International Women’s Day 2009

“Women and Men: United to End Violence Against Women”

Reducing Maternal Deaths—Addressing Neglect, Exploitation & Violence

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Director, UNICEF Tokyo
Tokyo, 6 March 2009

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Health, Education, Equality, Protection
ADVANCE HUMANITY
# Millennium Development Goals on Maternal & Child Health

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<th>Goal 4</th>
<th>Target 4-A: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate</th>
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<td>Reduce child mortality</td>
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<th>Goal 5</th>
<th>Target 5-A: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate</th>
<th>Target 5-B: Achieve, by 2015, universal access to reproductive health</th>
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<td>Improve maternal health</td>
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Maternal and child health closely related to MDGs on eradication of extreme poverty and hunger, elimination of gender discrimination, achievement of universal primary education, reduction of infectious diseases
Current Situation

More than **500,000 maternal deaths every year** from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth

- 1,500 women die from maternal-related complications every day
- Regional distribution: about 50% of such deaths in Sub-Saharan Africa and 35% in South Asia
- **No substantial improvement since 1990**
- The biggest gap between developing countries and developed countries among various index mortality rates
Countries with high birth rates have more risks of maternal death.

In Niger, one in seven women die from complications related to pregnancy and childbirth (average rate in developed countries is one in 8,000)
14% of deaths of pregnant women associated with injury & violence*

Source: UNICEF

*Bangladesh Maternal Health Services and Maternal Mortality Survey, 2001
What lies between a woman and Emergency Obstetric Care?

Factors Affecting Utilisation & Outcome

- Women’s Status
  - Economic Status
  - Educational Status
  - Health & Nutritional Status

- Distance
  - Transport
  - Roads cost

Quality of Care

Phases of Delay

- Phase 1
  - Decide to Seek Care

- Phase 2
  - Reach Medical Facility

- Phase 3
  - Receive Adequate Treatment
Reducing Maternal Deaths—
A Call to Rights-based Action

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Steps to Rights-based Action

• Create a supportive environment for maternal health and gender equality: **UNITE WOMEN AND MEN**
• Ensure a continuum of care across time and location
• Strengthen health systems to improve maternal health
• Work together—collaborate with partners, maintain & strengthen political commitments
Aligning values and actions

• Bangladesh Women-Friendly Hospital Initiative
  – Call upon values of human dignity, right to life & development, participation, accountability, interdependence
  – Mobilise men, women, communities
  – Support risk-taking champions
  – Improve access to & quality of services
  – Set new norms (technical & social, policies)
THANK YOU

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