The Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality working group has written a letter to the editor of The Lancet, which was published in the February 18 edition of the journal. Amy Boldosser-Boesch, Senior Director of the FCI Program of MSH, represents MSH in the working group and co-wrote the letter.

The letter points to an error in a 2015 Global Burden of Disease article that suggests that more than 60 percent of countries have already achieved the Sustainable Development Goal target for maternal mortality ratio. The working group, which led the development of the SDG target for maternal mortality, points out that it is a global target, not a country target. The working group writes, “Understanding the distinction between the global and national targets is crucial. The global target alone is not useful for instituting country-level change. Countries need to set national targets to achieve two-thirds reduction in maternal deaths and thus contribute to meeting the global goal.”

“If country decision makers and global development partners mistakenly decide that maternal
health and survival are no longer a high priority based on this misinterpretation of the SDG target for maternal mortality reduction,” the working group adds, “women’s lives will be compromised.”

The Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality working group was established in 2013 to accelerate progress in reducing maternal mortality and includes representatives from the World Health Organization, the US Agency for International Development, the UN Population Fund, UNICEF, the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, Management Sciences for Health, White Ribbon Alliance and Jhpiego.

Read the letter to the editor in *The Lancet* [1]

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