights

Reproductive rights are certain human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus documents.

These rights rest on the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and

means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. It also includes their right to make decision concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents (ICPD Programme of Action, 1994, para 7.3). In the exercise of this right, they should take into account the needs of their living and future children and their responsibilities towards their communities.

Sexual rights embrace human rights that are already recognized in national laws, international human rights documents and other consensus statements. They include the right of all persons, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, to:

- the highest attainable standard of sexual health, including access to sexual and reproductive health care services;
- seek, receive and impart information related to sexuality;
- sexuality education;
- respect for bodily integrity;
- choose their partner;
- decide to be sexually active or not;
- consensual sexual relations;
- consensual marriage;
- decide whether or not, and when, to have children; and
- pursue a satisfying, safe and pleasurable sexual life.

The responsible exercise of human rights requires that all persons respect the rights of others.

Reproductive rights are violated because of the inadequate levels of knowledge about human sexuality and inappropriate or poor-quality reproductive health information and services are some of the reasons.

Other explanations include the prevalence of high-risk sexual behavior; discriminatory social practices; negative attitudes towards women and girls; and the limited power many women and girls have over their sexual and reproductive lives.

Adolescents are particularly vulnerable because of their lack of information and access to relevant services in many countries. It is important to target these people before they establish their sexual and reproductive beliefs and behaviors. Equally so, older women and men have distinct reproductive and sexual health issues, which are often inadequately addressed.

Gender equality means equal treatment of women and men in laws and policies, and equal access to resources and services within families, communities and society at large. (Transforming health systems: gender and rights in reproductive health by WHO, 2001)

Gender equity means fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities between women and men. It often requires women-specific programmes and policies to end existing inequalities. (Transforming health systems: gender and rights in reproductive health by WHO, 2001)

Gender discrimination refers to any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of socially constructed gender roles and norms which prevents a person from enjoying full human rights. (Transforming health systems: gender and rights in reproductive health by WHO, 2001)

→ Reproductive Health and Rights of Girls and Woman

Reproductive health and associated rights is a broad term, but here a list of issues SCORA members have felt should be focused on in terms of global health when it comes to promoting, assuring and advocating for health of woman and girls as well as their rights protection.

STIs and HIV/AIDS

- Reproductive Health and Life Skills Education
- Vulnerability of girls and women – physiological and socio-economic
- Drug use
- Stigma and double discrimination
- Youth Friendly Services
- VCCTs
- Support, Care and Treatment of WLWHIV/AIDS

Contraception and Fertility

- Puberty & Education on Hygiene and Contraceptives
- Accessibility, Affordability & Shared Responsibility
- Family Planning
- Abortion
- Laws and Policies
- Short and long-term Effects of Contraceptives
- Infertility

Cancers of the Female Reproductive System including Breast

- Gynecological Consult & Early Diagnosis
- Prevention – vaccination, pap-smear availability and regular check-ups
- Cervical, Uterine, Ovarian and Breast Cancer
- Cancer Treatment & Patient Support
- Palliative Care

Maternal Health

- Child Marriage
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Ectopic Pregnancy
- Miscarriage
- Rural and remote health care - Safe Childbirth & Preventing Fistula
- Vertical HIV Transmission / Sperm Washing Procedures
- Menopause

Gender Based Violence

- Female Genital Mutilation & Breast Ironing
- Domestic Violence
- Rape & Gang Rape
- Systematic Rape of Women during War times
- Kidnapping
- Trafficking & Forced Prostitution
- Acid throwing
- Sati – burning of widows
- Stoning
- Honor Killings
- Femicid – killing or induced abortion of female infants

** list as such does not cover all issues and problems girls and women face when it comes to SRHR, but this should give you a broad overview of some of the most crucial ones*

→ Call for Action – what can you do

All above mentioned issues are an issue here and now, these are issues that affect girls and women all over the globe one way or the other. Being affected by any point stated can change the future of girls, radically shift faiths and lives of women, which inevitably affects whole families and societies as a whole. There are quite a number of activities you as a medical student can do to celebrate IWD:

Raising Awareness

- Wearing pink and distributing pink, green, white and red ribbons
- Organizing Info-stands – main square, university, dorms, mess halls...
- Outreach to vulnerable women – distributing materials, inform them where to seek help
- People holding hands, organize a rally, make support/remembrance quilts
- Art Performance – in the street or following other organized events
- Installations – rearrange a window in a boutique to raise awareness about women portraying
- Theater Play – by famous actors addressing domestic violence or have “vagina monologues”
- Public Shockers – female volunteers walk around with fake “blue eye/s” & record responses
- Poster, Photographs or Contraceptives Exhibit – extraordinary ones already exists, host one
- Graffiti, Creative Writing, Dancing or Art Theme Contest – for young girls
- Movie Airing – with or without facilitated discussions afterwards (any topic)
- Personal Pledges to Support Women & Message writing and release of balloons
- Stop Violence against Women concerts
- Girls Night Out parties–girls pay entrance fee, make bathrooms unisex, Mr. Beauty Pageant
- Games and Quizzes – reward winners, condom blowing, putting on a condom...
- Promote opening of YFS, VCCT, Family Planning Centers, Women Shelters,...

