Tens of thousands of women die every year as a result of complications related to unsafe abortion. By expanding access to reliable, safe abortion services, we are helping women who want to terminate their pregnancy to do so safely.
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Giving women access to safe abortion and post-abortion care
Unsafe abortion remains a major contributing factor to maternal deaths across the developing world, accounting for at least 13% of their total.

Across the regions where we work, we estimate that four women die every hour as a result of unsafe abortion, and around the world approximately 20 million women suffer serious complications, including amnesia, chronic infection and infertility, every year.

Our teams work on six continents every day, helping to prevent unintended pregnancies by providing women with a full range of contraceptive choices.

But unintended pregnancies still occur, and some women will seek abortions as a way to address the situation they find themselves in.

We want to make sure that any woman wanting to end their pregnancy can do so in a safe, effective way. Which is why we are committed to offering safe abortion services in all the countries where we legally able to.

Protecting women from unsafe abortions

Our contraception services prevented around 4.3 million unintended pregnancies in 2015 alone, providing women who may otherwise have been forced to turn to unsafe abortion. We also halted 6.6 million unsafe abortions, by providing women with access to safe, reliable treatment and procedures.

Expanding access

In recent years, we have expanded access to safe abortion and made sure that more women can access our services in places, and with professionals, who best meet their needs.

As well as accessing a safe abortion within our own centres, in some regions women can now terminate a pregnancy safely through our global social franchising network, as well as through formal pharmacists and community health workers who we have trained to provide medical abortion.

Medical abortion is a safe, non-invasive alternative to surgical abortion, which we can offer to women outside of a healthcare centre environment. These trained women can have more control over when and where their treatment takes place.

In Zambia, the law states that women seeking an abortion must obtain three doctors’ signatures, despite the country having only 1,500 doctors out of 10.3 million people.

Three failed attempts to induce a miscarriage by having a baby out for three days. On the fourth day, I was arrested, after my friend reported me to the police. I spent three days in jail, and then I was taken to court. I was sentenced to two years in prison for attempting to induce a miscarriage using traditional herbs.

We want to keep doing all we can to reduce the harm caused by unsafe abortion.

We will keep doing this in two ways – firstly by increasing access to safe abortion services, wherever it’s legal for us to do so, and secondly, by giving women access to the contraceptive options that should reduce the need for them to resort to an unsafe abortion in the first place.

By giving women access to safe abortion, our services make it less likely that women will risk their lives by undergoing an unsafe procedure.

We believe that women should be able to make their own decisions about whether and when to have a child, and that we should all be contributing to women realizing their rights.

Medical abortion gives women greater choice and flexibility over how and when they access safe abortion.

A study we conducted in Vietnam found that it was an acceptable alternative for surgical methods when women used it at home. Medical abortion at home was also found to be just as safe as treatment carried out in a clinic.

With the help of a safe abortion service, women who want to end their pregnancy can access care in a way that is right for them.

“Post-abortion family planning”

If a woman comes to us for an abortion, the procedure itself is just one part of the service we provide. We aim to offer emotional support, as well as post-abortion family planning, for all women who have had an abortion or miscarriage.

We can offer many different contraceptive options for women post abortion, including short-term, long-acting, and permanent methods, and support each woman in choosing the best option for her, depending on her fertility intentions and the type of procedure she had.

We treat every woman as an individual, and make sure we provide a warm welcome, and just the right balance of medical facts and emotional support, so she feels informed and reassured about the choices she is making.

We want to keep doing all we can to reduce the harm caused by unsafe abortion.

We will keep doing this in two ways – firstly by increasing access to safe abortion services, wherever it’s legal for us to do so, and secondly, by giving women access to the contraceptive options that should reduce the need for them to resort to an unsafe abortion in the first place.

We advocate for safe abortion because we know that it saves women’s lives, so we are helping to shape abortion policies in several countries where we work.

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Our continuing commitment

Offering medical abortions is allowing us to help many more women to end their pregnancies safely. Combined with providing women with the full range of contraceptive choices, in 2015 alone these two services prevented 4 million unsafe abortions across the countries we work in. And we estimate that in 2016, we were preventing around 19% of all abortions and post-abortion care in the countries where we're based.

