

Information on how the Government and organizations have disseminated and applied the technical guidance on the human rights based approach to eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity in humanitarian settings (OHCHR, 2014):

The case of DRC

1. With respect to policies and programmes to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity.

Universal health coverage; reproductive, maternal, new-born, child and adolescent health; performance-based management, contributions of the private sector are among the priorities of the Government of the DRC and the Ministry of Health and all stakeholders including alignment and harmonization of all resources related to reproductive and maternal health; efficiency; accountability and transparency towards eliminating preventable maternal mortality and morbidity in the country.

2. With respect to building an enhanced understanding of the requirements of a human rights-based approach:

DRC is taking appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination and violence against women and girls including sexual and gender-based violence, forced and early marriages, nutritional taboos and other harmful practices. DRC pays attention to marginalized and vulnerable groups especially in programming response to humanitarian situations. Reforms are ongoing to render the health system of DRC more effective in dealing with preventable maternal mortality and morbidity.

3. With respect to challenges faced in implementing a human rights-based approach in policies and programmes to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity:

Geographic access due to long distances and poor road infrastructure, financial access due to generalized poverty especially in hard-to-reach areas, insecurity due to armed conflicts, poor quality of care due to dilapidated health structures and equipment as well as poorly qualified and unsupervised health staff are among some of the main challenges.

4. With respect to fragile and humanitarian settings:

Emergency interventions can mean the difference between life and death for pregnant women and newborns. UNFPA DRC works with major UN agencies and several international and national organizations to ensure that the supply of hygienic delivery kits, equipment, drugs and supplies needed to provide medical care and safe childbirths are available in health facilities, including in areas identified as hot spots. Childbirth complications, including surgeries and safe blood transfusions, are also managed. UNFPA supports the establishment or strengthening of the referral and counter-referral system for an appropriate management of obstetric and neonatal emergencies hence contributing to reducing preventable maternal mortality and morbidity in fragile and humanitarian settings.

5. With respect to data collection on sexual and reproductive health in crisis settings:

UNFPA is using demographic intelligence to plan, monitor and evaluate access of women and young people to sexual and reproductive health services, by supporting the production, utilization and vulgarization of quality demographic data on population dynamics, youth, gender and SRH within the framework of programming and monitoring of humanitarian action. UNFPA in collaboration with DFID, Gates Foundation, and Flowminder is also starting a project on Geo-Referenced Infrastructure and Demographic Data for Development (GRID). The GRID project will provide demographic data from digital sensing census, small areas estimations including in humanitarian settings.

Reporting maternal deaths has been integrated into weekly epidemiological surveillance. This is not systematic and much remains to be done on reporting maternal deaths in humanitarian settings.
