Unit 16: Maternal Mortality and Factors Affecting Women’s Health

Lecture Objectives

- Define maternal mortality and discuss its causes
- Discuss physical and social factors that affect global women’s health
- Understand how education affects global women’s health
Maternal Mortality

Maternal Mortality:
- Death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of the end of pregnancy from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management
  - Not accidental death

MM is an important health indicator of the overall health system quality.
- WHY?

Because women survive in sanitary, safe, well-staffed and stocked facilities. If new mothers are thriving, it indicates the health care system is doing its job.
Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births), 2010

Regional distribution of maternal deaths*

Maternal deaths, 2005

- East Asia/Pacific: 45,000 (8%)
- South Asia: 187,000 (35%)
- Latin America/Caribbean: 15,000 (3%)
- Industrialized countries: 930 (<1%)
- CEE/CIS: 2,600 (<1%)
- Eastern/Southern Africa: 103,000 (19%)
- Middle East/North Africa: 23,000 (4%)
- West/Central Africa: 162,000 (30%)

* Percentages may not total 100% because of rounding.

Lifetime Risk of a Woman

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continent</th>
<th>Losing an Infant</th>
<th>Maternal Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>1 in 5</td>
<td>1 in 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>1 in 11</td>
<td>1 in 132</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>1 in 21</td>
<td>1 in 188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed Countries</td>
<td>1 in 125</td>
<td>1 in 2976</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maternal Mortality Causes

- Comlications of abortion: 4%
- Haemorrhage: 34%
- Sepsis/infections: 10%
- Hypertensive disorders: 9%
- HIV/AIDS: 6%
- Anaemia: 4%
- Obstructed labour: 4%
- Other causes: 30%

What is the main cause of many of these causes?
Factors that Affect Women’s Health
Physical Factors that Affect Women’s Health

- No control over fertility & personal health
  - Poor spacing of children
- Harmful traditional practices
  - Food taboos, pregnancy & delivery, menstruation, FGC
- Poor hygiene
- Chronic anemia

Physical Factors that Affect Women’s Health

- No medical care during illness
- Chronic infection
- Hard physical work
- Occupational hazards
  - Construction, carpet making, brick making
Other Factors Affecting Women’s Health

• Intra-familial discrimination
  ○ Food, clothing, education

• Domestic Violence

• Early Marriage

• Lack of self determination

• Low status of women

Education

OF THE 775 MILLION ILLITERATE ADULTS
TWO-THIRDS ARE WOMEN

32 MILLION OF THE 61 MILLION CHILDREN NOT IN PRIMARY SCHOOL ARE GIRLS
EDUCATING GIRLS MAKES THEM...

HEALTHY

A child whose mother can read is 50% more likely to live past age 5.

Over the past 10 years, women’s education has prevented more than 4 million child deaths.


Literacy and Fertility

Chart showing the relationship between female literacy rate and fertility rate in various countries, including Burkina Faso, Afghanistan, Mali, Sudan, Pakistan, El Salvador, Jamaica, Sri Lanka, Colombia, and Thailand.
Violence Outcomes

- Among women aged 15 to 44, acts of violence cause more death and disability than cancer, malaria, traffic accidents and war combined.

- 1 in 3 have been beaten or sexually assaulted in her life.

Violence Outcomes

- Up to 30% of women reported their first sexual experience as forced.

- 80% of those trafficked across national borders are women and girls.
### Prevalence of Early Marriage

#### Countries with the Highest Proportion of Child Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chad</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladesh</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guinea</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central African Republic</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepal</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Class Wrap-Up

- **Key Words:**
  - Maternal Mortality, Early Marriage, Causes of Maternal Mortality

- **Individual Importance:**
  - Women across the world experience difficult and harsh lives that impact their health

- **Public Health Importance:**
  - The kind of care offered to women serves as an important indicator of the overall quality of the health system

- **Socio/Economic Importance:**
  - Just as in the U.S., women’s health is strongly affected by cultural norms surrounding gender.