



Inter-Agency Group
for Safe Motherhood

UNFPA

UNICEF

WHO

WORLD BANK

IPPF

POPULATION COUNCIL

20 April, 1998

Ms. Christie Macy
c/o Office of the First Lady
Old Executive Building
Washington, DC 20500

Handwritten notes in blue ink:
MV
CIT
To press
office

Dear Ms. Macy:

Please find enclosed a complete set of media clips citing Hillary Rodham Clinton received thus far from the World Health Day event held at the World Bank, 7 April, 1998. We will make sure to forward any additional clips that we may receive.

We are very pleased about the extensive coverage received to date, much due to the excellent speech delivered by the First Lady.

Please do not hesitate to contact us again should you need any additional information.

With kind regards,

Åsa Jonsson
Program Associate
Family Care International

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Print

Friday April 3, 1998
Page F3

THE RELIABLE SOURCE

By Annie Groer and Ann Gerhart

NOW YOU KNOW . . .

■ Tuesday is World Health Day. And to mark the occasion, **Vendela**—model and UNICEF spokeswoman who does not always look as if she's had enough to eat—will be at the World Bank.

She'll join **Hillary Rodham Clinton**, Ugandan Health Minister **Cripus Kiyonga** and bank president **James Wolfensohn** in talking up ways to prevent maternal deaths.

Every year, 600,000 women die during pregnancy or childbirth, mostly in developing countries. Most could be prevented, and 1.5 million infants saved, by spending under \$2 a year per person for health care, according to the World Bank.

And for the record, the Swedish-born Vendela actually has a surname: **Thommessen**.

The Washington Post

INTERSCIENCE

Friday, April 10, 1998
Page E3

JUDY MANN

Safe Motherhood: A First Step in Development

Two significant shifts have occurred in international development efforts. The first is an agreement reached by major funders and nongovernmental organizations that women are at the center of the development process.

As World Bank President James Wolfensohn put it as part of his remarks during the World Bank conference on Safe Motherhood this week: "If you educate a woman, you educate a man and a family. If you educate a man, you educate a man."

The second shift has occurred in the capital flow into developing countries. Aid from donor nations fell from \$40 billion to \$37 billion from 1996 to 1997, as developed countries tightened budgets and cooled to the strategic importance of international development now that the Cold War has ended. The biggest players now are private-sector companies, whose investments went from \$247 billion in 1996 to \$256 billion last year.

Wolfensohn made it clear that important players in the private sector have joined a 10-year partnership of governmental and nongovernment agencies. Among them are Merck & Co. pharmaceuticals, which has donated Ivermectin, a drug that Wolfensohn says "has all but eradicated" river blindness in Africa, and Johnson & Johnson, which recently announced distribution of a drug that fights parasites common in Central America.

What remains lacking is a fundamental political will in many of these countries to make the health of girls and women central to development planning. "People don't care," he said. "As I travel around talking to ministers, conversations about health and safe motherhood are very rare."

Despite a decade of international efforts by such groups as UNICEF, the World Health Organization, the World Bank, the U.S. Agency for International Development, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and the Population Council, maternal mortality is now estimated at between 585,000 and 600,000 a year, an increase from earlier estimates, which were probably unreliable. Current estimates are probably not all that good either, though, since many rural deaths are never officially reported.

Motherhood has been made safe in some places but not others, said Richard Feachem, who directs the health, nutrition and population programs at the World Bank. During the decade-long partnership, he said, "we've learned a lot."

He urged the representatives of organizations involved in the Safe Motherhood effort to think about the objectives as four concentric circles: The outer one involves the empowerment of women in their families, villages and governments; the second one holds the development process in general, the establishment of a country's infrastructure, housing, clean water, sanitation;

the third involves the quality, availability and sustainability of basic health services; and the fourth, the core circle, holds maternal health services.

