

Male Involvement in Maternal Health

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This presentation focuses on:
Male involvement in Maternal Health

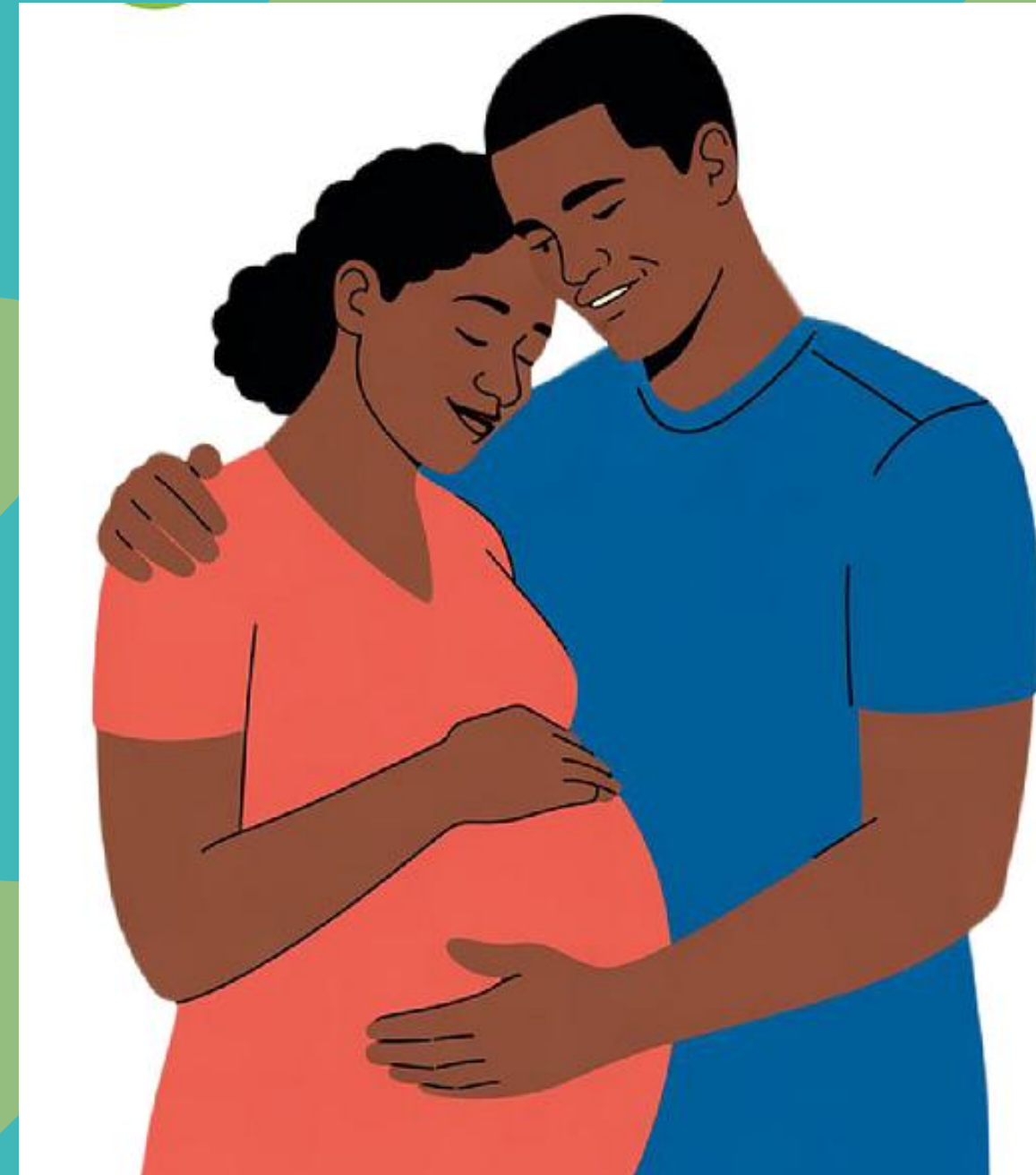


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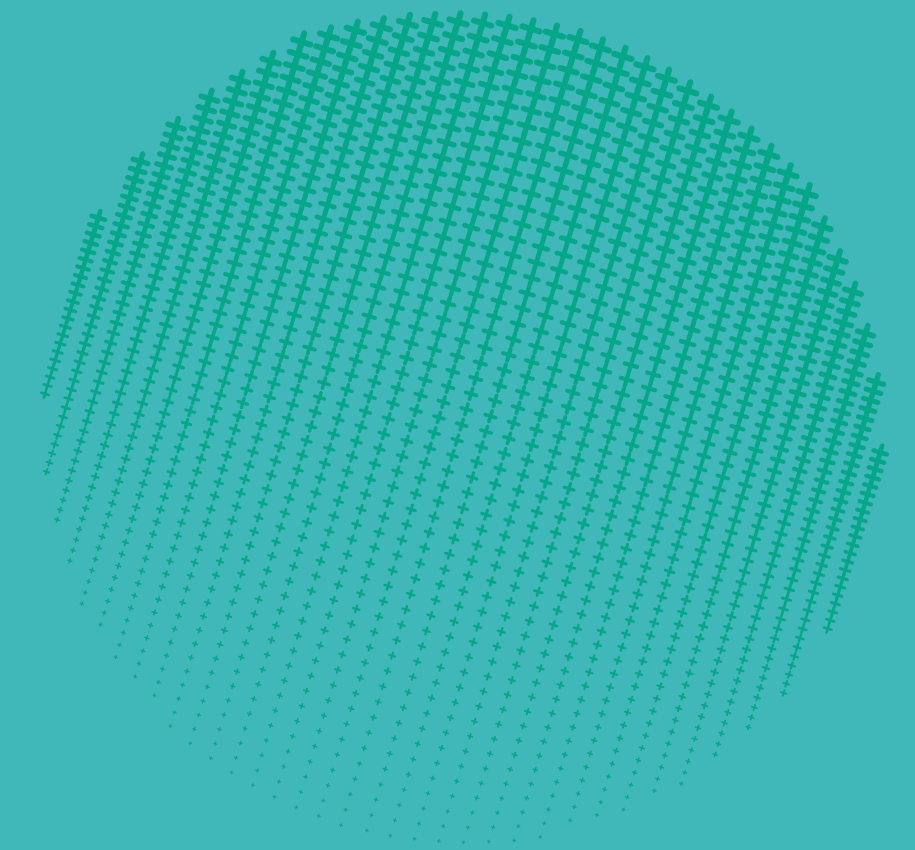
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Introduction

Maternal health has long been regarded as a responsibility solely of women. However, growing evidence and global health initiatives are challenging this outdated notion. In reality, Men play a crucial role in ensuring the health and well-being of mothers and their newborns. From supporting women during pregnancy to making informed decisions about childbirth and postnatal care, men's active involvement can significantly improve maternal and child health outcomes. Yet, cultural norms, lack of awareness, and inadequate health systems often limit their participation. Recognizing and promoting the role of men in maternal health is not only a matter of public health—it is also a step toward achieving gender equality, stronger families, and healthier communities.

"As partners for maternal health, men can save lives," stated former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

The Global Maternal Health Crisis

197

Global MMR

Deaths per 100,000 live births in 2023

500+

Sub-Saharan Africa

Deaths per 100,000 live births

99%

LMIC Deaths

Of maternal deaths occur in low-income countries

Over 700 women die daily from preventable pregnancy-related causes—one death every two minutes. Limited access to skilled care and cultural barriers drive this crisis.



What is Male Involvement?

Male involvement refers to the active participation of men—particularly partners or fathers—in supporting women's reproductive health journeys throughout pregnancy, childbirth, and beyond.

