

# WHY SKILLED BIRTH ATTENDANTS MATTER

Skilled Birth Attendants Improve Maternal and Newborn Survival

MOST MATERNAL AND NEWBORN DEATHS OCCUR IN THE FIRST 24 HOURS AFTER BIRTH,<sup>1</sup> AND 99% ARE IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.

APPROXIMATELY 800 WOMEN DIE EVERY DAY FROM PREVENTABLE CAUSES RELATED TO PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH.<sup>2</sup>

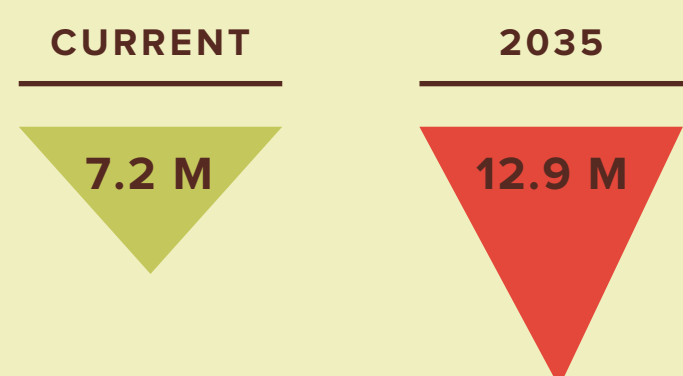
In 2012, 40 million births in developing regions were not attended by skilled health personnel.<sup>3</sup>



## SAVE MILLIONS OF LIVES EACH YEAR

BY INCREASING THE NUMBER OF WELL-TRAINED AND SUPPORTED SKILLED BIRTH ATTENDANTS IN THE 73 COUNTRIES WHERE MOST MATERNAL AND NEWBORN DEATHS OCCUR.<sup>4</sup>

A skilled birth attendant (SBA) is a midwife, physician, obstetrician, nurse or other health care professional who provides essential and emergency health care services to women and their newborns during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period.



The current deficit of doctors, nurses and midwives is about 7.2 million<sup>5</sup> and by 2035 the global deficit of skilled professionals will grow to about 12.9 million.<sup>6</sup>

IN AFRICA, THERE ARE ONLY TWO TRAINED HEALTH WORKERS FOR EVERY 1,000 PEOPLE. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, THERE ARE FOUR.

THIS IS FAR SHORT OF WHAT IS NEEDED TO MEET THE HEALTH NEEDS OF MOTHERS AND CHILDREN.<sup>7</sup>



## SKILLED BIRTH ATTENDANTS

The Champions of Maternal and Newborn Health

A skilled birth attendant, such as a midwife, is educated and trained to proficiency in the skills needed to manage:

- pregnancies and labor
- childbirth
- family planning
- referral of women and newborns with complications
- newborn health



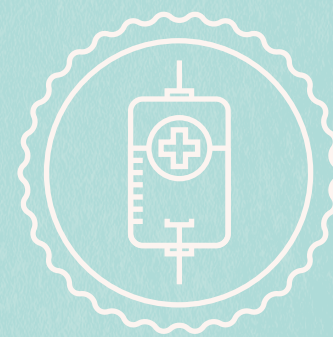
### SKILLED BIRTH ATTENDANTS HAVE THE GREATEST IMPACT WHEN THEY HAVE...



supportive policies that enable SBAs to provide a range of quality services (especially for emergencies) and provide them adequate professional and legal support

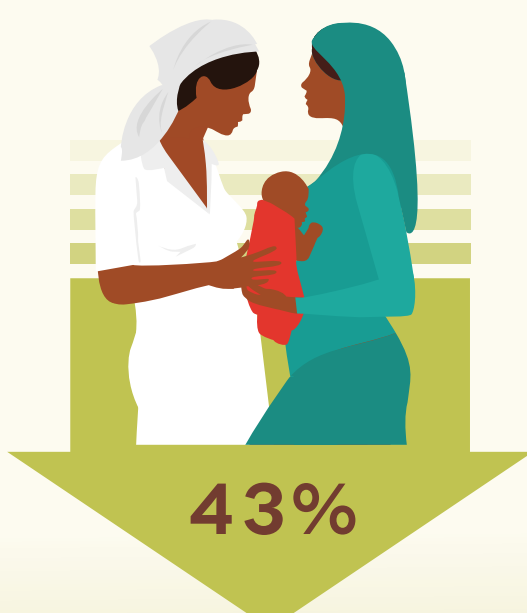


competency-based clinical training and mentorship



well-equipped and fully-staffed facilities with sufficient medicines and supplies to provide respectful, quality care

### SUPPORTING AND TRAINING SBAs WITH BASIC LIFE-SAVING COMPETENCIES CAN:



INVEST IN SKILLED BIRTH ATTENDANTS  
UNLOCK BETTER HEALTH  
*for*  
WOMEN AND CHILDREN

1. Skilled Birth Attendants World Health Organization. 2015

2. Maternal Mortality World Health Organization. 2015

3. United Nations, MDG Report, 2014

4. UNFPA, State of the World's Midwifery Report, 2014

5. "A Universal Truth: No Health Without a Workforce". WHO. 2013

6. Ibid

7. Global Atlas of the Health Workforce, World Health Organization. WHO 2011

8. "Ending Newborn Deaths: Ensuring Every Baby Survives. Save the Children". 2014

9. "Delivering Hope and Saving Lives: Investing in Midwifery". UNFPA. 2012

innovating to save lives

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