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Maternal Deaths Drop Sharply, but Only 9 Nations Meet U.N. Goal

Worldwide, maternal mortality fell by 43 percent over the last 25 years, but only nine countries have achieved the U.N. goal of a 75 percent reduction

 REUTERS

November 12, 2015 |

By Reuters Staff

BANGKOK (Thomson Reuters Foundation) - Only nine countries have achieved a U.N. development goal of reducing the number of women dying before, during or after giving birth by 75% since 1990, the United Nations and the World Bank said on Thursday.

Worldwide, maternal mortality fell by 43% in the 25-year period, thanks to access to better-quality health services during pregnancy and childbirth, and to sexual and reproductive health services and family planning, they said in a report in *The Lancet*.

"Over the past 25 years, a woman's risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes has nearly halved," said Flavia Bustreo, assistant director-general for family, women's and children's health at the World Health Organization (WHO).

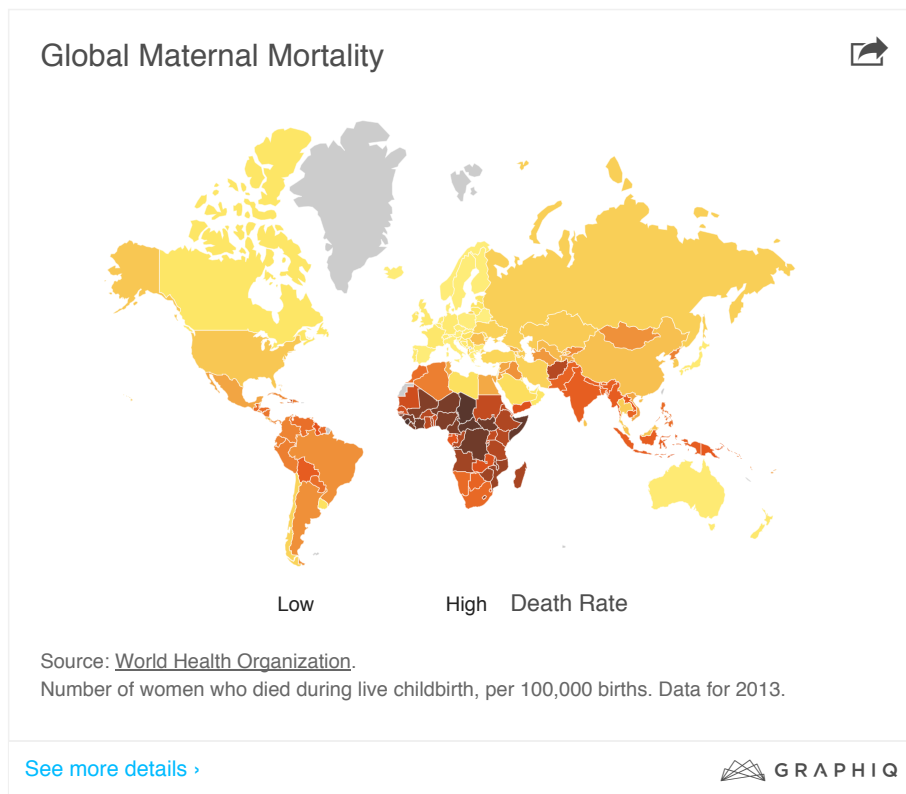
U.N. member states pledged in 2000 to reduce maternal mortality, defined as a woman's death during pregnancy, childbirth or within 6 weeks after birth, by three quarters by 2015 as part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS).



Worldwide, maternal mortality fell by 43 percent in the 25-year period, thanks to access to better-quality health services during pregnancy and childbirth, and to sexual and reproductive health services and family planning.

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The Maldives, Bhutan, Cambodia, Cape Verde, East Timor, Iran, Laos, Mongolia and Rwanda reduced maternal mortality by between 78% and 90%, the organisations' report said.

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Globally, the number of maternal deaths dropped 43% to an estimated 303,000 this year from about 532,000 in 1990, or to 216 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births from 385 in 1990, the report said.

East Asia saw the sharpest drop, to 27 deaths per 100,000 live births from 90.

A new set of targets adopted by world leaders in September - the Sustainable Development Goals - includes reducing maternal deaths to fewer than 70 per 100,000 live births globally.

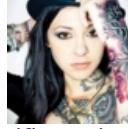
That will require the pace of reduction to more than triple to 7.5% per year, beginning in 2016, from the 2.3% annual improvement between 1990 and 2015, the report said.

SOURCE: <http://bit.ly/1Nt13hA>

Lancet 2015.



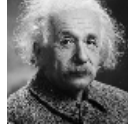
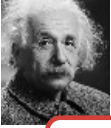
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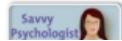



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