

Is Swaziland on Track with the 2015 Millennium Development Goals?

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Abstract : Background: The importance of maternal and child healthcare services cannot be stressed enough. These services are very important for the health and health outcomes of the mother and that of the child and in ensuring that both maternal and child deaths are prevented. The objective of the study is to inspire good quality maternal and child health care services in Swaziland. Specifically, is Swaziland on track with the 2015 Millennium Development Goals? Methods: The study used secondary data from the Swaziland Demographic and Health Survey 2006-07. This is an explorative and descriptive study which used pre-selected variables to study factors influencing the use of maternal and child healthcare services in Swaziland. Different types of examinations, such as univariate, bivariate, and multivariate statistical analysis were adopted. Results: The study findings showed a high use rate of antenatal care (97.3%) and delivery care (74.0%), and a low rate of postnatal care use (20.5%). The uptake childhood immunization is also high in the country, averaging more than 80.0%. Moreover, certain factors which were found to be influencing the use of maternal healthcare and childhood immunization include: woman's age, parity, media exposure, maternal education, wealth status, and residence. The findings also revealed that these factors affect the use of maternal and child health differently. Conclusion: It is important to study factors related to maternal and child health uptake to inform relevant stakeholders about possible areas of improvement. Programs to educate families about the importance of maternal and child healthcare services should be implemented. Swaziland needs to work hard on child survival and maternal health care services, no doubt it is on track with the MDG 4 & 5.

Keywords : maternal healthcare, antenatal care, delivery care, postnatal care, child health, immunization, socio-economic and demographic factors

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