

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

A matter of life and death

References

CURRENT SITUATION
(latest available data)

- Better situation
- Above average
- Below average
- Worse situation
- Insufficient data

EVOLUTION
(since 1990 or closest available year)

- ➔ Significant progress
- ➔ Slight progress
- || Stagnant
- ➔ Regression
- ➔ Major regression

Complete table at: www.socialwatch.org/statistics2008

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES (BCI value, 0-100)	WOMEN AGED 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)	BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)	ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (per 100,000 live births)	CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG CURRENTLY IN UNION WOMEN AGED 15-49 (%)
➔	Afghanistan (52)	52*	14*	1800	10* ➔
➔	Albania (94)	81*	100* ➔	92	60* ➔
➔	Algeria (94)	79*	95	180	61 ➔
➔	Angola (62)		45* ➔	1400	6* ➔
	Antigua and Barbuda (—)		100 		53*
	Argentina (98)		99* 	77	65*
 	Armenia (96)	93*	98* ➔	76	53* ➔
	Australia (99)		100* 	4	
	Austria (—)			4	51*
 	Azerbaijan (85)	70*	97 ➔	82	55* ➔
	Bahamas (99)		99 	16	
	Bahrain (99)		99* 	32	
➔	Bangladesh (57)	49* ➔	20 ➔	570	58* ➔
➔	Barbados (99)	89*	100* 	16	55
➔	Belarus (99)		100* 	18	73* ➔
➔	Belgium (99)		99*	8	
➔	Belize (93)		91 ➔	52	56* ➔
➔	Benin (68)	88*	74 ➔	840	17
➔	Bhutan (78)		51* ➔	440	31* ➔
➔	Bolivia (80)	79* ➔	60,8* ➔	290	58* ➔
➔	Bosnia and Herzegovina (—)	99*	100 	3	36 ➔
➔	Botswana (92)	99* ➔	99* ➔	380	44*
➔	Brazil (92)		97* 	110	77* ➔
	Brunei Darussalam (100)		100* 	13	
➔	Bulgaria (99)		99 	11	42* ➔
➔	Burkina Faso (64)	73* ➔	54 ➔	700	17 ➔
➔	Burma/Myanmar (76)		68* ➔	380	34* ➔
 	Burundi (58)	93*	34* ➔	1100	9* ➔
➔	Cambodia (66)	69*	43,8*	540	40* ➔
➔	Cameroon (70)	83*+ ➔	63 	1000	29 ➔
	Canada (99)		100* 	7	
	Cape Verde (93)		89*	210	53*
➔	Central African Republic (65)		54 ➔	980	19 ➔
➔	Chad (42)	43*+ ➔	15* ➔	1500	3* ➔
➔	Chile (100)		100* 	16	61* ➔
➔	China (90)		98 ➔	45	90* ➔
➔	Colombia (90)	94*+ ➔	96* ➔	130	78* ➔
➔	Comoros (79)		62* ➔	400	26* ➔
➔	Congo, DR (69)		61*	1100	31* ➔
➔	Congo, Rep. (79)	87*+ ➔	83* ➔	740	44*
	Cook Islands (90)		100* 		
➔	Costa Rica (94)		94 ➔	30	96* ➔
➔	Côte d'Ivoire (79)	84*	57 ➔	810	13

NOTE:
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SOURCES:
Women aged 15-49 attended at least once during pregnancy: Global Health Atlas, WHO (www.who.int/globalatlas). Except for (+) Demographic and Health Surveys - STAT compiler (www.measurdat.com/accesssurveys).

Births attended by skilled health personnel:
Reproductive Health Indicators Database, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO (www.who.int/reproductivehealth/). Except for (+) Demographic and Health Surveys - STAT compiler (www.measurdat.com/accesssurveys).

Maternal mortality ratio: Reproductive Health Indicators Database, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO (www.who.int/reproductivehealth/).

Contraceptive use among currently in union women aged 15-49: World Development Indicators 2008 website, World Bank (www.worldbank.org).

For more detailed information on the reference years of the data, see complete tables at: www.socialwatch.org/statistics2008
Definition of indicators at the end of this table.