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Unsafe abortion remains a major contributing factor to maternal deaths across the developing world, accounting for at least 15% of their total.

Why safe abortion matters

By giving women access to safe abortion, our services make it less likely that women will die as they try to end their pregnancies.

But the work we do also has a wider benefit. By enabling women to have more control over their fertility, they can have more control over when and how they have children, and plan their families.

A safe and legal abortion can save a woman’s life and transform her prospects. So while our services are saving lives at an individual level, they are also making a difference at a community and society level as well.

Across the regions where we work, we’ve estimated that every year there are about 44.8 million women who suffer severe complications, including amnesia, chronic infection and infertility, every year.

The scale of the issue

How we’re addressing it

Our teams out working communities every day, helping to prevent unwanted pregnancies by providing women with a full range of contraceptive choices. But unintended pregnancies will still occur, and some women will seek abortions as a way to address the situation they find themselves in.

We want to make sure that any woman wanting to end her pregnancy can do so in a safe, affordable way. Which is why we are committed to offering safe abortion services in all the countries where we legally able to.

We’ve expanded access to safe abortion and reproductive health care in several countries around the world, helping to prevent unintended pregnancies and protecting women from unsafe abortions.

Our contraception services prevented around 3 million unintended pregnancies in 2015 alone, providing women who may otherwise have been forced to risk an unsafe abortion. We also averted 1 million unsafe abortions, by providing women with access to safe, reliable treatment and procedures.

Protecting women from unsafe abortions

Our contraception services prevented around 3 million unintended pregnancies in 2015 alone, providing women who may otherwise have been forced to risk an unsafe abortion. We also averted 1 million unsafe abortions, by providing women with access to safe, reliable treatment and procedures.

In recent years, we have expanded access to safe abortion and made sure that more women can access our services in places, and in a way, that is best for them.

As well as accessing a safe abortion within our own centres, in some regions women can now terminate a pregnancy safely through our global social franchising network, as well as through local pharmacies and community health workers who we have trained to provide medical abortions.

Medical abortion is a safe, non-invasive alternative to surgical abortion, which we can offer to women outside of a healthcare centre environment. These women can have more control over when and where their treatment takes place.

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Medical abortion is a safe, non-invasive alternative to surgical abortion, which we can offer to women outside of a healthcare centre environment. These women can have more control over when and where their treatment takes place.

We have expanded access to medical abortion for the terminating 130,000 and more women with 4 million unsafe abortions across the countries we work in.

Offering medical abortions is allowing us to help many more women to end their pregnancies safely. Combined with providing women with the full range of contraceptive choices, in 2015 alone these services prevented 4 million unsafe abortions across the countries we work in.

And we estimate that by 2016, we were providing around 10% of all abortions and post-abortion care in the countries where we’re based.

Post-abortion family planning

If a woman comes to us for an abortion, the procedure itself is just one part of the service we provide. We also offer emotional support, as well as post-abortion family planning, for all women who have had an abortion or miscarriage.

We can offer many different contraceptive options for women post abortion, including short-term, long-acting, and permanent methods, and support each woman in choosing the best option for her, depending on her fertility intentions and the type of procedure she had.

We treat every woman as an individual, and make sure we provide a warm welcome, and just the right balance of medical facts and emotional support, so she feels informed and reassured about the choices she’s making.

We advocate for safe abortion because we know that it saves women’s lives, so we are helping to shape abortion policies in several countries where we work.

Why safe abortion matters

By giving women access to safe abortions, our services make it less likely that women will die as they try to end their pregnancies.

But the work we do also has a wider benefit. By enabling women to have more control over their fertility, they can have more control over when and how they have children, and plan their families.

A safe and legal abortion can save a woman’s life and transform her prospects. So while our services are saving lives at an individual level, they are also making a difference at a community and society level as well.

At a wider level, we know that increasing access to safe abortion also improves the health of families, enhances education access to safe abortion and post-abortion care in the countries we’re based.

