

New study reveals investing in midwives could save millions of lives

A new study published in the Lancet Global Health¹ documents the potential impact of midwives in preventing and reducing maternal and newborn mortality and stillbirths. Led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Confederation of Midwives and the World Health Organization, the study is based on modelled estimates of deaths averted in 88 low- and middle-income countries that account for over 95% of global maternal and newborn deaths and stillbirths. These countries have severe health workforce shortages: they are home to 74% of the world's population but just 46% of the world's doctors, nurses and midwives.



Key findings from the study

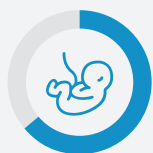
Midwives who are **EDUCATED AND REGULATED TO GLOBAL STANDARDS** play a vital role in reducing mortality

Achieving **UNIVERSAL COVERAGE** of midwife-delivered interventions by 2035

COULD AVERT



67%
of maternal deaths



64%
of newborn deaths



65%
of stillbirths

SAVING 4.3 MILLION LIVES
PER YEAR BY 2035

A less ambitious **25% INCREASE** IN COVERAGE of midwife-delivered interventions every 5 years

COULD AVERT



41%
of maternal deaths



39%
of newborn deaths



26%
of stillbirths

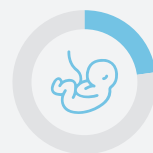
SAVING 2.2 MILLION LIVES
PER YEAR BY 2035

Even a modest **10% INCREASE** IN COVERAGE every 5 years

COULD AVERT



22%
of maternal deaths



23%
of newborn deaths



14%
of stillbirths

SAVING 1.3 MILLION LIVES
PER YEAR BY 2035

1. See: [http://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X\(20\)30397-1/fulltext](http://www.thelancet.com/journals/langlo/article/PIIS2214-109X(20)30397-1/fulltext)

A small decrease in coverage rates (2% every 5 years) would result in 552,000 more maternal and newborn deaths and stillbirths per year than if the 88 countries maintained current rates of coverage of these interventions.



Overall, increased coverage of midwife-delivered interventions, including family planning, would:



HELP REDUCE
**the number
of abortions**
from
40 million
to 25 million



HELP AVERT
**44% of
infant deaths**
due to HIV
from 27,000
to 15,000



CONTRIBUTE TO
healthier families and more
productive communities
and to a **health system**
that can provide effective
coverage of essential
sexual, reproductive,
maternal, newborn and
adolescent health services.



For midwives to work effectively, investment is needed in their **education, training, regulation** and **working environment**.

For more information about midwives and midwifery see:

<https://www.unfpa.org/midwifery>

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Johnson & Johnson
FOUNDATION