

## Every Day Should be Mother's Day

### *Join our call for healthcare for mothers around the world*

More than half a million women die during pregnancy or in childbirth each year, virtually all of them in developing countries. Related to this are the deaths of three million children. In Ethiopia, 1 in 27 women die of complications or illnesses during pregnancy and childbirth. In the UK only 1 in 8,200 women die for this reason.

Most of these deaths are wholly preventable. If mothers had access to good health care and basic medicines, most of them would survive to look after their families and contribute to their communities. Access to health care, family planning, contraception and adequate education are some of the means by which maternal health can be improved.

The birth of a child should be something which people look forward to with joy, and not an event which poses a significant risk to the mother's life.

Maternal mortality decreased by less than 1 per cent per year between 1990 and 2005 – far below the 5.5 per cent annual improvement needed to reach Millenium Development Goal 5 to reduce the maternal mortality rate by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015. The maternal mortality rate remains unacceptably high across much of the developing world and is the area of least progress among all the MDGs.

The current state of maternal health is a crisis demanding immediate action. Rich countries must honour their promises to increase aid spending to 0.7% GDP by 2015 and act urgently to provide the US\$10.2m needed to scale up health care for new mothers and their children.



*Midwife Mariana examines expectant mother , Joachim, 19, in her house. Chinguar, Bie, Angola. "I love my job but I don't have basic facilities or equipment. All my tools are in this tiny box. I have no beds. My patients have to sleep on the floor. I do not charge for my services. And when they have no food I share mine. There is a huge need for better services here. We need basics like beds, and soap." Mid wife Mariana, 64*

Photo credit: Andy Hall/Oxfam GB

For learning activities on all of the **Millennium Development Goals** visit  
[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/change\\_the\\_world\\_in\\_eight\\_steps/](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/change_the_world_in_eight_steps/)

### **Take action!**

This Mothers Day (14<sup>th</sup> March), Oxfam is encouraging people to send a message to the leaders of each of the main political parties in the UK. **We'd like the UK Government to lead the rest of the world in addressing the preventable deaths of mothers and children.**

Send a mothers day card to Gordon Brown (Labour), David Cameron (Conservative) or Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrat) to make sure they know how important the health of newborn babies and their mothers around the world is.

- Encourage the group to share their ideas for slogans or statements they could use in their card.
- Make the cards stand out, be creative!
- Split into 3 groups and write to a party leader each.
- When the cards have been made. Send them to the Oxfam Youth & Schools Team with the form below and we'll make sure that each leader gets the cards.
- Please make sure we receive the cards by **Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March.**



*Image credit:  
istockphoto.com,  
DNY59*

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Name of Teacher:

Name & Address of School:

Postcode:

Email\*

Age of pupils:

Please return this slip, along  
with your cards, to:

Oxfam Youth & Schools Team  
Oxfam House  
John Smith Drive  
Oxford OX4 2JY

\*Please provide your email address to receive messages from us about our projects and activities. You can unsubscribe at any time. We would like to keep you informed about our projects and activities. However, if you'd rather not receive such information, please either email us at [changes@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:changes@oxfam.org.uk), phone 0300 200 1300 or write to Supporter Relations, Oxfam House, John Smith Drive, Oxford OX4 2JY