



# Maternal and Newborn Health Care Policy Brief

## INTRODUCTION

Institutional births have increased dramatically across the globe, including in sub-saharan Africa, but the places where births occur vary enormously and are poorly understood.

Countdown to 2030 analyzed maternal and newborn health data from Malawi in the last two decades. The study aims to inform the best balance of childbirth care services across facilities to adequately provide life-saving and respectful childbirth care. Data sources included DHS, HMIS, and others.

## FINDINGS

### Birth Attendance & Place of Delivery

Deliveries conducted by doctors have steadily increased since 2000; thus, associated with the decline in the proportion of deliveries conducted by nurse-midwives.

Over the years, the assistant at birth for mothers delivering at the facilities has drastically shifted from other non-skilled staff and nurse/midwives to doctors or clinical officers.

More women are giving birth in the health centers and hospitals in the recent years compared to 2000. Home deliveries have been declining over time.

### Volume and Concentration of Care

**64%** of public health facilities offered delivery services in 2022.

**60%** of the total livebirths took place in facilities that register 1000+ livebirths per year but represent 19.9% of the total facilities in the country.

### Cesarean Section

Over the years, there was increased rates of C-section rates throughout the wealth categories, although the increase has been lower in the lower wealth group but improved much more in the higher wealth categories.

C-section rates were higher among the richest at 16.1%, compared to the poor at 4.9%.

Cesarean section rate (per 100 births) by wealth quintile in 2019



## RECOMMENDATIONS & NEXT STEPS

- ✓ Sustain efforts to promote and ensure skilled birth attendance during childbirth by strengthening training programs for midwives and other healthcare professionals.
- ✓ Strengthen data collection and monitoring systems to regularly assess progress and identify areas for improvement.

Learn More:

[www.countdown.org/maternal-newborn-health](http://www.countdown.org/maternal-newborn-health)

Birth Attendant and Place of Birth , 2000 - 2019

