

Dear AAPLOG Colleague,

Here is some info we need to be conversant with. The United Nations' Millennium Develop Goal #5 (MDG5) is to reduce worldwide maternal mortality by 75% by the year 2015-- a very laudable goal. (About half the deaths occur within 24 hours of delivery.) Cause of deaths: 24% from hemorrhage, 20% from "malaria, anemia, heart disease" group, 15% from sepsis, 13% from unsafe abortions, 12% eclampsia, 8% obstructed labor, remainder anesthesia, embolism, ectopics.

Worldwide, a maternal mortality death occurs every minute of every day. Some more immediate solutions: make available uterotonic agents, malaria meds, antibiotics, anti-convulsants, anti-hypertensives.

More long-term solutions: increase in trained obstetric medical caretakers, improvements in prenatal care, and universal access to safe abortions. What? You heard it right. A major push worldwide is being made to reduce maternal mortality by reducing the number of "unsafe" abortions. By definition, an "unsafe" abortion is one done in a country where the procedure is illegal, a "safe" abortion is one done in a country where it is legal. Thus any country where abortion is illegal must change it's laws, if it wants to decrease this maternal mortality (and be favored with international money grants for "reproductive health service.") So the pressure is on those countries to conform to the universal access to abortion agenda.

FIGO, the International ObGyn Federation met in South Africa in early October. Here's a news release from the meeting--- and you will hear a lot more of this in the future:

"CAPE TOWN, Oct 8 (IPS) – One hundred African women and girls die unnecessarily from unsafe abortions every day because they have to rely on unqualified medical practitioners or self-induce abortion by ingesting poisonous substances or inserting tools into their uterus.

Africa has the highest percentage of maternal deaths due to unsafe abortion. 60 percent of abortion-related deaths occur in women and girls under the age of 25.

"Abortions that have to be performed illegally translate directly to higher maternal mortality," warned Dr Anibal Faundes" (professor of obstetrics at the State University of Campinas in Sao Paulo, Brasil,)

AAPLOG COMMENT: In the USA, about 5000 illegal abortions in 1971 became 1.5 million legal abortions yearly. Translate that kind of increase into the African medical world, and see how many women's lives are "saved."