These were patterns that emerged during successful efforts in Malaysia, where women do not have legal barriers, according to Datin Seri Dr. Siti Hasmah, its first lady, who spoke at the conference. Taboos were overcome, and family planning has been stressed during the past decade. Today more than 95 percent of women seek and receive pre- and post-natal care, and 95 percent had births that were assisted by trained personnel.

In another address, Crispus Kiyonga, minister of health in Uganda, noted its successes in increasing contraception use.

He also made the point that the Ugandan parliament has 50 female members, that the vice president is a woman and that there are several women in the cabinet. After the country started to pull itself together in 1986, he said, there was "a deliberate political decision" to encourage women to become involved in the power structure, and the women's vote since then has become particularly influential.

Hillary Rodham Clinton told a wonderful story from her recent trip to Africa. The women of a village in Senegal had joined together to ban female circumcision. "They have decided that female circumcision, considered a rite of passage for all girls, had harmed their daughters' bodies and spirits for too long," she said. "It was time to end the hemorrhaging, and the infection, and the AIDS, and the childbirth complications caused by this deadly tradition."

"Using a skit that they showed me, these women educated their religious leaders, their husbands and their neighbors. And as a result, they have banned the practice of female circumcision in their village, and now in 13 other villages as well."

"When I asked one of the women in this small village what had driven her and others to try to end such a long-standing cultural practice, she replied simply: 'We studied human rights, and particularly the right to health.'"

What is so clear from that story is that the lofty concept of women's rights being human rights—which Clinton articulated in a shot heard round the world at the U.N. conference on women held in Beijing in 1995—has reached the women in remote villages, the women who need this assurance the most.

What was also clear from this week's conference is that some of the most important voices and institutions in the world of development are committed to ending the scourge of maternal deaths from unsafe abortions, lack of family planning, infections, obstructed delivery and other avoidable causes. Whether the resources will be there wasn't clear, but they certainly should be. This is an effort whose time is way overdue.

BURRILL'S
NewsExpress

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

DATE: **APR 08 1998**

Across the nation

FROM TRIBUNE NEWS SERVICES

1-13

NEW HAMPSHIRE



AP photo

Open-door prize: Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, accompanied by Sen. Judd Gregg (R-N.H.), draws a U.S. visa application at random Tuesday on a visit to the National Visa Center in Portsmouth. The lucky applicant, from Bangladesh, qualifies for a 1999 U.S. visit.

MICHIGAN

Boyfriend of mother charged with keeping girl in small box

CHEBOYGAN—The live-in boyfriend of a 3-year-old girl's mother repeatedly forced the child into a small wooden box over the last two months, prosecutors said Tuesday.

The girl was kept in the 3-by-2-foot box for up to 30 minutes at a time, said Cheboygan County Prosecutor Joseph Kwiatkowski. The man also abused the girl in other ways—physically and mentally—while her mother did nothing to stop it, Kwiatkowski said.

The box is covered in black vinyl and has a hinged lid. There is no lock, but it was positioned so that the girl could not open the top, the prosecutor said.

"For this child to be confined in this box with no light, virtually no air... is a horrendous act of child abuse," he said. "It's pretty much child torturing."

Earl Richard Schleben Jr., 27, of Afton, was arraigned Tuesday in District Court on three counts of first-degree child abuse, each a felony punishable by up to 15 years in prison.

The mother, Sharica Irwin, was charged with second-degree

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WASHINGTON, D.C.

Defense chief warns brass on gay policy

WASHINGTON—Defense Secretary William Cohen acknowledged Tuesday that "some commanders haven't gotten the message" about the Clinton administration's policy barring the pursuit and harassment of homosexuals in the military.

He ordered new guidelines to explain and enforce it.

Members of the armed forces who do engage in such "hunts," Cohen warned, will "be the subject of their own investigation" and potentially charged with sexual harassment.

"I have tried to make it very clear that we want this policy

fully and fairly implemented," Cohen said in an interview on National Public Radio.

Amid controversy, the "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue" policy began in 1994, seeking to strike a balance between prohibiting gay conduct in the military and attempts to maintain the privacy of those who choose not to declare their sexual orientation.

