



# Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality: USAID Maternal Health Vision for Action

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## SUMMARY

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is working with the global community to End Preventable Maternal Mortality (EPMM). The USAID Maternal Health Vision for Action outlines how USAID will help achieve this goal.

The world has made significant progress in reducing maternal mortality over the past two and one-half decades, but the agenda for maternal survival is not yet finished. Most maternal deaths are preventable and staggering disparities between countries remain. We have the knowledge, tools, and resources to end this disparity. With concerted effort from the international community and with strong political commitment, we can end preventable maternal deaths within a generation.

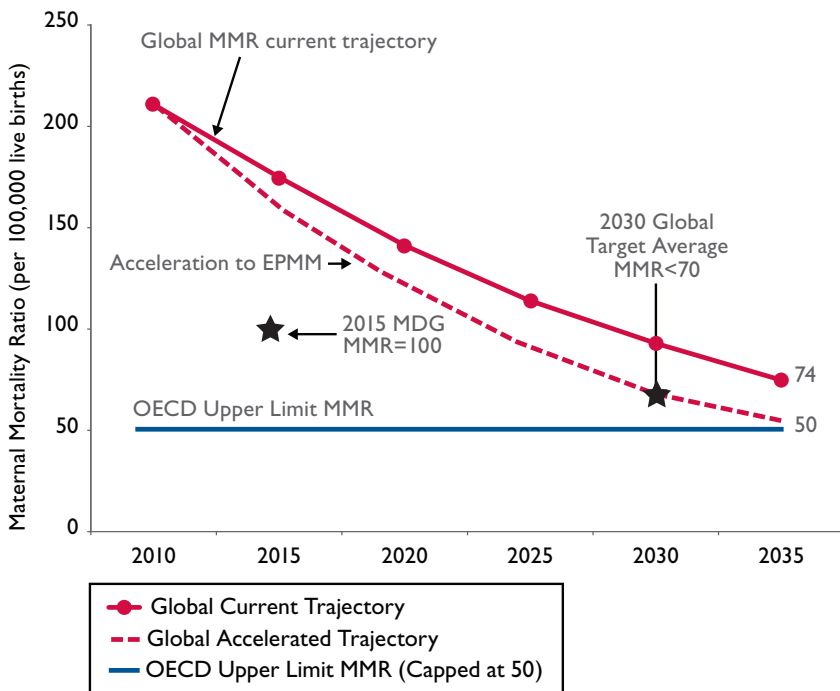
USAID's goal is to contribute to EPMM with a target maternal mortality ratio (MMR) of less than 50 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births by 2035. This goal is equivalent to the highest MMR of any Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) country in 2010. Achieving the target will move us toward a world where no woman will face unequal risk of death or disability due to pregnancy based on the country in which she lives.

Toward this 2035 goal, USAID will contribute to achieving the internationally accepted target of reduction of the global MMR to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030.

The **USAID Maternal Health Vision for Action** addresses the world of disparity:

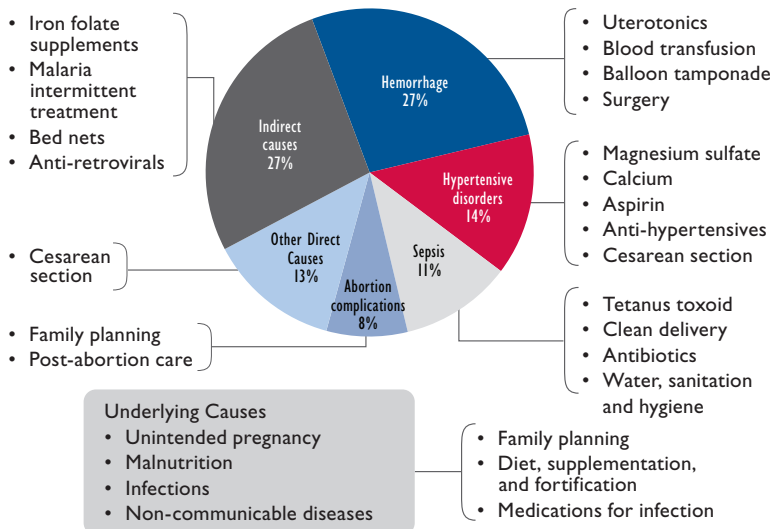
- Women are dying needlessly and suffering disabling conditions as a result of pregnancy and childbirth.
- The lifetime risk of maternal death in women living in sub-Saharan Africa is nearly 50 times greater than for those in the United States.
- Discrimination impedes a woman from her right to access quality, respectful maternity care.
- Weak health systems underlie poor care and health outcomes.

Maternal Mortality Ratio Projections: 2010–2035  
Global & OECD Countries



Source: WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank, United Nations, 2014

## Global Causes of Maternal Death and Selected Key Interventions



Source: Say L et al. 2014; PMNCH 2011; Benova et al. 2014; WHO 2012

By working with host country leadership and other partners to reach the most vulnerable and to address the main drivers of maternal death such as poverty, cultural and gender norms, age, ethnicity, religion, social stigma, and geographical location, we can achieve the bold vision of ending preventable maternal deaths through:

- 1. Enabling and mobilizing individuals and communities** to promote healthy behaviors, activate communities to hold health systems accountable, and improve equity of access for the most vulnerable.
- 2. Advancing quality, respectful care** for family planning, maternity care, nutrition, and infection prevention and treatment, including for HIV/AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis.
- 3. Strengthening health systems** to mobilize resources, strengthen supply chains for commodities, foster quality of care, expand and strengthen human resources, improve referral systems, and improve monitoring and promote data for decision making.

The Vision serves as a lens and guide for targeted, context-specific, country-based programming that will result in sustainable programs and improved maternal and fetal health. Our focus geographically is on 24 countries where 70 percent of maternal deaths occur.

## USAID geographic focus for maternal survival:

Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal, South Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Yemen, and Zambia

Achieving the Vision is possible. Progress has already been made. Cambodia and Rwanda, long supported by USAID and others, have already surpassed Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5. Despite poverty and other challenges, countries such as Bangladesh have achieved remarkable progress. Building on advances in economic growth, girls' education, decreasing fertility, and women's empowerment, we have an unprecedented opportunity to realize a world where no woman dies as a result of maternal death from preventable causes.

A steady drumbeat is already underway to end preventable maternal mortality. This USAID Maternal Health Vision supports global efforts to reduce maternal deaths, including the United Nations (UN) *Every Woman Every Child* campaign; *Family Planning 2020*; the UN *Commission on Life Saving Commodities*, the UN *Commission on Information and Accountability, A Promise Renewed* to accelerate reductions in child mortality, the global *Every Newborn Action Plan*, and the new global consensus on *Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality*.

Despite the challenges, we can end preventable maternal mortality, and we can do it in a generation. Learn more at [www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/maternal-and-child-health](http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/maternal-and-child-health).