Summary: CURRENT SITUATION (colour) EVOLUTION (arrow-icon)	COUNTRIES (BCI value, 0-100)	WOMEN AGED 15-49 ATTENDED AT LEAST ONCE DURING PREGNANCY BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)	BIRTHS ATTENDED BY SKILLED HEALTH PERSONNEL (%)	ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY RATIO (per 100,000 live births)	CONTRACEPTIVE USE AMONG CURRENTLY IN UNION WOMEN AGED 15-49 (%)
	Croatia (99)		100	7	69*
	Cuba (99)		100	45	73
	Cyprus (99)		100*	10	
←	Czech Republic (99)		100	4	72*
—	Denmark (98)			3	
	Djibouti (75)		93	650	18
	Dominica (97)		99*		50*
→	Dominican Republic (88)	98*+	96	150	61
	Ecuador (83)	56*	80*	210	73*
→	Egypt (88)	71*+ →	74*	130	59*
→	El Salvador (79)		69*	170	67*
	Equatorial Guinea (59)		63*	680	
→	Eritrea (67)	70*+	28*	450	8*
	Estonia (99)		100*	25	
	Ethiopia (54)	28*+	6*	720	15*
	Fiji (99)		99*	210	44*
	Finland (100)		100*	7	
	France (99)		99*	8	82*
	Gabon (82)	94*	86*	520	33*
	Gambia (70)	92*	57	690	18*
	Georgia (89)	91*	92*	66	47*
	Germany (100)		100	4	
	Ghana (66)	92* →	50	560	17
—	Greece (100)			3	
	Grenada (92)		100*		54*
→	Guatemala (68)	86*	41*	290	43*
→	Guinea (66)	82*+ →	38*	910	9*
	Guinea-Bissau (61)	89*	39	1100	10
←	Guyana (81)	88*	94*	470	35*
→	Haiti (—)	85* →	26	670	32
→	Honduras (78)	92*+	67	280	65
	Hungary (99)		100	6	
—	Iceland (100)			4	
→	India (71)	65*	47	450	56
→	Indonesia (84)	92* →	66*	420	57*
	Iran (91)		97*	140	74*
	Iraq (83)		89	300	50
	Ireland (100)		100*	1	
—	Israel (100)			4	
	Italy (99)		99*	3	60*
→	Jamaica (95)		97*	170	69*
←	Japan (99)		100*	6	52*
→	Jordan (97)	99* →	100*	62	56*
←	Kazakhstan (98)	82*	100	140	51
	Kenya (71)	88* →	42*	560	39*
	Kiribati (88)		90*		21*
	Korea, DPR (—)	98*	97*	370	69*
→	Korea, Rep. (100)		100	14	81*
→	Kuwait (98)		100	4	50*
←	Kyrgyzstan (95)	88*	98	150	48
→	Lao, PDR (58)	44*	19*	660	32*
	Latvia (99)		100*	10	
	Lebanon (95)		98*	150	58*

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SOURCES:
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Births attended by skilled health personnel: Reproductive Health Indicators Database, Department of Reproductive Health and Research, WHO (www.who.int/reproductivehealth). Except for (+) Demographic and Health Surveys - STAT compiler (www.measuredhs.com/accesssurveys).

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Contraceptive use among currently in union women aged 15-49: World Development Indicators 2008 website, World Bank (www.worldbank.org).

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→	Lesotho (72)	90*+	55*	960	37* →
	Liberia (65)		51*	1200	10*
	Libya (98)		100 →	97	
	Lithuania (99)		100*	11	
	Luxembourg (97)		100*	12	
	Macedonia (96)		98* →	10	14
	Madagascar (61)	80*+	45* ←	510	27* →
→	Malawi (62)	93*+ →	54	1100	42 →
	Malaysia (99)		100* →	62	
	Maldives (86)	98*	84*	120	39* ←
→	Mali (69)	53* →	41*	970	8* →
	Malta (100)		100	8	
←	Marshall Islands (93)		95*		34* ←
	Mauritania (66)	63*	53* →	820	8*
	Mauritius (98)		99*	15	76*
→	Mexico (94)		94 →	60	71 →
	Micronesia (—)		88* ←		45*
	Moldova (96)	98*+	100*	22	68* ←
	Mongolia (95)		99*	46	66
—	Montenegro (—)		99*		
→	Morocco (79)	68*+ →	63* →	240	63* →
→	Mozambique (66)	85*+ →	48* →	520	17* →
→	Namibia (85)	85* ←	76* →	210	44* →
—	Nauru (—)		100*		
→	Nepal (65)	70	19 →	830	48 →
←	Netherlands (100)		100	6	75* ←
	New Zealand (98)		95* ←	9	
→	Nicaragua (72)	85* →	67* →	170	69* →
→	Niger (52)	46 →	18 →	1800	11 →
	Nigeria (63)	61*	35*	1100	13* →
—	Niue (—)		100		
—	Norway (100)			7	
→	Oman (99)		98 →	64	32* →
→	Pakistan (64)		54 →	320	28* →
←	Palau (99)		100		17* ←
	Panama (91)		91* →	130	
	Papua New Guinea (68)		38* ←	470	26*
→	Paraguay (85)		100* →	150	73* →
	Peru (86)	85* →	73* ←	240	46 ←
→	Philippines (77)	88* →	60* →	230	49* →
	Poland (100)		100	8	
	Portugal (99)		100*	11	
—	Puerto Rico (—)				78*
	Qatar (96)	62*	100	12	43*
→	Romania (96)	89*	98*	24	70* →
→	Russian Federation (98)	96*	100	28	73* →
	Rwanda (53)	94*+	28*	1300	17* ←
→	Samoa (97)		100*		43* →
	Sao Tome and Principe (82)	91*	81		30
	Saudi Arabia (97)		93	18	21* ←
→	Senegal (71)	87*+ →	52* →	980	12* →
	Serbia (—)		99*		41*
	Sierra Leone (61)	82*	43*	2100	5*

