

**contraception:** also called birth control, methods used by sexually active people to prevent pregnancy.

**developing country:** a country at a relatively early stage in the process of economic development classified using a range of economic and social criteria such as per capita income and life expectancy.

**dowry:** a cultural practice where money, property or goods are given to the husband or his family from the bride or her family.

**family planning:** the practice of attaining a desired number of children and determining the spacing of pregnancies, achieved by providing access to contraceptives, reproductive health services as well as education.

**fertility rate:** the average number of live births per woman during her reproductive years, among a given set of people.

**gender-biased sex selection:** the selective termination of pregnancies when the fetus is known or predicted to be a female because male children are valued over female children in a particular family or society.

**illiteracy:** the inability of an individual to use reading, writing, and computational skills in everyday life.

**infant mortality rate:** the annual number of deaths to infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births.

**malnutrition:** the condition that occurs when a person's body does not receive enough nutrients, often caused by an inadequate or unbalanced diet.

**maternal mortality:** the death of a woman from pregnancy-related causes.

**prenatal care:** the healthcare a woman receives during pregnancy, including dietary and lifestyle counseling, physical exams and the regular monitoring of the expectant mother and developing fetus.

**replacement level fertility:** the level of fertility at which a couple has only enough children to replace themselves; usually estimated to be 2.1 children per woman.

**wage gap:** also called the gender pay gap, the phenomenon of females earning less pay than males, on average, as well as in the same jobs or professions.