

Papua New Guinea

Part of one of the largest Pacific islands, Papua New Guinea has a culturally diverse and fast growing population, which is predominantly young and rural. The total fertility rate remains high. With a reduction in maternal mortality of only 26 percent since 1990, Papua New Guinea's current ratio is among the highest in the Western Pacific. Skilled attendance at birth is low, mainly due to an acute shortage of midwives, poor accessibility, lack of adequate delivery facilities and low levels of trust in public services. The current National Health Plan 2011-2020 addresses the needs for health facilities at community level. Plans to fill the midwifery gap in the country are underway, by strengthening the midwifery education institutions. Currently there is no direct-entry programme for midwifery education, and the only available education is sequential (a one-year midwifery programme after three years of nursing education).

▶ COUNTRY INDICATORS*

Total population (000); % urban	6,888; 13
Adolescent population (15-19 yrs) (000); % of total	722; 10
Number of women of reproductive age (age 15-49) (000); % of total	1,723; 25
Total fertility rate (children per woman)	4.1
Crude birth rate (per 1,000 population)	31
Births per year (000)	206
% of all births registered	–
Number of maternal deaths	530
Neonatal mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	26
Stillbirth rate (per 1,000 births)	15
Number of pregnant women tested for HIV	43,942
Midwives are authorized to administer a core set of life-saving interventions	Partial
Density of midwives, nurses and doctors per 1,000 population	0.6
Estimated workforce shortage to attain 95% skilled birth attendance by 2015	239
Gross secondary school enrolment (male; female) %	–; –
Literacy rate (age 15 and over) (male; female) %	64; 56

▶ MDG INDICATORS

Maternal mortality ratio (per 100,000 live births)	250
Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel (%)	53
Contraceptive prevalence rate (modern methods) (%)	26
Adolescent birth rate (births per 1,000 women age 15-19)	70
Antenatal care coverage (at least one visit; at least four visits) (%)	79; 55
Unmet need for family planning (%)	–
Under-5 mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	69

▶ MIDWIFERY WORKFORCE¹

Midwives (including nurse-midwives) ²	292
Other health professionals with some midwifery competencies ³	–
General practitioners with some midwifery competencies	225
Obstetricians	16
Community health workers with some midwifery training	–
A live registry of licensed midwives exists	Yes

▶ MIDWIFERY EDUCATION

Midwifery education programmes (direct entry; combined; sequential)	No; Yes; Yes
Number of midwifery education institutions (total); number of private	12; 7
Duration of midwifery education programmes (in months)	12 to 36
Number of student admissions (first year)	–
Student admissions per total available student places (%)	–
Number of students enrolled in all years (2009)	–
Number of graduates (2009)	–
Midwifery education programmes are accredited	Yes

▶ REGULATION

Legislation exists recognizing midwifery as an autonomous profession	No
Midwives hold a protected title	No
A recognized definition of a professional midwife exists	Yes
A government body regulates midwifery practice	Yes
A licence is required to practise midwifery	Yes
Midwives are authorized to prescribe life-saving medications	Yes



MIDWIFERY BAROMETER

Midwives per 1,000 live births	1	●
Birth complications per day; rural	87; 75	●
Lifetime risk of maternal death	1 in 94	●
Intrapartum stillbirth rate (per 1,000 births)	5	●
Neonatal mortality as % of under-5 mortality	37	●

PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

A midwives association exists	Yes
Number of midwifery professionals represented by an association	-
Association(s) affiliated with ICM; ICN	Yes; No

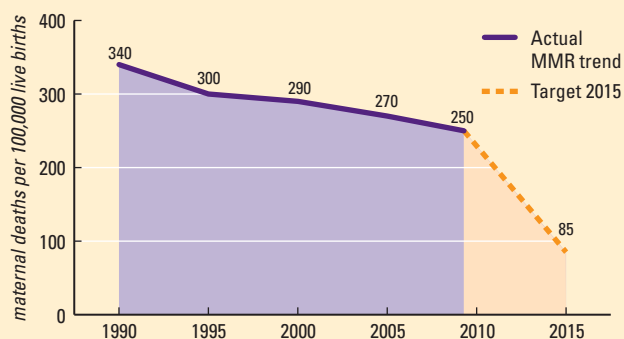
POLICIES

A national maternal and newborn health plan exists that includes the midwifery workforce	Yes
The plan is costed	Yes
The national health workforce plan specifically addresses midwifery	Yes
Compulsory notification of maternal deaths	Yes
Systematic maternal death audits and reviews	Yes
Confidential enquiry for maternal deaths	Yes
Compulsory registration of all births	Yes
All maternal and newborn health services are free (public sector)	Partial

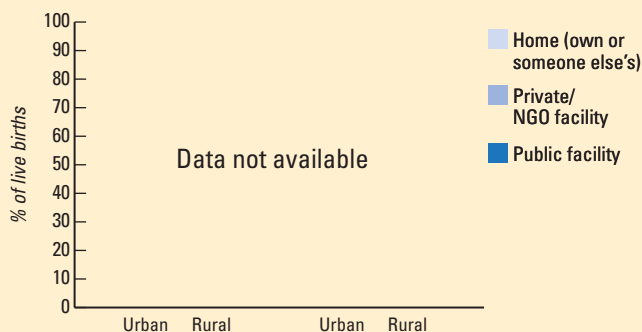
SERVICES

Number of facilities providing essential childbirth care	-
Number of Basic Emergency Obstetric and Newborn Care (EmONC) facilities	584
Number of Comprehensive EmONC facilities	26
Facilities per 1,000 births	-

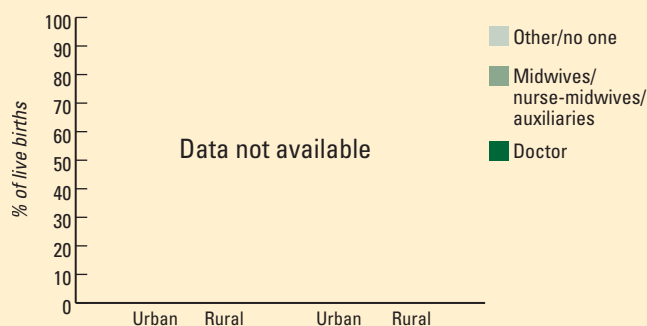
Trends in maternal mortality: 1990–2015



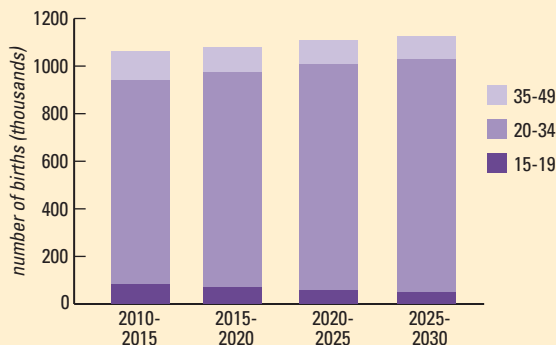
Where women give birth: urban vs. rural



Who attends births: urban vs. rural



Projected number of births, by age of mother



Explanatory notes: *Annex 2 provides a complete list of source data. All data sources are from 2008 unless otherwise stated. Where country respondents stated that data were not available, the term 'Unavailable' is used. In all other instances, '-' is used to denote a nil response or data that requires further verification. 1. 2008 estimates based on country data returns and the WHO Global Atlas of the Health Workforce. 2. Includes midwives, nurse-midwives and nurses with midwifery competencies. These figures do not necessarily reflect the number of practising midwives or the ICM definition of a midwife. 3. Auxiliary midwives and auxiliary nurse-midwives.