

Strengthening Systems for Maternal and Reproductive Health

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Overview

- **Inequities and gaps in maternal and reproductive health in Africa**
- **Priorities in strengthening health systems**
- **Priorities beyond the health system**
- **Unsafe abortion – neglected and preventable**

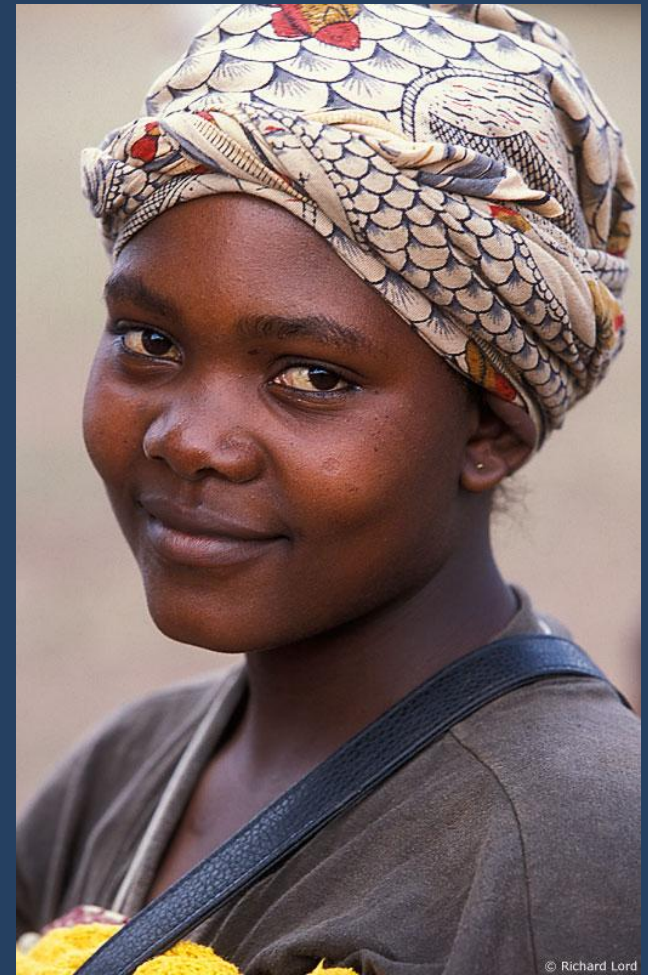
Inequities and gaps

- Underserved countries and populations across all aspects of reproductive health



Inequities and gaps

- **Young people's RH needs**
- **Access to and use of modern contraception**
- **Maternal mortality**
- **Unsafe abortion**



Priorities in strengthening health systems

Invest in **primary health care workers**

- **Motivate and train**
- **Facilitative supervision and other support mechanisms**



Priorities in strengthening health systems

- RH (including MCH) too fragmented
- Better integrated services—ON SITE
- Establish regulations, standards and guidelines for service delivery
- Improve quality of care, including attention to values clarification and rights
- Improve collection and use of data
- Strengthen logistics systems

Priorities beyond the health system

Effective engagement of communities:

- Youth needs
- Information/ Education
- Reduce stigma



Private Midwives outreach in Uganda

Priorities beyond the health system

Improve policies:

- Ensure that health system and national laws and policies reflect public health evidence and human rights -- not ideology
- Incorporate needs of neglected groups, including youth, into policy frameworks
- Mobilise human and financial resources

Priorities beyond the health system

- Use the UN, AU and national legal systems to **hold governments accountable**
- Ensure **active participation** of women and youth
- **Stay the course** post-2015

