

Safe Motherhood

Maternal Death Rate Estimates and Mortality Ratio (year 2000)

The maternal mortality ratio is a measure of the risk of death once a woman has become pregnant.

World Total: 529,000 Deaths (.4% of all births)

Africa: 251,000 (.83%)

Asia: 253,000 (.33%)

Latin America and Caribbean: 22,000 (.19%)

Developed Nations: 2,500 (.02%)

By Country (These 13 countries account for 67% of all maternal deaths)

India: 136,000 (.5%)

Nigeria: 37,000 (.8%)

Pakistan: 26,000 (.5%)

Democratic Republic of the Congo: 24,000 (.99%)

Ethiopia: 24,000 (.8%)

United Republic of Tanzania: 21,000 (1.5%)

Afghanistan: 20,000 (1.9%)

Bangladesh: 16,000 (.38%)

Angola: 11,000 (1.7%)

China: 11,000 (.05%)

Kenya: 11,000 (1%)

Indonesia: 10,000 (.2%)

Uganda: 10,000 (.88%)

18 Countries have maternal death rates of 1% or more.

What causes Maternal Death?

Maternal deaths are deaths from pregnancy-related complications occurring throughout pregnancy, labor, childbirth and in the postpartum period (up to the 42nd day after the birth). Between 11% and 17% of maternal deaths happen during childbirth itself and between 50% and 71% in the postpartum period

Severe bleeding (hemorrhage) 25%

Indirect Causes* 20%

Infections 15%

Unsafe Abortion 13%

Eclampsia 12%

Direct Causes** 8%

Obstructed Labor 8%

*Indirect causes are diseases (pre-existing or concurrent) that are not complications of pregnancy, but complicate pregnancy or are aggravated by it. These include malaria, anaemia, HIV/AIDS and cardiovascular disease.

**Direct causes are maternal deaths following complications of pregnancy and childbirth, or are caused by any interventions, omissions, incorrect treatment or events that result from these complications, including complications from (unsafe) abortion.

Percentage of Births attended by a skilled attendant

(either a nurse, midwife or doctor trained and proficient in the skills necessary to assist a normal pregnancy, childbirth and the immediate postpartum.) Many causes of maternal death are easily treated when a skilled attendant is available.

World-wide: 61.5% of births

Developed Countries: virtually all births

Least Developed Countries: 33.7%

Africa average: 46.7%

Eastern Africa: 34.5%

Western Africa: 40.9%

Asia average: 58.3%

South-Central Asia: 38.9%

South America average: 86.8%

Low Birthweight Rate

Low birthweight has been defined by the World Health Organization (WHO) as weight at birth of less than 2,500 grams (5.5 pounds). This is based on epidemiological observations that infants weighing less than 2,500 g are approximately 20 times more likely to die than heavier babies.

World Total: 20 million infants annually (15.5% of all live births) with 95.6% of low birthweight infants are in developing countries

South-Central Asia: 27% of births

Sub-Saharan Africa: 15% of births

Caribbean: 14%

Central and South America: 10%

Oceania: 10%

Developed Countries: 7%

Sources:

World Health Report 2005 Make Every Mother and Child Count World Health Organization

Maternal mortality in 2000 : estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA Department of Reproductive Health and Research. World Health Organization, Geneva 2004.

Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel Global, regional and subregional updates – 2006 WHO

For more information about the Global Day of Prayer visit christian.birthingnaturally.net.