Emotional Support

Providing companionship and encouragement during the maternal health journey

Financial Contributions

Supporting healthcare costs, transportation, and essential supplies

Healthcare Participation

Accompanying partners to visits and engaging in medical decisions

Advocacy

Promoting better services and challenging harmful cultural norms



What areas can men be involved in?

Antenatal Care (ANC):

Accompanying partners to ANC visits.
Learning about pregnancy risks and healthy practices.

Birth Preparedness:

Saving money for delivery.
Arranging transportation and choosing a health facility.
Knowing danger signs and emergency plans.

During Childbirth:

Providing emotional support during labor.
Advocating for their partner's needs in healthcare settings
(where culturally and logistically appropriate).

Postnatal Support:

Helping with newborn care (feeding, bathing, etc.).
Supporting the mother's physical and emotional recovery.
Encouraging exclusive breastfeeding.



Proven Benefits Across Multiple Domains



Maternal Health

50% reduction in postpartum depression risk, higher ANC utilization rates, shorter labor duration, and improved satisfaction with care



Paternal & Family

Stronger father-child bonds, reduced stress, improved communication, joint decision-making, and enhanced relationship equity



Child Health

Better nutrition practices, higher immunization rates, improved breastfeeding initiation, and increased child survival rates



Health Systems

Increased service demand, motivated healthcare providers, cost savings through prevention, and stronger community health outcomes



Barriers to Male Involvement

Individual Barriers

- ✓ Limited knowledge of danger signs (only 50% recognition in Ethiopia)
- ✓ Attitudes viewing pregnancy as "women's business"
- ✓ Work commitments and fear of testing

