Introduction
- South Africa has the world’s third-highest incidence of HIV
- South Africa also has an alarmingly high rate of adolescent and unplanned pregnancy
- Despite abortion being legal in the country since 1996, services are very limited, forcing many women to seek unsafe abortions
- Moreover, young people in South Africa are in serious need of access to contraception services

Objective of Internship
The objective of this internship is to learn how to leverage the use of sexual and reproductive health (SRH) rights and services to empower young people, particularly adolescent and young women.

Work Profile
- Ibis Reproductive Health is an organization that seeks to advance sexual and reproductive health rights and services in Southern Africa, particularly South Africa
- Ibis’s work includes research on various public health topics, including abortion and adolescent pregnancy
- Through the mmoho campaign, Ibis works to create safe abortion messages and educate young people on their SRH rights

Reflection
- Wrote white sheets on support for adolescent parents in Botswana and Lesotho and on the implications of the Global Gag Rule for NGOs in South Africa
- Assisted Dr Daphney Conco at the Wits University School of Public Health on creating a study instrument for a national incomplete abortion study
- Assisted Ibis staff with the creation of the website for the mmoho campaign
- Visited Morningside Clinic (private) and Leratong Hospital (public) in Greater Johannesburg with Dr Mpume Simelane
- Attended and assisted in a Global Health Strategies workshop for training medical practitioners in the abortion space

Looking Ahead
- This internship reinforced for me that I am interested in working in the SRH space
- I learned that this work can be done while being a practicing doctor (i.e. OB/GYN)

Questions
- How can people continue to advocate for women’s SRH rights and services?
- How can the lessons learned in South Africa since the legalization of abortion be applied to the United States and around the world?

Conclusion
- Sexual and reproductive health rights and services are a matter of human rights, not politics
- Although many people are engaged in this work, much more is needed to advance SRH around the world
- This work is hard but incredibly rewarding

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