DEATHS OF WOMEN IN REPRODUCTIVE AGE IN KASSALA STATE – EASTERN SUDAN. A COMMUNITY BASED STUDY

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Background:
Most deaths of women of reproductive age (WRA) in developing countries occur at home and are not accurately reported. The majority of studies concentrate on earlier stages of life, leaving paucity of information in this area. We conduct this study to obtain data on causes of deaths of WRA and sociodemographic factors that contribute to these deaths.

Methods: A reproductive age mortality survey (RAMOS) was conducted to study the cause of deaths of (WRA) in four purposely selected areas in Kassala State. The methodology constitutes of two stages. The first is stage of death identification using multiple source of information in the community. The second stage is stage of verbal autopsy conducted by trained data collectors interviewing a preselected respondent who attended death.

Results: 168 deaths were identified among 26,066 WRA over three year period. Verbal autopsy was done on 148 (88.1%) of cases. Reproductive age mortality rate was found to be 188.0/100,000 WRA. Infectious & parasitic diseases constitute about 42% of these deaths followed by complications of pregnancy and childbirth (25%). The peak deaths occur in teenagers 43 (29.1%). Early marriage, illiteracy, poverty and poor water supply are main contributing factors. 101 (68.2%) of deaths occurred at home.

Conclusions:
Accordingly maternal mortality rate and ratios were found to be 80.6 per100,000 WRA and 713.6 per 100,000 live births (LB) respectively. In addition to complications of pregnancy and childbirth causes of deaths in WRA are similar to infant and childhood causes of deaths.