Meanwhile, the Department of Defense released a report showing that the number of people discharged for homosexuality increased to 997 last year from 850 in 1996.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

First lady urges better maternity care worldwide

WASHINGTON—In the time it took Hillary Rodham Clinton to deliver her World Health Day speech, she said, an estimated 15 women died around the globe from pregnancy complications or unsafe abortions.

"No woman should ever die in childbirth," she declared Tuesday as she called for renewed attention to maternal health.

Nearly 800,000 women and girls, most in developing nations, die each year while pregnant or in labor due to complications, including self-induced abortions, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Breaking down the data, the first lady said every minute a woman or girl dies, 40 have unsafe abortions, 110 experience pregnancy-related problems and 180 face unplanned pregnancies.

The audience for the first lady's 15-minute speech included several hundred health-care professionals.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

It's the warmest, wettest year of the century so far

WASHINGTON—Because of El Niño, the first two months of 1998 were the warmest and wettest in 104 years, providing "a taste of what might be expected" if global warming predictions come true, says the chief of the government's climate research agency.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration reported Tuesday some details about the 1997-98 El Niño-driven winter.

In January and February, the national average temperature was 87.5 degrees, 5.4 degrees higher than normal and the highest since the government began keeping records in 1894.

Fifteen states across the Midwest and East reported record average temperatures.

"This record-breaking El Niño is consistent with a worldwide trend in the last 40 years toward a warmer and wetter world," said Commerce Undersecretary James Baker, NOAA's chief and an oceanographer by profession.

BURRELL'S
NewsExpress

MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE

DATE: APR 8 1998

First Lady urges renewed focus on maternal health

She calls for better international family-planning programs.

Associated Press

A5

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"No woman should ever die in childbirth," she said Tuesday, calling for renewed global attention to maternal health. "The vast majority of these deaths and so much of that suffering could have been avoided."

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Breaking down the statistics, Clinton said that every minute, a woman or girl dies, 40 have unsafe abortions, 110 experience a pregnancy-related problem and 190 face an unplanned pregnancy.

Clinton, speaking to health-care professionals and private and public policymakers at World Bank headquarters, said countries should develop better family-planning and education programs for women and children to combat maternal mortality.

On that point, she criticized conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which critics say lead to abortions.

"Without it, [family planning] women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more of all maternal deaths," Clinton said. "I would like to stress that point because there are some in our Congress and in our country who do not understand how providing family-planning services helps reduce the rate of abortion."

Supporting Clinton at the World Health Day celebration, Malaysia's First Lady, Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, called for the elimination of "cultural and social taboos" that often prevent women and girls from making their own reproductive decisions.

"Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said.

Date: Wed, 8 Apr 1998 12:25:51 -0400

From: ksherk@ccmc.org (KIRSTEN)

Subject: ORLANDO SENTINAL-4/8/98: FIRST LADY PLEADS FOR MOTHERS

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THE ORLANDO SENTINEL

April 8, 1998 Wednesday, CENTRAL FLORIDA

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BYLINE: Compiled From Wire Reports

DATELINE: WASHINGTON

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Clinton, speaking to several hundred health-care professionals and private and public policy-makers at World Bank headquarters, said the death rate of new mothers is up to 200 times greater in poor nations than in rich ones.

"And those deaths are directly related to the high level of poverty and the low status of women, in those countries," she said.

Clinton said countries should develop better family-planning and education programs for women and children.

On that point, she criticized conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which critics contend leads to abortions.

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Clinton, who last week returned from a 12-day tour of Africa with President Clinton, noted that she and her husband visited projects promoting women and children to underline U.S. support for "human rights and particularly the right to health."

Supporting Clinton at the World Health Day celebration, Malaysia's first lady, Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, called for the elimination of "cultural and social taboos" that often prevent women and girls from making their own reproductive decisions.

"Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said.
GRAPHIC: PHOTO: World Health Day. Hillary Clinton holds amaternity
field safety kit during her speech.
ASSOCIATED PRESS

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PARRELLE'S News Express

Page 1 of 1 Page Article (SCS1004X)

April 8, 1998

San Francisco Chronicle

Appears On Page A3

Mrs. Clinton Urges War On Maternal Mortality

She says world needs more family planning

By Laura Myers
Associated Press

Washington

In the time it took Hillary Rodham Clinton to deliver her World Health Day speech, she said, an estimated 15 women died around the globe from pregnancy complications or unsafe abortions.

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"Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said.

Carol Bellamy, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund, said her visit last week to Afghanistan, where women suffer harsh discrimination under Taliban rule, demonstrated to her that women without equal human rights are in mortal danger.

"It is no coincidence that Afghanistan ... is distinguished both by severe economic and social restrictions on women and by the highest maternal mortality rate of any developing country — 1,700 deaths per 100,000 live births — a truly shocking number," Bellamy said.

In the United States, by comparison, from 10 to two dozen women die for every 100,000 live births, according to various federal surveys.

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BURRELLE'S
NewsExpress

FORT WORTH STAR TELEGRAM

DATE: APR 08 1998

HEALTH Digest

A4

Spanking best avoided, new research indicates

ATLANTA - Pediatricians should encourage parents to use "timeouts" and positive reinforcement instead of spanking when children act up, their professional organization has recommended.

Spanking teaches children aggression and is no more effective than other forms of punishment, the American Academy of Pediatrics said in this month's issue of its magazine, *Pediatrics*.

The 53,000-member academy acknowledged that it doesn't expect to eliminate the popular punishment overnight. About 90 percent of U.S. parents spank, and 59 percent of pediatricians in a 1992 survey said they support the practice.

The academy said effective discipline has three crucial components:

- A supportive, loving relationship between parent and child.
- Use of positive reinforcement when children behave well.
- Use of punishment when children misbehave.

First lady calls for more attention to maternal health

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Nearly 600,000 women and girls, most of them in developing nations, die each year while pregnant or in labor because of complications, including self-induced abortions, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Over 7 million youths may have some hearing loss

More than 7 million American children and teen-agers may have some level of hearing loss that could be affecting their ability to learn and communicate, new findings suggest.

In a nationwide study of 6,166 children ages 6 to 19, about 15 percent were found to have a low- or high-frequency hearing loss, which was confirmed by in-person interviews and hearing tests. When applied to the general population, this figure translates into 7 million youths.

The study was published in today's issue of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*.

BURRELLE'S
NewsExpress

CINCINNATI ENQUIRER

APR 08 1998

First lady: Focus on mothers' health

She cites figures of deaths in pregnancy

BY LAURA MYERS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — In the time it took Hillary Rodham Clinton to deliver her World Health Day speech, she said, an estimated 15 women died around the globe from pregnancy complications or unsafe abortions.

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In the United States, by comparison, from 10 to two dozen women die for every 100,000 live births, according to various federal surveys.

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The Houston Chronicle

April 05, 1998, Sunday 2 STAR EDITION

SECTION: A; Pg. 2

LENGTH: 397 words

HEADLINE: Newsmakers

BODY:

Good Will showering?

Gus Van Sant ("Good Will Hunting") will direct a remake of Alfred Hitchcock's 1960 classic, "Psycho." But unlike other remakes, it will use the original script. "We're actually making essentially the same movie," said producer Brian Grazer. Still, it will be in color and the shower scene will be more skin-intensive. No stars have been announced yet.

Health Day celebrities

Tuesday is World Health Day. And to mark the occasion, Vendela - model and UNICEF spokeswoman who does not always look as if she's had enough to eat - will be at the World Bank. She'll join Hillary Rodham Clinton, Ugandan Health Minister Cripus Kiyonga and bank president James Wolfensohn in talking up ways to prevent maternal deaths. Every year, 600,000 women die during pregnancy or childbirth, mostly in developing countries. Most could be prevented, and 1.5 million infants saved, by spending under \$ 2 a year per person for health care, according to the World Bank. And for the record, the Swedish-born Vendela actually has a surname: Thommessen.