Building Knowledge and Skills

- Peer Education Workshops and Trainings – university, schools, dorms, youth centers,...
- Organizing interactive lectures or round table discussions with prominent woman speakers
- Organize or attending radio and TV shows – open line for questions
- Writing articles for teen & woman magazines
- Answer questions about reproductive health and rights at a Youth/Woman Hot Line
- Open-doors at the VCT – activities in the waiting room, known figure getting tested
- Setting up a Quiz – on line, on the Info-stand, with “shocking” team...
- Personal Testimonies / Poem or Story Reading / Open Talks
- Outreach vans/busses to remote areas – counseling, workshops, handing out info materials
- Visit mothers and pregnant women to promote breast feeding, safe pregnancy and future family planning in association with midwives and nurses
- Open talk where a female medical doctor talks about her experiences to medical students when it comes to managing a career and having a family
- Train med students in those women health issues that are underrepresented in med. curricula

Raising Support, Funds or Materials

- Fashion show – have a fundraiser for a specific cause
- Theme parties or concerts – raise funds from entrance fees, drinks, musical requests,...
- Selling IWD products (t-shirts, hats, Easter cards, key chains, ribbons...)
- Contribution Boxes at Info-stands
- A bake sale, lemonade stands, sale of products and arts made by afflicted woman ...
- Getting clothes, food or other necessities to woman from local businesses or fellow citizens
- Putting NMO account in the bottom of all leaflets for contributions
- Organize treasure hunts or car-wash with local businesses (→ target men to fund woman)
- Blood Donations, Condom Distribution, Harm Reduction actions
- Signing of “I pledge to support woman” statement – target decision makers as well

Promoting the Event

- Putting up posters, having newspaper, radio and TV clips/promo messages
- Airing of a theme related movie on the national television – you can put up titles
- Handing out flyers for theme parties or concerts
- Using web portals, making a special web site & mass e mailing friends and fellow colleagues

→ Useful web links

UNAIDS, United Nations Joint Programme on HIV/AIDS

www.unaids.org

UNICEF - Global AIDS Campaign

www.unicef.org

UNFPA

www.unfpa.org

World Health Organization

www.who.int/reproductive-health

UNIFEM

www.unifem.org

WomenWatch

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/>

International Woman's Day

<http://www.un.org/ecosocdev/geninfo/women/womday97.htm>

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/feature/iwd>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2006/>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2005/>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2004/>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/iwd/2003/>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/2002/>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/2001/>

<http://www.un.org/events/women/women00.htm>

http://www.raconline.org/info_guides/public_health/womenshealth.php

Important woman in history

<http://search.eb.com/women/browse?browseId=248524>

<http://search.eb.com/women/browse?browseId=249197>

<http://search.eb.com/women/browse?browseId=249178>

<http://almaz.com/nobel/women.html>

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/women/notable.htm>

<http://www.greatwomen.org/women.php?action=viewAll>

<http://www.listproc.bucknell.edu/archives/femecon-1/200211/msg00008.html>

Sati – burning of widows

<http://www.csuchico.edu/~cheinz/syllabi/assf001/spring99/parrilla/parr1.htm>

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/2002/20020908/ldh1.htm>

<http://sacw.insaf.net/Wmov/shukla20March2004.html>

Stoning

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stoning>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/africa/2116540.stm>

<http://ipsnews.net/news.asp?idnews=35701>

<http://www.meydaan.com/stoning/>

Honor Killings

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honor_killing

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/Index/engASA330181999>

Femicide – killing or induced abortion of female infants

http://www.unfpa.org/16days/documents/pl_femicide_factsheet.doc

<http://www.unfpa.org/16days/documents/femicidio.pdf>

http://www.gendercide.org/case_infanticide.html

http://www.thesouthasian.org/archives/2004/gender_inequalities_the_case_o.html

FGM

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Female_genital_cutting

<http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs241/en/>

<http://www.irinnews.org/webspecials/FGM/default.asp>

http://www.who.int/reproductive-health/publications/fgm/fgm_statement.html

<http://www.unfpa.org/gender/practices1.htm>

Breast Ironing

http://www.unfpa.org/16days/documents/pl_breakironing_factsheet.doc

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Breast_ironing

<http://newsnotwanted.blogspot.com/2006/06/whats-breast-ironing.html>

Acid throwing

<http://www.corrosion-doctors.org/Acids/acid-attack-1.htm>

http://iweb.tntech.edu/fhossain/Acid_Menace.html

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/3097469.stm

<http://bicn.com/ezone/features/lifeinbgd/acidsurvivors.htm>

<http://www.webster.edu/~woolfm/acidattacks.html>

Systematic Rape of Women during War

http://www.religioustolerance.org/war_rape.htm

http://condor.depaul.edu/~rrotenbe/aer/aer13_1/Olujic.html

<http://web.amnesty.org/library/index/engaf540762004>

<http://www.webcom.com/hrin/parker/c95-11.html>

Gang Rape

<http://www.cnn.com/2004/LAW/06/23/video.rape.trial/index.html>

<http://www.womenagainstrape.net/indexpage.htm>

Child Marriage & Fistula

http://www.unfpa.org/16days/documents/pl_traumaticfistula.doc

http://www.unfpa.org/16days/documents/pl_earlymarriage.doc

http://www.unfpa.org/16days/documents/pl_bridenapping_factsheet.doc

<http://www.endfistula.org/>

Trafficking and Forced Prostitution

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sexual_slavery

<http://217.69.40.171/english/>

<http://www.walnet.org/csis/papers/saunders-childpro.html>

<http://www.astra.org.yu/index.php>

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