

# Improving Maternal Death Reporting

Nigeria has two percent of the world's population, yet 14% of the global maternal deaths. In 2013, the maternal mortality ratio was 576 per 100,000 women, a number that has not changed significantly in 5 years.<sup>1</sup> Almost all of these deaths are preventable.

In response to the 2012 Resolution of the UN Commission on the Status of Women to eradicate preventable maternal deaths, Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) worked with national stakeholders and development partners to create a strategy for the systematic review and audit of maternal deaths. It is anticipated that this will apprise elected officials and policy makers of the urgency of eliminating preventable maternal deaths and give them the tools to do so.

Sokoto and Bauchi States are now providing evidence for local interventions to **REDUCE MATERNAL MORBIDITY AND MORTALITY.**

At least two-thirds of maternal deaths in Nigeria occur outside a health facility. Because most women in Bauchi and Sokoto States, where TSHIP has provided technical and financial support for maternal, neonatal, and child health (MNCH) since 2009, deliver at home, many maternal deaths are not reported. TSHIP is helping Bauchi and Sokoto design legislation that will institute maternal death notification systems and audit information on the cause of death.

An important prerequisite for the passage of a maternal death audit and notification bill is the capacity of local systems to identify, record, certify, and report maternal deaths. Because the dead are buried in public burial sites within 24 hours of dying, cemetery officials and attendants are in a position to provide early notice of potential maternal death cases. In 2014, TSHIP joined the State Ministry of Local Government and the National Population Commission (NPoPC) to support training for cemetery attendants from all 23 local governments in Sokoto

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to identify and document maternal and newborn deaths. Cemetery attendants have begun to report deaths to NPoPC. TSHIP also helped to train staff of secondary health care facilities on the importance of facility-based notification of maternal deaths due to preventable causes.

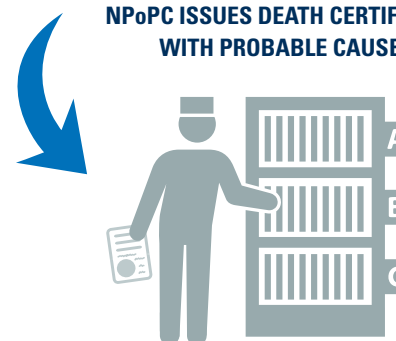
Once notified of a case of suspected maternal deaths, an audit is conducted. Thereafter, NPoPC issues death certificates with probable causes, which are in turn reported to the state government. With support and training from TSHIP Sokoto and Bauchi States are now providing evidence for local interventions to reduce maternal morbidity and mortality.



**CEMETERY OFFICIALS REPORT DEATHS**



**NPoPC ISSUES DEATH CERTIFICATES WITH PROBABLE CAUSES**



**NPoPC NOTIFIES STATE GOVERNMENT**