

## Goal

Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of maternal mortality rate (MMR) by half

## A 1-IN-13 RISK OF DEATH

In sub-Saharan Africa women face a 1-in-13 chance of dying in childbirth, as compared to a 1-in-4,100 chance in industrialized countries.

# » Maternal Mortality

Region	Lifetime risk of dying in pregnancy or childbirth*
Sub-Saharan Africa	1 in 13
South Asia	1 in 55
Middle East/North Africa	1 in 55
Latin America/Caribbean	1 in 160
East Asia/Pacific	1 in 280
CEE/CIS	1 in 800
Least developed countries	1 in 16
Developing countries	1 in 60
Industrialized countries	1 in 4,100
World	1 in 75

\* Affected not only by maternal mortality rates but also by the number of births per woman.

Source: WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA, *Maternal Mortality in 1995: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 2001.*



## Result

Skilled care at delivery has increased across all developing regions. However, in some countries, and in sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, where maternal mortality is highest, delivery care has not improved significantly.

## ... but

Access to antenatal care and quality essential obstetric care must be made available to all women.

## Issue

Complications during pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death and disability among women of reproductive age in developing countries, killing an estimated 515,000 women each year.

For every woman who dies, approximately 30 more endure injuries, infection and disabilities in pregnancy or childbirth. This means that at least 15 million women a year suffer this type of damage.

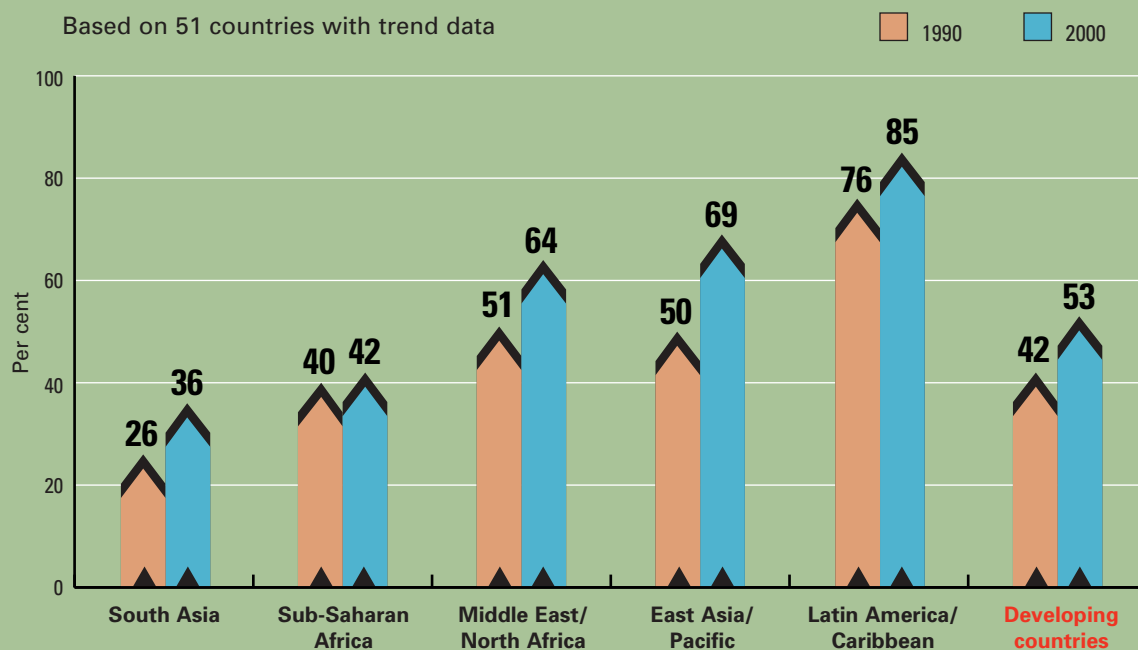
## Difficulties in monitoring progress

Measuring maternal mortality trends is difficult. Only a few countries have the vital registration systems needed to monitor such trends. Those that do account for only about one quarter of live births and relatively few maternal deaths.

The proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel has been recommended as a measure of progress for maternal mortality. As the chart (below) shows, in sub-Saharan Africa, where maternal mortality is highest, skilled care at delivery has not increased.