In Zambie, for example, we estimate that every year 4.2% of abortions are unsafe, and this is leading to at least 1,000 maternal deaths.

Citizen journalist Lusakha shares her story of going back to school after an abortion:

“I was sentenced to two years in prison.”

In Zambia, law states that women seeking an abortion must obtain three doctors’ signatures, despite the country having only 1,026 doctors out of 16.2 million people.

Having dropped out of school to have her first child, when Lusakha fell pregnant for a second time, aged 18, she felt she had no options but to take matters into her own hands.

“I knew I was breaking the law but I respected my abortion because of pressure from my family. My parents said they would kick me out unless I had an abortion. My boyfriend said he would leave me and if I wanted to get married one day I would amount to nothing as I would never go back to school again.”

Our continuing commitment

Offering medical abortions is allowing us to help many more women to end their pregnancies safely. Combined with providing women with the full range of contraceptive choices, in 2015 alone these services prevented 4 million unsafe abortions across the countries we work in.

And we estimate that by 2016, we were providing around 10% of all abortions and post-abortion care in the countries where we’re based.

We want to keep doing all we can to reduce the harm caused by unsafe abortions. We will keep doing this in two ways – firstly by increasing access to safe abortion services, wherever it’s legal for us to do so, and secondly, by giving women access to the contraceptive options that should reduce the need for them to resort to an unsafe abortion in the first place.

Post-abortion family planning

If a woman comes to us for an abortion, the procedure itself is just one part of the service we provide. We also offer emotional support, as well as post-abortion family planning, for all women who have had an abortion or miscarriage.

We can offer many different contraceptive options for women post abortion, including short-term, long-acting, and permanent methods, and support each woman in choosing the best option for her, depending on her fertility intentions and the type of procedure she had.

We treat every woman as an individual, and make sure we provide a warm welcome, and just the right balance of medical facts and emotional support, so she feels informed and reassured about the choices she’s making.

We advocate for safe abortion because we know that it saves women’s lives, so we are helping to shape abortion policies in several countries where we work.

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We treat every woman as an individual, and make sure we provide a warm welcome, and just the right balance of medical facts and emotional support, so she feels informed and reassured about the choices she’s making.

We advocate for safe abortion because we know that it saves women’s lives, so we are helping to shape abortion policies in several countries where we work.
Unsafe abortion remains a major contributing factor to maternal deaths across the developing world, accounting for at least 15% of their total.

How we're addressing it

We advocate for safe abortion of the issue.

Why safe abortion matters

By giving women access to safe abortions, our services make it less likely that women will die from their health or procedures.

Expanding access

In recent years, we have expanded access to safe abortion and made sure that more women can access our services in places, and in the ways that best meet their needs.

We can offer many different contraceptive options, and support each woman in choosing the best option for her, depending on her fertility intentions and the type of procedure she had.

Post-abortion family planning

If a woman comes to us for an abortion, the procedure itself is just one part of the service we provide. We are there to offer emotional support, as well as post-abortion family planning, for all women who have had an abortion or miscarriage.

Protecting women from unsafe abortions

Our contraception services prevented around 43 million unintended pregnancies in 2015 alone, providing women who may otherwise have been forced to resort to an unsafe abortion. We also averted 4 million unsafe abortions by providing women with access to safe, reliable treatment and procedures.

Expanding access

We want to keep doing all we can to reduce the harm caused by unsafe abortion.

Medical abortion

As well as being highly effective, medical abortion gives women greater choice and flexibility over how and when they access safe abortion.

A study we conducted in Vietnam found that it was an acceptable substitution for surgical methods when women used it at home. Medical abortion for women who had an abortion was also found to be just as safe as treatment carried out in a clinic.

Our continuing commitment

Offering medical abortions is allowing us to help many more women to end their pregnancies safely. Combined with providing women with the full range of contraceptive choices, in 2015 alone our services prevented 4 million unsafe abortions across the countries we work in.

We need to keep doing this in two ways — firstly by increasing access to safe abortion services, wherever it is legal for us to do so; and secondly, by giving women access to the contraceptive options that should reduce the need for them to resort to an unsafe abortion in the first place.