

From the Editor-in-Chief

T rue to the mission of *World Health & Population* (WHP), papers in this issue span the globe, from Brazil, Jamaica and Ivory Coast to Nigeria, Nepal, Bangladesh and Kerala. The two papers that directly address HIV/AIDS are those from the western hemisphere; in particular, the paper on Brazil by Wogart and Calcagnotto, from the German Overseas Institute, provides insights into the very difficult questions of the provision of antiretroviral drugs, intellectual property rights and global co-operation to address the HIV epidemic. The paper by Gibbison examines the impact of AIDS prevalence at the regional level on the consistent use of condoms as a preventative measure, emphasizing that explicit exposure to the hard facts of the epidemic is a great motivator. Finally, a paper relevant to the HIV epidemic, submitted from the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research, addresses communication between parents and children regarding sexuality. Certainly parents are seen as the “first line of defence” for sexuality-related issues, from disease prevention through population control.

Four papers in this issue are concerned with maternal and child health. Two are from Bangladesh and involve analysis of large data sets. Khan et al. work with the Bangladesh Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) data and elucidate factors associated with unintended pregnancies. Islam and Chowdhury analyze data from a large sample survey to understand the associations between normal and complicated deliveries, and the type of delivery assistance/delivery attendants utilized. Kumar, reporting from Kerala, focuses in more precisely on the issue of complicated deliveries by examining – also through sample survey data – the relationship between a woman’s prenatal history and the high prevalence of Caesarean section found in that Indian state. Policy recommendations are provided in all these papers.

Koissi and Högnäs look at impacts on child mortality through a Bayesian approach, also using DHS data, this time from Ivory Coast. Their hypothesis, that the constructs around the entire family constellation must be examined in the context of potential “family frailty,” is very interesting.

Finally, to round out this issue of WHP, is a practical, field-based paper on prescribing in a community-based drug program in rural western Nepal. Given the ongoing turmoil in that country, one wonders what has happened to such initiatives; however, the “lessons learned” as presented by Shankar et al. may be applicable elsewhere.

The contributing authors and editorial staff of WHP are interested in any comments or suggestions you might have on the papers or journal. Please feel free to write or e-mail us.

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