## Trends in skilled care at delivery (1990-2000)

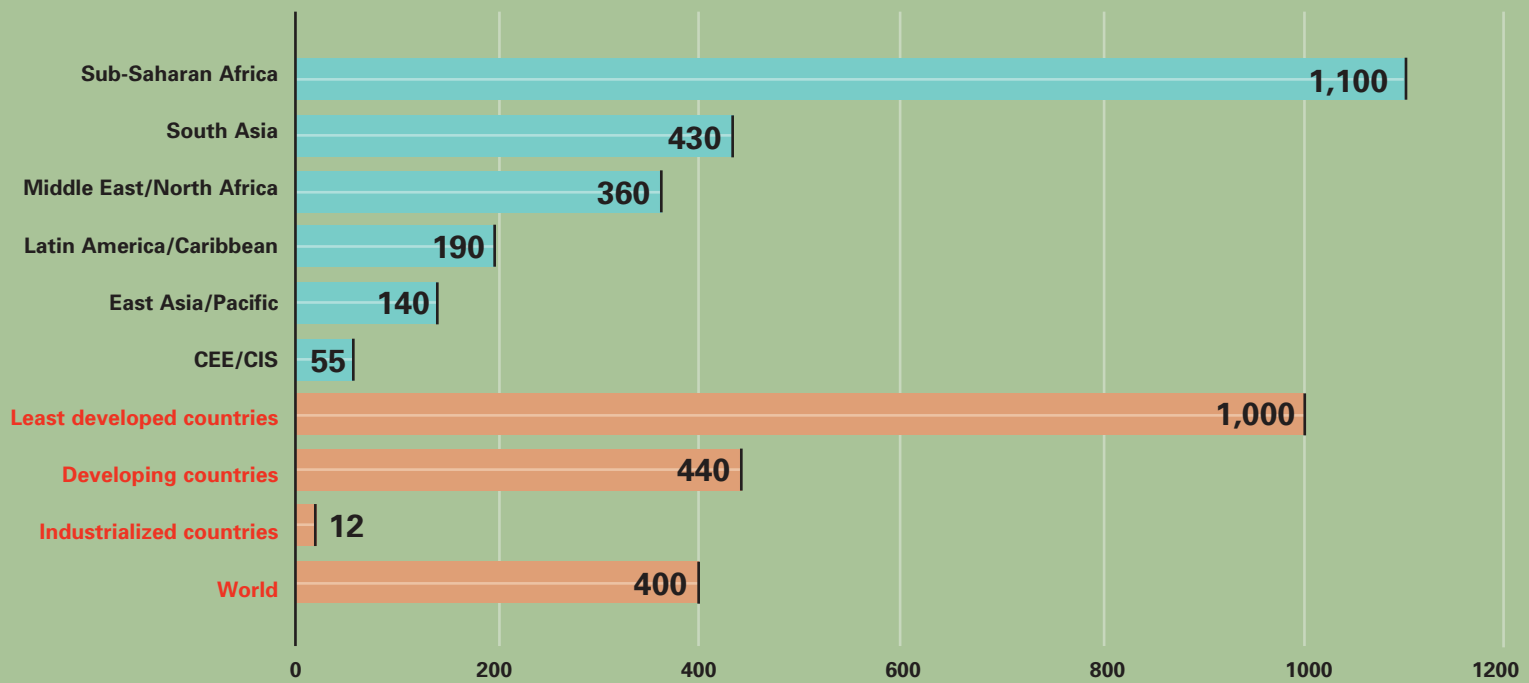
In sub-Saharan Africa, where maternal mortality is highest, delivery care has not improved



Source: UNICEF, 2001.