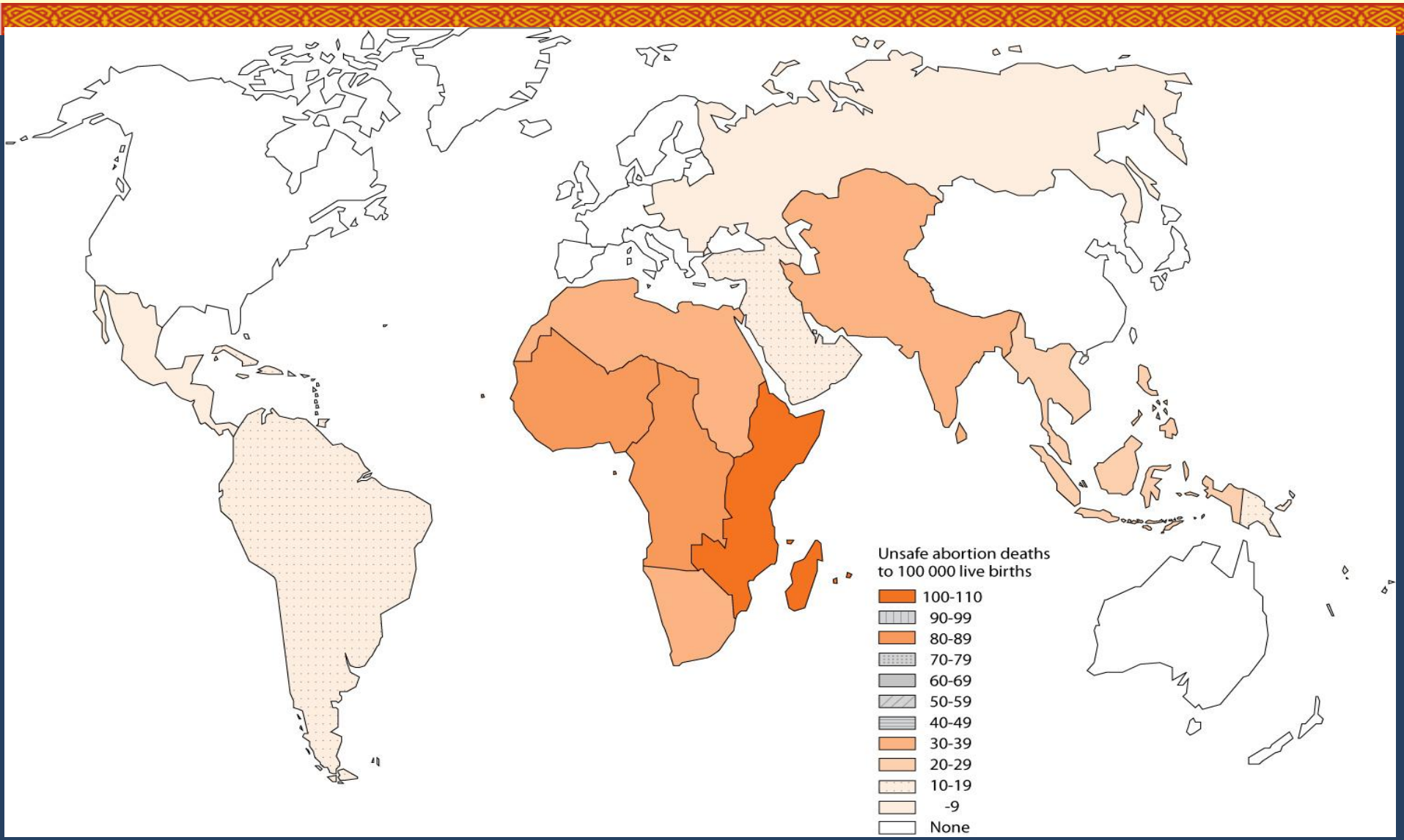


African Union
a United and Strong Africa

The burden of unsafe abortion in Africa and South Asia

Deaths from unsafe abortion per 100,000 live births, 2008

(Source: WHO, 2011)

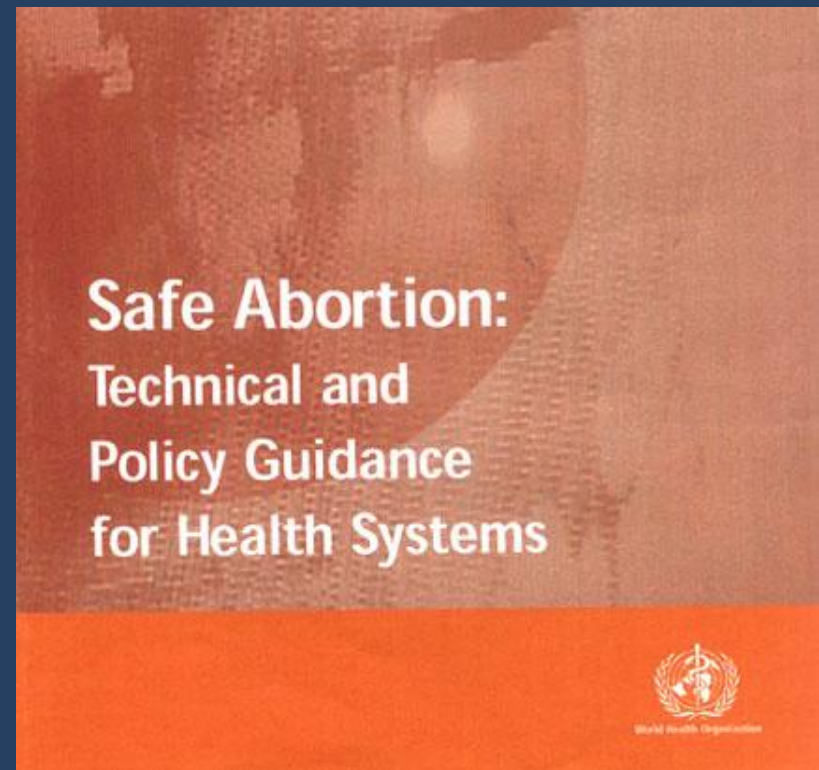


Unsafe abortion: Risks of inaction

- **150,000 preventable maternal deaths in Africa in the next five years**
- **Millions of injuries, increased infertility, harms to families and children**
- **High costs to health systems and women**
- **MDGs not met**
- **Violations of women's human rights**

Responses to unsafe abortion

- Global: Safe abortion addressed in WHO guidance and other key documents
- Regional: Africa protocol affirms abortion as a woman's right for several indications; Maputo Plan of Action includes safe abortion
- National: Changes in laws and policies; expanded access to safe abortion and postabortion care



Talk Talk→

ACTION/ IMPLEMENTATION

- Talking since Alma-Ata 1978
- Safe Motherhood conferences
- Conference after conference
- Numerous strategies-latest being CARMMA
- Shifting goal post
- Let us stop and consider what is happening on the ground--at implementation level
- We need to DELIVER---- in Africa

Reducing Maternal Mortality

- Is it family planning ?
- Or is it access to safe abortion/PAC?
- Is it increased age at first pregnancy?
- Or is it BEMOC or EMOC and skilled attendance?
- IT IS ALL OF THE ABOVE AND MORE.
- TOGETHER
- We need to be consistent in our message and advocacy—avoid confusion

They count on us!

