



Reconstructing Reproductive Health: An Analysis of Post-Conflict Challenges and Systemic Opportunities in Ethiopia

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Abstract

Post-conflict African states face significant challenges in rebuilding health systems, with reproductive health services being particularly vulnerable to disruption. Ethiopia's experience offers a pertinent case for examining this process within the field of medicine. This study aimed to analyse the specific post-conflict challenges and to identify systemic opportunities for reconstructing reproductive health services in Ethiopia. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving a systematic review of policy and grey literature, complemented by in-depth interviews with healthcare providers, policymakers, and service users across three regions. Data were synthesised using thematic analysis. Key challenges identified were the widespread destruction of health infrastructure, critical shortages of skilled personnel, and pervasive psychological trauma among both providers and patients. Access to maternal healthcare was severely disrupted, with a majority of facilities in the studied regions reported as non-functional during the peak of conflict. Opportunities centred on the potential to decentralise service delivery and to integrate mental health support into routine reproductive care. Reconstructing reproductive health services in post-conflict Ethiopia requires a comprehensive strategy that addresses both physical infrastructure and human resource dimensions, including workforce support and psychosocial care. Priorities should include training and retaining midwifery staff, adopting integrated service models that incorporate mental health, and strengthening community-based health information systems to build systemic resilience. post-conflict health, reproductive health, health systems reconstruction, maternal health, Ethiopia, healthcare access This research provides an evidence-based analysis for health planners and policymakers, highlighting specific leverage points for rebuilding equitable and resilient reproductive health services in post-conflict settings.

Keywords: *post-conflict reconstruction, reproductive health, health systems strengthening, Sub-Saharan Africa, fragile states, humanitarian medicine, health policy analysis*



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