



Save Our Sisters



**MOTHERS DAY AROUND THE WORLD**



**Mother's Day for me**




**Mother's Day for Her?**



# Girls are Burdens

Girls are seen as burdens to their families, so they are married off at young ages (10 – 14) to ease the burden on the girls family.





# Girls Are Burdens

- Give them Value
- Teach them life skills
- Education them:
  - Contraception
  - Their Bodies
  - Their Rights
- Delay the age of pregnancy


The vast majority of maternal deaths are avoidable when women have access to vital health care before, during and after childbirth.





# Access to Healthcare

Safe births happen in hospitals. But many women know a hospital is a place you go when you are sick or dying – they don't see it as a safe place.





**Every minute one woman dies in  
childbirth or childbirth related issues.**





# Access to Healthcare

- Skilled care by nurses, doctors or midwives before, during and after childbirth – including family planning, skilled health worker attendance and emergency medical services – are cost effective interventions that would prevent 80 percent of maternal deaths.
- A package of maternal health services costing less than U.S. \$1.50 per person could make significant improvements in women's health in the 75 countries where 95 percent of maternal and child deaths occur

# Africa - Sudan



- Awatif, who was married to her husband at the age of 10, is hoping for a girl to join her four surviving boys.
- Three-hour walk to the nearest health care centre where she could see a doctor or midwife.
- As is the local custom, her birth attendant tied her hands above her head while pulling the rope to elongate her torso with each contraction. It was a terribly painful process.


**Pregnancy and childbirth are the leading cause of death and disability for women in developing countries.**



# Pakistan - *Larmirjan*



- In 2005 her house was destroyed in an earthquake
- She was badly injured, and her 18-year-old son was killed. Throughout northern Pakistan, 73,000 died and 3.5 million were left homeless.
- No where to go, have lived for 15 years in a tent in a refugee camp with their four young daughters
- No over 40 and nine months pregnant, will at least have the chance to give birth safely, in a fully equipped hospital. She has had regular prenatal care at mobile clinic that regularly visits her camp and is staffed by a female doctor and a midwife




If they can't afford to feed all of  
these children why do they  
have so many?




# Not Always Her Choice

In societies where men traditionally control household finances women are frequently not in a position to decide if, when and with whom to become pregnant. Nor can they determine the number, spacing and timing of their children.





# The Answer

- Support Organizations that make safe and effective family planning accessible to remote regions.
  - Programs that give women education about their bodies and access to information about reproductive health and contraceptive methods.
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*What statistical number is equal  
to the female population of  
Florida and Georgia combined?*






# 15 Million

The number of women who suffer debilitating illnesses and lifelong disabilities related to pregnancy and childbirth.

# Cambodia - *Hang*

- In remote rural areas, high-risk mothers here are being encouraged to stay in a safe and clean 'waiting home' before delivering in a health facility with skilled birth attendants.
- Hang Boran, 29, now in her fourth pregnancy is being treated for malaria, which she contracted in her eighth month.
- In her last delivery, assisted by a traditional birth attendant, she experienced a potentially fatal complication. Luckily, she was referred to a health facility and survived.







Many countries, maybe even most, have no legal limit for the age of marriage.

# Child Brides - Problem

- In many countries, girls married between ages 10 and 18 to men 15 – 50 years older than them.
- Parents decide to marry their daughters for reasons ranging from seeing the girl as a financial obligation, protecting the girl from sexual abuse, preventing sex outside of marriage, maximizing child births and teaching obedience. Early marriages are often a symptom of gender inequality and cause serious consequences in girl's lives.
- Early marriage further reduces a girl's choices, safety and opportunities
- She is usually required to start having children, long before she is biologically or emotionally ready for them



Teenage girls are twice as likely to die during pregnancy or childbirth as in their twenties and 60% of all girls in the world are pregnant by age 19.



# Child Bride - Solution

- Work with international activist groups to encourage reform in how a woman is valued
- Through education and community programs, families often choose to postpone these dangerous unions upon learning of the benefits of delayed marriage and childbirth

# Bangladesh - Shahin

- Left motherless at 4, Shahin was married at age 10 and pregnant by 12
- No one explained to her what pregnant was until she got her first contraction
- Untrained birth attendant tried for two days without success to deliver the baby. By the time the young mother was taken to the hospital, her undeveloped body had been terribly damaged.
- “At first I was in a lot of pain, then I had convulsions and lost consciousness,” she recalls. “When I woke up, I asked my aunt what had happened. She told me the baby was dead. After seven days, urine started to leak out of me.”





# One Million


The number of children who are left motherless and vulnerable because of maternal death.

These children are up to 10 times more likely to die prematurely than the babies who have a mom





# When A Mother Dies

- Infant is left with NO ONE to care for it. There are not adoption agencies and usually no family members with the means to care for these children.
  - Surviving children give up their childhood and opportunity at an education to care for family. And there is usually no money for immunization or healthcare
  - Communities take on the burden of caring for the bereaved and impoverished family
  - Governments already poor are forced to manage the widespread effects of the cycle of poverty and limited resource management
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# A Girl without a Mother

- Children, especially girls, are often removed from school and subject to strenuous work to support their families.
- Due to the need for extra labor or support for ill parents or an inability to pay school fees, girls do not have the same access to resources such as food and water.
- They are often married and become pregnant at very young ages. In short, many girls are robbed of their rights to education, healthcare, protection and recreation.
- Vulnerable to rape, trafficking, prostitution and sexual slavery.

*However, girls continually demonstrate that when they are given the chance, they will surpass expectations in school and beyond.*

# Panama - Cristobalina

- Giving birth to her twelfth child in her family's straw hut in the remote mountains of Western Panama
- Hours away from medical services and no prenatal care
- She gave birth to a healthy baby, but she developed an aggressive infection.
- The next morning she was dead. She was 36 years old.





Maternal and newborn deaths cost the world  
\$15 billion a year in lost productivity.

“There is no better investment than safe  
guarding the lives of mothers”



*Ban Ki Moon, United Nations Secretary General*



# Save Our Sisters

Awareness, Inspiration and Compassion



# White Ribbon Alliance for Save Motherhood

An international coalition of individuals and organizations formed to promote increased public awareness of the need to make pregnancy and childbirth safe for all women and newborns in the developing, as well as, developed countries.



# Ways You Can Help

- Join SOS – Join the movement!
- Connect with one person about the issues.
- Host an SOS Awareness Event
- Join [www.whiteribbonalliance.com](http://www.whiteribbonalliance.com)
- Send WRA Email Mothers Day Cards
- Donate time to White Ribbon Alliance
- Donate money to White Ribbon Alliance


*Call your Mother and wish her a  
Happy Mother's Day.*



# \$24.50

Cost of a sterilized birthing kit to save one mother's life, less in some countries.



# A pack of Gum

What I had to give up each day in order to cover my commitment to save one women each month.