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←	Singapore (91)		100	14	62* →
	Slovakia (97)		100	6	
	Slovenia (99)		100	6	
←	Solomon Islands (82)		43* ←	220	7* →
→	Somalia (—)		33	1400	15 →
→	South Africa (89)	89*	92* →	400	60* →
—	Spain (99)			4	
→	Sri Lanka (98)		97* →	58	70* →
	St Kitts and Nevis (95)		100*		54*
—	St Lucia (98)		100*		
←	St Vincent and Grenadines (93)		100*		48* →
←	Sudan (76)		49* →	450	8
	Suriname (86)	91*	71*	72	42*
	Swaziland (77)		74*	390	48* →
—	Sweden (100)			3	
	Switzerland (97)		100	5	
→	Syria (94)		93 →	130	58 →
→	Tajikistan (85)	75*	83*	170	38* →
	Tanzania (73)	94*+ →	46* →	950	26* →
→	Thailand (96)		97 →	110	77 →
→	Timor-Leste (60)		19*	380	10* →
→	Togo (71)	78* →	62 →	510	17 →
	Tonga (95)		99*		33* ←
	Trinidad and Tobago (95)	96*	98	45	43 →
→	Tunisia (95)		90* →	100	63* →
→	Turkey (92)	67*	83* →	44	71* →
←	Turkmenistan (—)	87*	100 →	130	48 ←
—	Tuvalu (89)		100*		
→	Uganda (59)	94 →	42 →	550	24 →
←	Ukraine (99)	90*	100*	18	66* →
	United Arab Emirates (99)		100*	37	
	United Kingdom (99)		99*	8	82
→	United States of America (99)		100* →	11	73*
←	Uruguay (96)		100*	20	77* →
→	Uzbekistan (—)		100	24	65 →
→	Vanuatu (87)		92* →		28* →
→	Venezuela (95)		95*	57	77*
→	Vietnam (90)	70*	88 →	150	76 →
—	West Bank and Gaza (—)				50 →
→	Yemen (61)	34* →	20* →	430	23* →
	Zambia (73)	93*	43* →	830	34* →
	Zimbabwe (80)	94	69	880	60 →

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Contraceptive use among currently in union women aged 15-49: World Development Indicators 2008 website, World Bank (www.worldbank.org).

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DEFINITION OF INDICATORS:

Women aged 15-49 attended at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel (%): Percentage of women aged 15-49 years attended at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel (doctors, nurses or midwives). Last available data: 2001-2006; evolution since 1990.

Births attended by skilled health personnel (%): Percentage of births attended by skilled health personnel (doctors, nurses or midwives). Last available data: 2001/2006; evolution since 1990 or closest possible year.

Estimated maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births): Annual number of deaths of women from pregnancy-related causes per 100,000 live births. Due to changes in the model of estimation, 1995 and 2005 data are not comparable. Last available data: 2005.

Contraceptive use among women currently in union aged 15-49 (%): Percentage of women in union aged 15-49 years currently using contraception. Last available data: 2001/2006; evolution since 1991.

Methodological notes and guidelines at the end of the section.

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

A matter of life and death

Reproductive health problems are still the main cause of illness and death for women in reproductive age throughout the world. According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) a woman per minute dies in childbirth due to avoidable causes and for each death there are 20 or more women who have permanent health disorders from complications arising when giving birth.

Every year half a million women lose their lives and more than 10 million find they will be unable to lead a full life. This is particularly worrying in poor countries, where most of the unwanted pregnancies, abortions performed in poor conditions, HIV/AIDS infections, deaths and permanent maternal damages occur.

Poverty and inequity related to sex exclude millions of women from the free exercise of their reproductive rights, while mortality and morbidity derived from maternity worsen their poverty situation. This makes the governments of the world more predisposed to committing themselves to prioritize, in the political agenda, the rights of women in general and their reproductive health in particular.