## Maternal mortality ratios\*, by region

Highest levels in sub-Saharan Africa

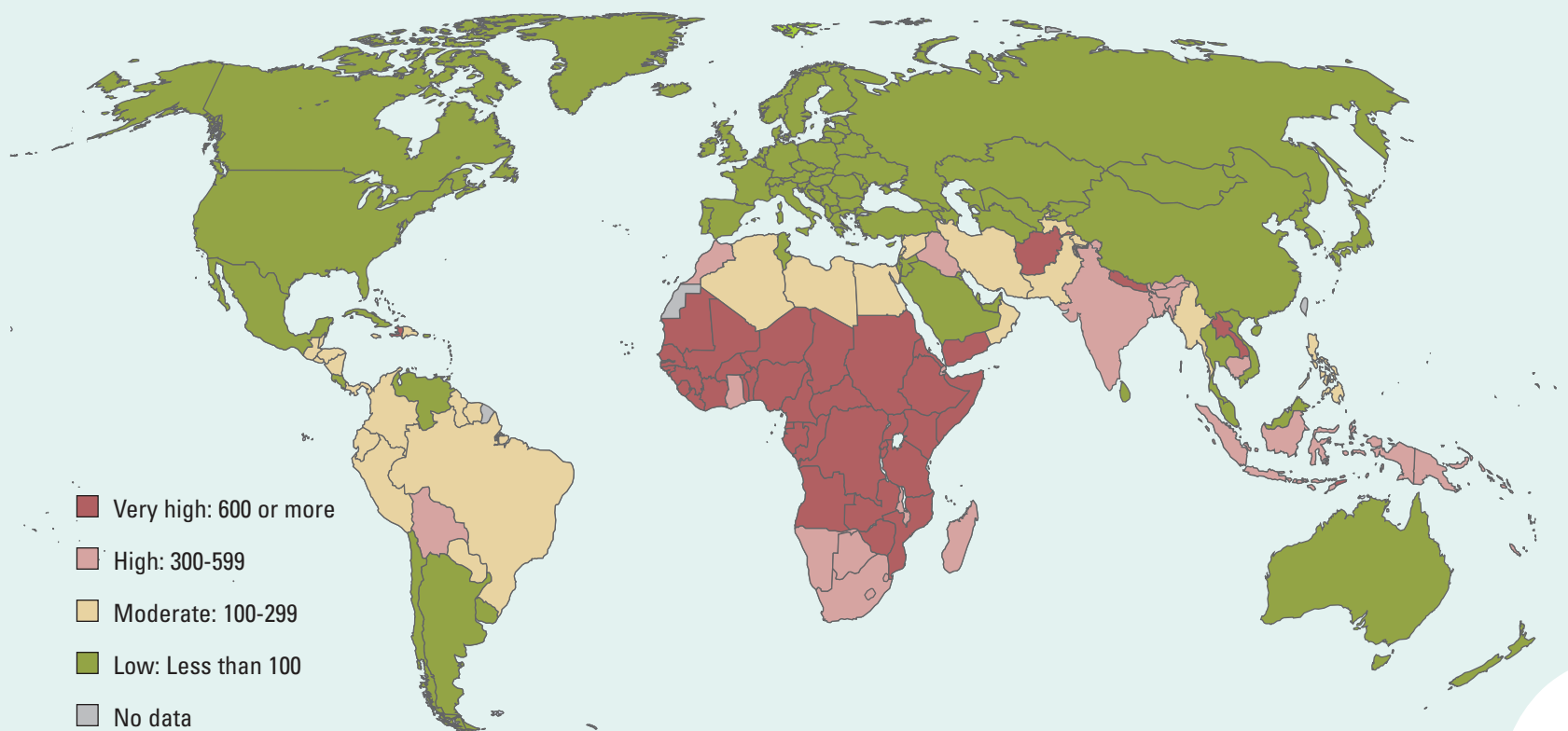


\*Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births, 1995.

Source: WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA, *Maternal Mortality in 1995: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 2001.*

## Risking death to give life

Maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births



Source: WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA, *Maternal Mortality in 1995: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 2001.*

## Essential obstetric care

Essential obstetric care (EOC) is critical for reducing maternal deaths. Unfortunately, national level data on the availability and use of EOC facilities are not yet available for many countries.

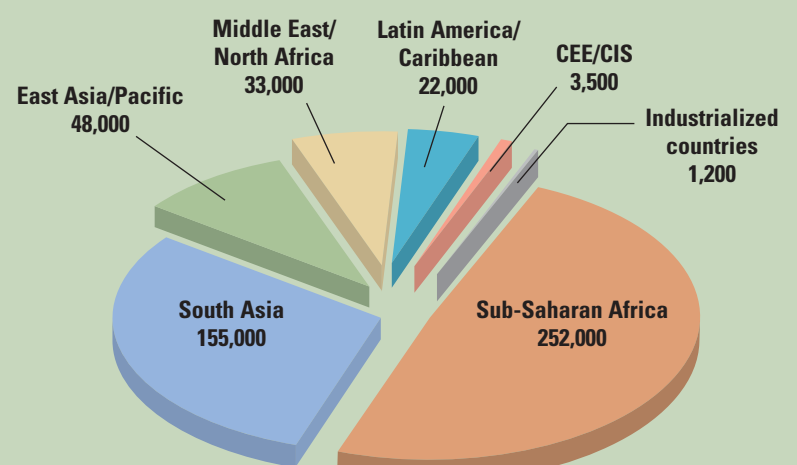
An indicator of whether EOC facilities are providing life-saving obstetric services is the rate of Caesarean section (or C-section) deliveries, one of the procedures used to treat major obstetric complications. UNICEF, WHO and UNFPA estimate that a minimum of 5 per cent of deliveries are likely to require a C-section in order to preserve the life and health of mother or infant. If the data show that less than 5 per cent of births are by C-section, this means that some life-threatening complications are not receiving the necessary care. Rates higher than 15 per cent indicate inappropriate use of the procedure.

## Unmet need: Where C-section rates are lower than 5 per cent

Chad	0.5	Guinea	2.0
Madagascar	0.6	Togo	2.0
Niger	0.6	Benin	2.2
Ethiopia	0.7	Senegal	2.2
Mali	0.8	Uganda	2.6
Nepal	1.0	Mozambique	2.7
Burkina Faso	1.1	Tanzania	2.9
Yemen	1.4	Uzbekistan	3.0
Eritrea	1.6	Viet Nam	3.4
Haiti	1.6	Nigeria	3.7
Central African Rep.	1.9	Cameroon	4.2
Zambia	1.9	Indonesia	4.3

Source: Demographic and Health Surveys, 1993-2000.

## Maternal deaths estimated at 515,000



Source: WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA, *Maternal Mortality in 1995: Estimates developed by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, 2001.*