ABORTION AND MATERNAL MORTALITY: a global perspective

True or False? Effective support to reduce the Maternal Mortality Rate requires access to abortion. Answer: False

Maternal mortality: ‘the death of a woman while pregnant or within 42 days of termination of pregnancy, regardless of the site or duration of pregnancy, from any cause related to or aggravated by the pregnancy or its management.’ (1. WHO)

ABORTION IN EGYPT

1990s: The Egyptian government works to improve maternal health care by focusing on:

- Skilled attendance at birth
- Adequate essential obstetric care
- Improved primary health care facilities
- Long distance transportation to a hospital.

2000: MMRs plunge by 52%, to 84 per 100,000 live births.

2008: MMRs plunge to 43 per 100,000 live births.

WHAT LOWERS THE MATERNAL MORTALITY RATE?

- Skilled attendants at birth
- Improved education for women
- Emergency obstetric care (including caesarean sections)
- Transportation for emergency obstetric care
- Community outreach
- Improved referral systems
- Access to abortion

WHAT DOES NOT LOWER MMR?

- Access to abortion

COUNTRIES that have either limited or no abortion have lower maternal mortality rates (MMR) than countries where abortions are legal.

CONCLUSION: The assumption that access to abortion is an essential component of women’s health when it comes to MMR needs further research.