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Part One: Women in the World

1 States Against Discrimination
Most of the world's governments are committed, on paper, to full equality for women.

2 The State of Women
There is no easy way to compare the status of women around the world; nonetheless there are ways of shedding light on women's status and quality of life.

3 In Their Place
Women everywhere face de facto restrictions on their presence, dress, and private and public behavior. But in many countries, "keeping women in their place" is a literal undertaking.

Part Two: Families

4 Households
The nature of families and of households is undergoing quite extraordinary changes. Both are smaller; more are headed by women, and more people live alone.

5 Marriage and Divorce
Most women and men in the world spend most of their lives married. However, the nature of marriage varies widely from place to place, and between men and women.

6 Lesbian Rights
Some governments are slowly responding to pressure to offer protection and recognition for lesbian and gay rights.

7 Domestic Violence
For millions of women, the home is the most dangerous place they could be.

8 Murder
Violence against women often escalates when the woman tries to leave an abusive relationship – this is when violent partners are most likely to turn to murder.

Part Three: Birthrights

9 Motherhood
Women are having fewer children than did their mothers and grandmothers.

10 Contraception
Access to reliable contraceptives is a powerful force in advancing women's liberation and autonomy.

11 Abortion
There are about 25 million legal abortions in the world each year, and another 20 million unsafe and illegal abortions.

12 Maternal Mortality
Each year, about 200 million women become pregnant; over half a million will die as a result.

13 Son Preference
A cultural preference for sons over daughters is almost universal. In some places, this preference is acted out in ways that produce demographic distortion.
Part Four: Body Politics

14 Breast Cancer
Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women, with over 1.5 million new cases diagnosed each year.

15 HIV/AIDS
Over 30 million adults in the world are HIV infected. Seventy percent of them live in Sub-Saharan Africa. More than half are women.

16 Sports
Notions of “appropriate” masculinity and femininity are deeply embedded within, and structured by, participation in sports.

17 Beauty
International beauty contests promote and export a white, Western standard of beauty. Globalization is accelerating the adoption of these standards around the world.

18 Under the Knife
An estimated 130 million girls and women in the world have undergone genital cutting; each year, another 2 million join their ranks.

19 Global Sex Trafficking
Women’s bodies are commodities in the global sex trade, a multi-billion dollar industry.

20 Rape
Women everywhere live under the threat of rape – often a threat greatest in their own homes and from men they know.

Part Five: Work

21 Working for Wages
Increasingly women are working outside the home for pay, but they are typically paid less than men for their labour.

22 Workplaces
Typically women are employed in different occupations from men, and are over-represented in a limited number of occupations.

23 Unequal Opportunities
Women everywhere have to balance “family” and “work” demands in ways that men seldom do. In most countries, they get little help doing so.

24 Fieldwork
The world’s agricultural labour force is shrinking but women make up 40 percent of the labour force that remains.

25 Unpaid Work
The unpaid labor of sustaining families and households represents a substantial part of daily work that is usually overlooked in official accounts.

26 Migration
Economic globalization is accelerating the flow of migrant labor. About 200 million workers and their dependents work in countries outside their own.
Part Six: To Have and To Have Not

27 Water
The lack of safe water and sanitation affects billions of people worldwide.

28 Literacy
Nearly a billion people in the world are illiterate, about two-thirds of whom are women.

29 School
More girls are in primary school than ever before, but still in lower proportions than boys.

30 Higher Education
More women are going on to higher education, although in most countries it is still a preserve of the elite.

31 Wired Women
The internet is a powerful agent of social change but race, age, gender and class digital divides are found everywhere.

32 Property
The majority of the world’s women do not equally own, inherit, or control property, land and wealth.

33 Poverty
Most of the world’s population is poor. Women are the majority of the world’s poor. The poorest of the poor are women.

34 Debt
Women are the “shock absorbers” of economic crises, bearing the brunt of government cutbacks in spending on social and health services.

Part Seven: Power

35 The Vote
In most countries, men gained the right to vote before women did. Almost everywhere, voting rights for women were resisted, sometimes fiercely.

36 Women in Government
Overall, the countries with the highest numbers of women in elected office are those that actively enforce policies promoting gender equality.

37 Seats of Power
An increasing number of countries and political parties ensure that women are now visible as candidates and in national legislatures.

38 Crisis Zones
Women bear specific burdens in regions fractured by wars, insurgencies, ethnic conflicts, famine, and economic collapse.

39 Women in the Military
Military service is traditionally the preserve of men—and they have fought hard to keep it that way.

40 Feminist Organizing
"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has." — Margaret Mead

Part Eight: World Tables

Demography and Health
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