



# Women's Reproductive Health

## 1. Safe Abortion<sup>1</sup>

### Objectives of the session

By the end of the session, the ASHA will learn about:

- Be able to advise on method, based on duration of pregnancy.
- Understand the risks of unsafe abortions, and know where safe abortion services are available in her area.
- Help women in need of such services to access safe abortion services.
- Be able to identify signs of post abortal complications and advise appropriate referral.
- Counsel for appropriate contraception after the abortion.



### A woman seeks abortion because:

- She does not want more children and has not used a contraceptive method properly or the method failed.
- A pregnancy can endanger her life.
- She has no partner who will help support child.
- She got pregnant after rape.
- The child will be born with serious birth defects.

When a woman is faced with an unwanted pregnancy, she should be able to get a safe abortion.

**Legality:** In India, abortions are legal up to 20 weeks. They are legal only if done by a qualified practitioner. Up to 12 weeks, one doctor can do it. After 12 weeks, two doctors need to sign the consent form. Abortion services are free in all government hospitals. Women over 18 do not need anyone else to sign a consent form.

<sup>1</sup> This chapter has been covered in Books 2 and 3, and is intended to serve as a refresher.