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which came into force in 1981, related the rights of women, among them reproductive health, as the right to enjoy life in decent conditions. The policies to promote, plan and invest in the field of reproductive health cannot be treated independently from the actions that the Millennium Development Goals hope to achieve, particularly those referring to the reduction of poverty and hunger in the world.

Likewise, after the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, there was a drive for the adoption of a series of policies to foster a greater coverage of reproductive health services, integrating family planning services in pre- and post-natal care to prevent unwanted pregnancies, labour services provided by skilled personnel, adequate obstetric assistance and prevention of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS.

The information in the table "Reproductive health: A matter of life or death" brings to the fore the huge distance in progress between countries. Chart 1 shows that the distance between the average values in countries in the better and worse relative situation is still very significant. The greatest differences surface in the percentage of births assisted by skilled personnel: while the better positioned countries can be considered to have made assistance practically universal (98.9%), at the other end of the spectrum 62% of births do not receive specialized attention.

It is also alarming to confirm the maternal mortality gap: in the countries in the better relative situation an average of 35 women die per 100,000 live births, while in countries with greater deficiencies 929 lives are lost owing to causes related to pregnancy and labour.

There are also differences in the access to modern contraceptive methods to prevent unwanted

CHART 1. Averages by indicator of countries in better and worse situation in reproductive health

		Women aged 15-49 attended at least once during pregnancy by skilled health personnel (%)	Contraceptive use among women currently in union aged 15-49	Births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	Estimated maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)
Worse relative situation	Average	67.2	17.1	37.9	928.8
	Number of countries	24	33	33	33
Better relative situation	Average	93.9	64.5	98.9	35.2
	Number of countries	11	50	75	70
Total	Average	80.7	44.9	79.1	336.1
	Number of countries	79	150	177	162

CHART 2. Current situation in reproductive health by region (number of countries)

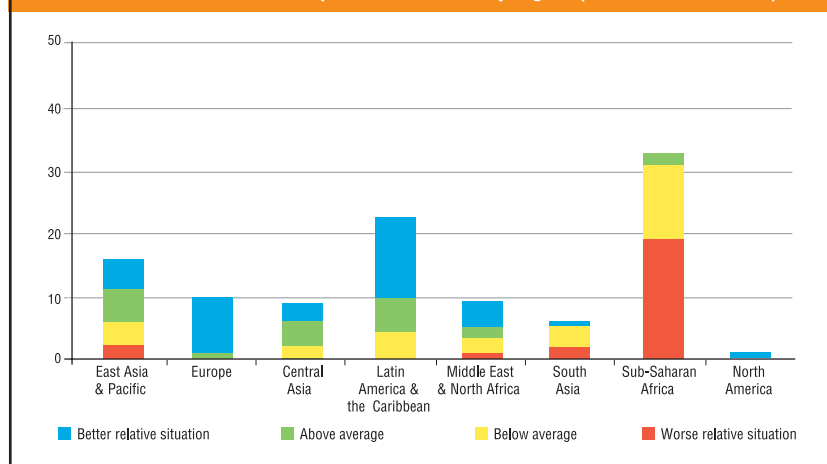


CHART 3. Current situation and evolution in reproductive health (number of countries)

	←	↶		↷	→	Total
Worse relative situation	1	1	5	12	5	24
Below average	0	3	5	7	11	26
Above average	0	3	4	5	9	21
Better relative situation	0	9	7	16	4	36
Total	1	16	21	40	29	107

pregnancies: for every six women who use contraceptives in the group of more developed countries, less than two have access to these methods in the countries in the worse relative situation.

The highest number of maternal deaths is closely associated with the lack of assistance at childbirth, and the increase in the number of deaths in countries with a high lack of attention during labour is significant. It is therefore possible to make a positive impact in the reduction of the maternal mortality rate through policies aimed at universalizing assistance at childbirth by specialized personnel.

Scenarios by region

Today's reproductive health scenario is very uneven per region (Chart 2). In Sub-Saharan Africa, more than half the countries are in the worse situation. If this category is added to the following (which in-

cludes countries below the average), the rate for the region is 87% or 9 out of 10 countries in the worse situation or below the world average.

The rest of the countries in the worse situation in this field are in East Asia and the Pacific, South Asia and the Middle East and North Africa. In Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America and Europe there are no countries in the group of the worse situation in reproductive health; and the two latter regions are the most advanced in the world.

The evolution indicators (Chart 3) shows that most countries have progressed slightly or significantly in the last few years; although there is also a significant proportion of stagnant countries – including critical scenarios – but, no doubt, the most worrying situation is that of countries in unfavourable scenarios whose indicators register regression. ■