

QUOTE OF THE DAY

Norbert Mao on race for speed to the finishing line, no stopping

EDITORIAL

Maternal deaths: Deliberate interventions are needed

Far too many females die from reproductive health-related causes in Uganda. Per the World Health Organisation data (2025), Uganda's maternal mortality ratio (MMR) stands at 189 per 100,000 live births. The records show that most maternal deaths occur during childbirth and the postnatal period due to haemorrhage, infections, and hypertensive disorders.

According to World Health Organisation data for Uganda, among the 10 leading causes of death for females, three are directly linked to reproductive health, and these include: pre-term birth conditions at 26.3 per 100,000 population, cervix uteri cancer at 19.3 per 100,000 population and maternal conditions at 18.3 per 100,000 population.

The issue:

Maternal health.

Our view:

To cut back on the number of maternal deaths, training for health specialists working in this delicate sector should be top-notch. The infrastructure and equipment to support the trained health workers to deliver on this mission should also be in place.

Overall, pre-term birth complications come in at number four among the leading causes of death at 30.3 per 100,000 population. The global slogan that says, "No mother should die while giving life", is really a way of saying that most maternal deaths are preventable, either with timely interventions or having the resources on hand to handle any eventualities during this highly sensitive period, when a myriad of things could go wrong.

A woman's body is complex, given the importance and extent of functions it was designed to carry. To cut back on the number of maternal deaths, training for health specialists working in this delicate sector should be top-notch. The infrastructure and equipment to support the trained health workers to deliver on this mission should also be in place.

Otherwise, we shall merely be paying lip service to the national and global commitments. Armed with data and experience, we should be marching firmly on towards Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 3.1, which aims to reduce the global maternal mortality ratio (MMR) to less than 70 per 100,000 live births by 2030. However, this cannot be achieved without the requisite investment in facilities and human resources to tackle the leading causes of maternal mortality, as underlined.

While the country has made some progress in reducing maternal mortality, from 418 per 100,000 in 2006 to 336 per 100,000 in 2016 and further to 189 per 100,000, the numbers remain far too high. We still have overcrowding in maternity wards, mothers sleeping on the floor or sharing beds, lack of basic mama kits and too few health personnel handling a high number of expectant mothers in several areas across the country.

Aware of the leading causes of mortality, what deliberate interventions are in place to contain recurring issues such as haemorrhage, likelihood of infections and hypertensive conditions?

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We pledge:

- To be accurate and fair in all we do.
- To be respectful to all in our