100 power trips

Michael Eisner and Rupert Murdoch top Premiere magazine's annual list of "the 100 most powerful people in Hollywood." Steven Spielberg is No. 4; Tom Cruise, No. 6; Will Smith, No. 24, and

Ginsburg is eating up his 15 minutes of fame

By **ANNIE DROER**
and **ADON GERRHART**

Washington Post **A3**

WASHINGTON — For weeks, some of the nation's top journalists have wooed William Ginsburg in the hopes of getting access to — and perhaps an interview with — Mordechai S. Lewinsky.

Now restaurants are getting hip. A whispered invitation here. A coded letter there. And, by the by, Ginsburg — often with Ms. Lewinsky and co-chancellor Nathaniel Spingarn in tow — shows up for dinner because, let's face it, the guy's a total foodie.

Indeed, on a visit Thursday to the Source (where we often pick

at cafeteria salads at our desk), Ginsburg whipped open his suit jacket to reveal just how well-fed he is.

In tones most reverential, he explained that his dinner at Nathaniel's in Georgetown on Wednesday night was up itself because he got genuine yellowfin tuna. This should not be confused with yellowfin, he said, which is really a member of the mackerel family.

He waxed even more rhapsodic about the '85 Chateau Front Royal that owner Carol Ross Joyal gave him from her 350-bottle cellar.

Model lends name to cause

Thursday is World Health Day. And to mark the occasion, Venetia

is — model and UNICEF spokeswoman who does not always look as if she's had enough to eat — will be at the World Bank.

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April 8, 1998

Appears On Page A18

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON

Charity stamp
to cost 40 cents

Americans will soon have the opportunity to fight breast cancer by paying 8 cents extra to mail a letter.

A price of 40 cents was set Tuesday by the Postal Service's Board of Governors for the special stamp to be issued later this year to raise money to battle the disease.

The stamp's design will be unveiled May 9 in Los Angeles, with the stamp to be issued in August.

This will be first charity stamp of this type - called a semipostal - issued in the United States. Semipostal stamps are valid for normal postage but cost more than regular stamps, with the extra charge given to the designated charity.

The current first class postage rate is 32 cents, meaning the stamp will have an 8-cent surcharge.

First lady's health call

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Nearly 600,000 women and girls, most in developing nations, die each year while pregnant or in labor due to complications, including self-induced abortions, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Clinton spoke to several hundred health care professionals and private and public policy makers at World Bank Headquarters.

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First lady urges maternal health focus

Speakers seek to reduce number of women dying from unsafe abortions.

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Hillary Rodham Clinton, speaking to several hundred health care professionals and private and public policymakers at World Bank headquarters, said countries should develop better family-plan-



Associated Press

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton lends her support to women's health issues Tuesday in Washington at a World Health Day conference. Clinton called for renewed attention on women's health as a basic human right, saying, "No woman should ever die in childbirth." Some 600,000 women die each year from childbirth complications and unsafe abortions.

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In the United States, by comparison, from 10 to two dozen women die for every 100,000 live births, according to federal surveys.

Bellamy and Hillary Rodham Clinton said simple hygienic handling of mother and baby can save lives at an estimated cost of \$3 per person per year.

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The Chattanooga Times
April 8, 1998, Wednesday

SECTION: National; Pg. A7**LENGTH:** 356 words**HEADLINE:** Mrs. Clinton urges focus on maternal health**BYLINE:** By Laura Myers, The Associated Press**BODY:**

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Mrs. Clinton, speaking to several hundred health care professionals and private and public policy-makers at World Bank headquarters, said countries should develop better family-planning and education programs for women and children to combat maternal mortality.

On that point, she criticized conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which critics contend lead to abortions.

"Without it (family planning) women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more of all maternal deaths," Mrs. Clinton said.

