Improving the scientific basis for defining, estimating, and monitoring the magnitude of maternal morbidity

**Current Project Brief**

**Objectives and Background**

The true extent of maternal morbidity, the health problems borne by women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period, is unknown. Overall, three major issues have limited valid, routine, and comparable measurements of maternal morbidity, the lack of:

- a common definition and identification criteria,
- standardized assessment tools especially at primary health care level,
- common indicators to measure morbidity.

Developing measurement criteria for the burden of pregnancy and post-partum related morbidity is crucial to the on-going elaboration of the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This project aims to construct a definition and develop identification criteria for maternal morbidity, estimate the burden of individual causes or determining factors of maternal morbidity based on existing evidence, develop and test an assessment tool for measuring maternal morbidity in low- and middle-income countries, and develop indicators for maternal morbidity.

**Geographic location**

Global scope

**Main deliverables**

- To construct a definition and identification criteria for maternal morbidity
- To achieve scientific consensus on definition and criteria for maternal morbidity
- To estimate the magnitude (of individual causes) of maternal morbidity based upon existing evidence
- To develop and validate an assessment tool for maternal morbidity applicable at the community and primary health care level
- To develop indicators of maternal morbidity measurement

**Partners**

The project is led and carried out by a technical working group, the Maternal Morbidity Working Group (MMWG), composed of obstetricians, physicians, midwives, epidemiologists, medical anthropologists, public health professionals and patient advocates from high-, middle- and low-income countries.

**Sources of funding**

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