Cultural Barriers

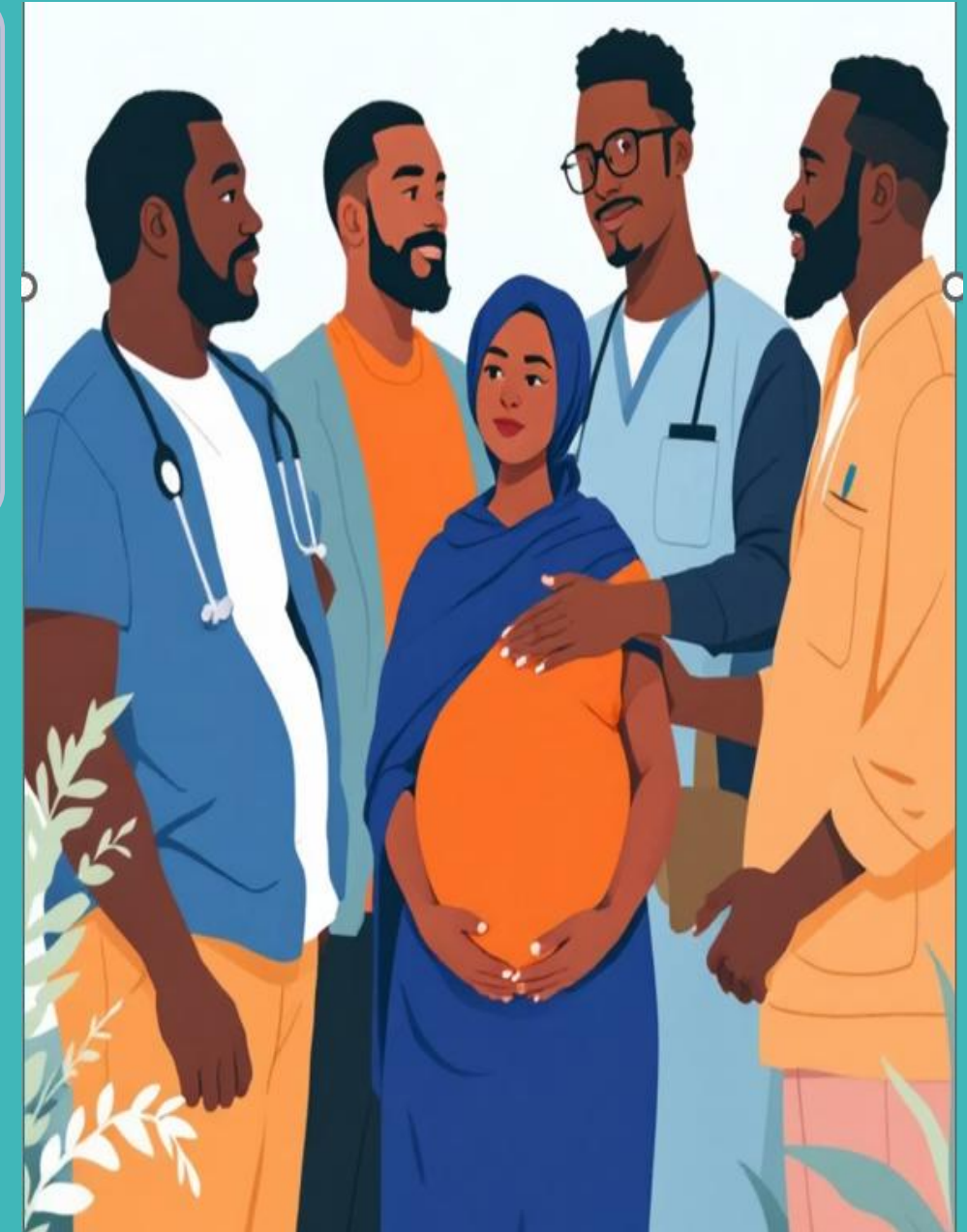
- ✓ Norms portraying involvement as weakness
- ✓ Stigma and extended family pressures
- ✓ Gender-based violence concerns

Systemic Barriers

- ✓ Unfriendly healthcare facilities
- ✓ Inconvenient clinic timings
- ✓ Policies restricting men in wards

Economic Barriers

- ✓ Hidden costs despite "free" services
- ✓ Transportation expenses
- ✓ Lost wages from work absence



Strategies to Promote Men's Involvement



Community-Based

Peer education programs, home visits, workplace interventions, and targeted information campaigns

Facility-Based

Couples' ANC visits, staff training on male involvement, male-friendly waiting spaces and services

Media & Policy

Mass media campaigns, policy incentives, economic empowerment programs, and multi-component interventions

The "Men in Maternity Health" (MiM) intervention demonstrated significant effectiveness in 2024, with multi-component programs yielding the best results.

Transforming Maternal Health Through Partnership

"Male involvement in maternal health offers transformative pathways to reduced mortality and more equitable societies. By overcoming barriers through targeted strategies, we can harness its full potential for healthier futures."

Call to Action

Prioritize men as partners in maternal health programs to achieve SDG targets and save lives

Global Impact

Every engaged father represents a step toward the goal of reducing MMR below 70 by 2030



Conclusion

Men's involvement in maternal health is not just beneficial — it's necessary. When men are educated, supportive, and active participants during pregnancy, childbirth, and early parenting, the whole family benefits. Encouraging men's engagement can break down harmful gender norms and promote healthier, more equitable families and communities.



THANK YOU

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