Carol Bellamy, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund, said her visit last week to Afghanistan, where women suffer harsh discrimination under Taliban rule, demonstrated to her that women without equal human rights are in mortal danger. Afghanistan has the highest maternal mortality rate of any developing country -- 1,700 deaths per 100,000 live births.

In the United States, by comparison, from 10 to two dozen women die for every 100,000 live births, according to federal surveys.

Ms. Bellamy and Mrs. Clinton said simple hygienic handling of mother and baby can save lives at an estimated cost of \$3 per person per year.

GRAPHIC: Hillary Rodham Clinton holds up a maternity field safety kit Tuesday.

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Wire Services

Mrs. Clinton decries childbirth deaths. By LAURA MYERS= Associated Press Writer=

WASHINGTON (AP) In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, villagers are learning to deliver babies. In Ethiopia and Mongolia, mothers-to-be trek long distances to live in group maternity homes until they give birth.

The projects are aimed at reducing a worldwide death rate that takes the lives of nearly 600,000 women and girls during childbirth every year one every minute of every day, Hillary Rodham Clinton said Tuesday.

Mrs. Clinton, using World Health Day to kick off a renewed effort to combat these deaths, said most of those lives could be saved.

"We have the strategies. We have the resources. But we do not yet have the collective will to do what we know needs to be done," she said, speaking at a World Bank forum of policy-makers on safe motherhood.

"Today, women in every nation in the world, including my own right here in our nation's capital, lack basic health care that could save their lives and ensure the health of their babies," she added.

As a result, in the worst cases, one woman in seven dies of childbirth or pregnancy complications, including self-induced or unsafe abortions, in Afghanistan, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Somalia, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

In more than a dozen African and Asian nations, the lifetime chance that a pregnant woman or girl will die are one in eight to one in 10, compared to one in 9,200 in Spain the healthiest country for pregnant women and one in 3,500 in the United States.

"No woman should ever die in childbirth," Mrs. Clinton declared, calling for more family planning and prenatal care programs worldwide, especially among poor people where problems are the worst.

Breaking down the statistics, the first lady said that every minute, a women or girl dies, 40 have unsafe abortions, 110 experience a pregnancy-related problem and 190 face an unplanned pregnancy.

Addressing domestic critics, Mrs. Clinton attacked conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which they contend leads to abortions.

"Without family planning) women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more of all maternal deaths," Mrs. Clinton said, adding that "some in our Congress and in our country who do not understand how providing family-planning services helps reduce the rate of abortion."

Malaysia's first lady, Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, called for the elimination of "cultural and social taboos" that often prevent women and girls from making their own reproductive decisions. "Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said.

**** filed by:APE(--) on 04/08/98 at 01:21EST ****

**** printed by:WHPR(JMAS) on 04/08/98 at 07:16EST ****

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05:00 PM ET 04/07/98

More than 600,000 women die in childbirth - agencies

By Maggie Fox, Health and Science Correspondent

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - More than 600,000 women die every year giving birth -- one woman every minute -- yet just \$2 a day in health spending would save them, the World Bank said Tuesday.

The agency, which funds development, said it was joining forces with the World Health Organization, the United Nations and other groups to press for more help for women, especially mothers, in developing nations.

"Why is it that a woman dies every minute? The answer is that people don't care," James Wolfensohn, president of the World Bank, told a meeting called to mark World Health Day. The theme this year is safe motherhood.

"We assume that women are there. We have never taken enough concern about the rights of women," Wolfensohn said. But he said anyone interested in helping countries develop should look to the health and education of women first.

"Women are central to the development process," he said.

"Many people say that if you educate a woman you educate the family. If you educate a man you educate a man."

Wolfensohn said the big players to target were corporations, which were investing \$250 billion a year in developing countries. "They cannot invest without thinking about their social responsibilities," he said. "It's not an option."

And just \$2 a day in simple health care would ensure that most women could give birth without dying or becoming ill. "It is not rocket science to help someone have a child safely."

Hillary Rodham Clinton, wife of President Clinton, told the gathering the death rate of new mothers is up to 200 times greater in poor nations than in rich ones.

