

The Millennium Development Goal Report



UNITED NATIONS

2010

ADDENDUM 2

Goal 5

Improve maternal health

Assessing the extent of progress towards the MDG 5 target of reducing by three quarters the maternal mortality ratio, between 1990 and 2015, is a challenge. This is mainly due to the scarcity of reliable and accurate data on maternal mortality data – particularly from developing countries where maternal mortality is high. The Maternal Mortality Estimation Interagency Group (MMEIG) composed of WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, and The World Bank, together with an independent Technical Advisory Group (TAG), has developed and updated existing maternal mortality estimates using statistical modeling for countries where no reliable data on maternal mortality exist.

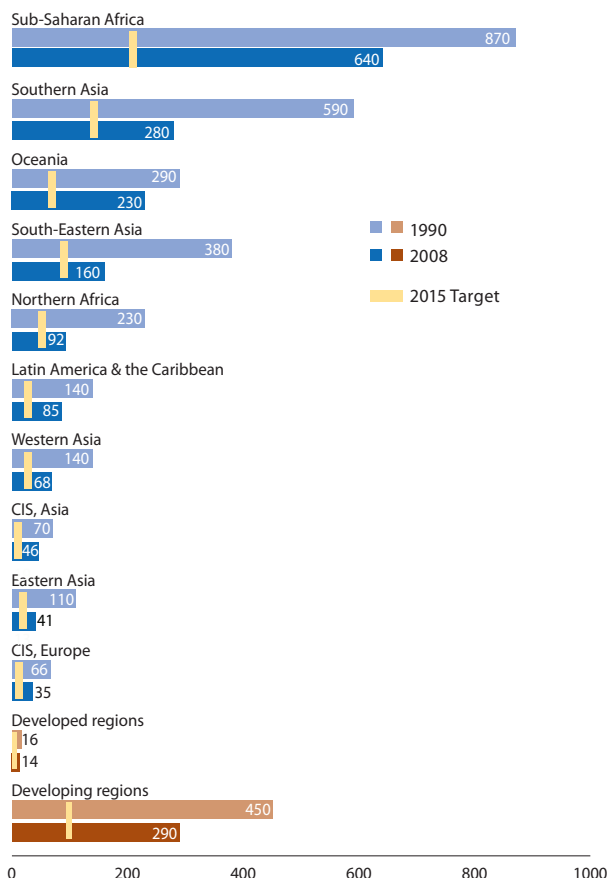
In 2008, the maternal mortality ratio in developing regions was 290 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, representing a 34 per cent decline since 1990. Exciting progress has been made in many developing regions, including sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia where the majority of maternal deaths occur.

TARGET

Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality ratio

Maternal mortality is declining, but more needs to be done

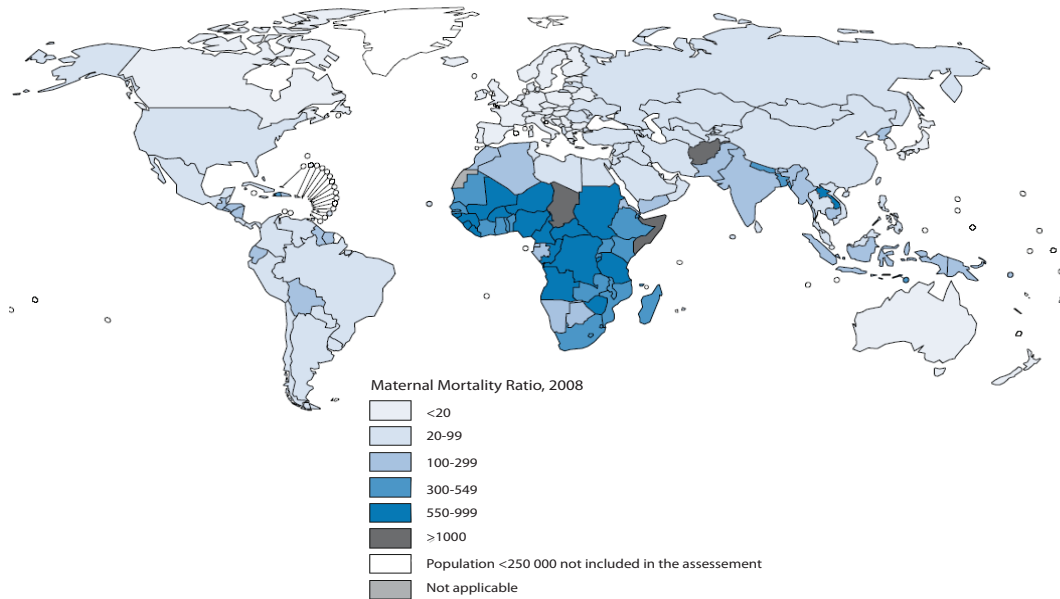
Maternal mortality deaths per 100,000 live, 1990 and 2008



Despite this important progress, an estimated 358,000 maternal deaths occurred worldwide in 2008. The average annual percentage decline in the global maternal mortality ratio was 2.3 per cent, short of the 5.5 per cent annual decline necessary to meet the MDG target. While there is progress to celebrate, efforts to save lives must be accelerated.

Substantial country and regional disparities persist

Maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, 2008



Developing countries continue to account for 99 per cent, or 355,000, of all deaths. Sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia account for 87 per cent of global maternal deaths, corresponding to 313,000 deaths. In sub-Saharan Africa, a woman's risk of dying from preventable or treatable complications of pregnancy and childbirth over the course of her life time is 1 in 31, compared to only 1 in 4300 in the developed regions.