WHO Safe Childbirth Checklist

Of the more than 130 million births occurring each year, an estimated 303,000 result in the mother’s death, 2.6 million in stillbirth, and another 2.7 million in a newborn death. Almost half of these deaths occur during labor and childbirth and most could have been prevented with quality care around the time of birth.

WHO has recently announced the updated [WHO Safe Childbirth Checklist](https://www.usaidassist.org) (SCC). The WHO Safe Childbirth Checklist, initially launched in 2012, is a tool to improve the quality of care provided to women giving birth. The Checklist is an organized list of evidence-based essential birth practices, which targets the major causes of maternal deaths, intrapartum-related stillbirths and neonatal deaths in low and middle income countries (LMICs), namely hemorrhage, infection, obstructed labor, hypertensive disorders, inadequate intrapartum care, birth asphyxia, and complications related to prematurity. It contains about 30 action items that, if missed, can lead to severe harm for the mother, the newborn, or both.

The WHO Safe Childbirth Checklist Pilot Edition followed a rigorous methodology and was tested for usability in ten countries across Africa and Asia. Recently, the checklist has been updated based on the newly released WHO guidelines (e.g. Management of Preterm Birth). To support the implementation of the checklist, WHO also provided an implementation guide (available for download [here](https://www.usaidassist.org)). There is also a new page designed to help care providers to implement the Checklist.

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