"And those deaths are directly related to the high level of poverty, and the low status of women, in those countries," she said.

"Many of these women did not recognize the danger signs of pregnancy and did not have the power to make their own decisions," said Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, wife of Malaysia's Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

"Women cannot be empowered in the face of the social, cultural and legal barriers that restrain them," Mohamad added.

"Women may have legal rights but they are still unable to exercise those rights and make choices. They are subjected to violence, abuse, discrimination and exploitation."

Clinton, just back from a trip to Africa with her husband, said many countries had made great political progress, yet neglected their women.

"Over the past few years, more than 20 nations have broken the chains of authoritarian rule and begun their journeys toward economic and social recovery," she said.

"Yet in the midst of this time of growth and promise around the world, we still fail to protect our most important citizens

-- the mothers of our children," she said.

Some countries have made things better, she said.

"In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, health workers trained in midwifery are being assigned to village-based health facilities, and maternal mortality has declined. In Ethiopia and Mongolia, women living in remote areas where transportation is difficult can now get to maternity waiting homes and get much-needed interim care.

"And in Brazil, I've met with women in a local hospital where they are being taught the basic facts about reproduction and family planning -- instead of having to face the pain and trauma and sometimes death of self-induced abortions."

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), Save the Children and the government in Nepal issue a safe home delivery kit with soap, twine, wax, a plastic sheet and a razor blade, meant to help women keep clean for delivery and cut the umbilical cord safely. Clinton showed one to the audience.

"We must invest in family planning," she said. "Without it, women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more maternal deaths."

^REUTERS@

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<<THE HINDU -- 04-07-98>>

POPULATION-WOMEN/ MOTHERHOOD STILL NOT SAFE, U.N. WARNS

Date: Wednesday, April 8, 1998

Source: Inter Press Service

UNITED NATIONS - Inter Press Service via NewsEdge Corporation : More than 1,600 women die each day as a result of complications from pregnancy or childbirth, although their deaths could be prevented by health services at an annual cost of as little as two dollars per person, according to the United Nations.

Three U.N. agencies - the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA), U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) - added that, in addition to roughly 600,000 fatalities, some 50 million women suffer injuries every year from pregnancy or childbirth. The three U.N. bodies joined with population groups and governments today to condemn the heavy toll and to seek solutions.

"Now is the time to act upon what has been learned over the past 10 years of research and model projects, before one more woman's life is lost needlessly," said Jill Sheffield, president of Family Care International, which chairs an inter-agency group on safe motherhood comprising the U.N. and non-governmental organizations.

As much as one-quarter of all maternal deaths stem from severe bleeding, often linked to the delivery itself. Infections account for 15 percent of the fatalities, while unsafe abortions (13 percent), eclampsia (12 percent) and obstructed labor (8 percent) are also among the most common causes of death.

WHO argues that most maternal deaths occur during or shortly after childbirth, and stem from lack of access to basic medical care. Only 53 percent of deliveries in developing countries are assisted by either a doctor or midwife, even though such assistance could ensure that conditions for delivery will be hygienic and that complications can be managed efficiently.

A full program to prevent maternal deaths -- as well as those of at least 1.5 million children annually -- would require the presence of a skilled attendant at all deliveries; treatment of complications; and postpartum family planning and neonatal care, WHO says. In low-income countries, the cost of such programs would amount to three dollars per person per year -- and only two dollars for maternal health services alone.

"Simple measures ensuring safe motherhood would also eliminate untold amounts of

safe motherhood initiatives. The campaign was supported today by U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton at a World Health Day commemoration at the World Bank.

Burkina Faso implements 'risk-free maternity' policy

Date: Wednesday, April 8, 1998

Source: Agence France Presse

Agence France Presse via NewsEdge Corporation : OUAGADOUGOU, April 7 (AFP) - Burkina Faso has put in place a national strategy to ensure "risk-free maternity" with the aim of reducing deaths in childbirth by 20 percent by 2000, the health ministry said Tuesday.

The situation for women today is "tragic," the ministry said, noting that 910 per 100,000 Burkinabe women died in childbirth in 1997.

Most affected are young women between 15 and 20 years of age, as well as women over 40, the ministry said.

Hemorrhages, infections, anemia and unprofessional abortions were cited as the main causes.

The new policy aims to improve the quality and accessibility of pre-natal, maternity and post-natal services for women.

lxh/gd/bb

<<Agence France Presse - 04-07-98>>

World Bank President and Hillary Rodham Clinton Call for Action To Stop Mothers From Dying

Date: Wednesday, April 8, 1998

Source: PR Newswire

WASHINGTON, April 7 /PRNewswire/ via NewsEdge Corporation -- The head of the World Bank today announced that six hundred thousand women a year die during pregnancy and childbirth because people do not care. "It is not a front-line issue ... not a high priority item in many of the countries in which we are operating," said James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank. He also said that two million children per year die because of complications during pregnancy and childbirth. "We cannot have 300 million women damaged after pregnancy. We can't have the orphans left behind. It's not rocket science to help someone have a child safely," he added.

suffering throughout the world," argued Sheffield.

Some of the efforts to provide simple maternal services can be difficult, however -- as UNICEF has learned in Afghanistan, which has the highest maternal mortality rate among all countries.

UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy said yesterday following a visit to Taliban-held parts of Afghanistan that her agency would continue to try to provide assistance there, but she added that the Islamist leaders of the Taliban made that task complex by placing restrictions on access to women.

UNICEF, in a statement, argues that a woman's health and access to healthcare in Afghanistan - where maternal mortality is estimated at 1,700 deaths per 100,000 live births - is "severely jeopardized by the restrictions on her movements, her mode of dress, her presence in public places and use of public transport."

Other countries pose different risks for mothers and pregnant women. In much of Western Africa, as well as Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola and Tanzania, fewer than half of all pregnant women have had at least one antenatal visit, according to WHO. Unsurprisingly, those same countries all boasted some of the highest maternal mortality rates in a 1990 WHO survey.

In Latin America, on the other hand, one of the greatest risks stems from unsafe abortions; the WHO estimates that all South American countries recorded rates of more than 30 unsafe abortions per 1,000 abortions in 1996. Unsafe abortions account for about a fifth of Latin America and the Caribbean's maternal deaths, the WHO adds.

Even the United States has had problems in making motherhood safer. According to UNICEF, maternal deaths in the United States may be under-reported, and may actually be double the stated level of 10 per 100,000 live births.

One of the major problems, the agency says, is the country's teenage pregnancy rate of 95.9 per 1,000 girls - "the highest among industrialized countries," UNICEF contends. An estimated one million teenagers become pregnant in the United States each year, it adds, with nearly one-third of those pregnancies ending in abortions.

In many cases, family planning may help to pave the way for safer births. "With the expanded availability of family planning information and services in many countries, more and more people can make their own choices about whether and when to have a child," said Charlotte Gardiner, a UNFPA senior technical adviser. "It's a tragedy that many women still cannot choose to have their baby in safety."

The inter-agency group is kicking off what it intends to be a full year of educational efforts to bolster awareness about the severity of the problem and of the need to foster

The strategies to reduce these deaths exist and the resources required are available according to the United States First Lady, Hillary Rodham Clinton, who spoke after Wolfensohn. "We do not yet have the collective will to do what needs to be done ... there is a simple but unbearable truth: so many of these deaths and so much of this suffering can be prevented." In a direct challenge to those in the U.S. who have cut funding of some reproductive health programs, Mrs. Clinton said, "We must invest in family planning which improves maternal health. Without it, women often turn to illegal, unsafe abortions which cause up to half of all maternal deaths. I want to stress this because there are some in our Congress who do not understand how access to family planning reduces abortion."

Wolfensohn stressed that safe motherhood is a vital economic investment. He committed the Bank to direct action, and to cooperative projects with the private sector, international organizations, voluntary groups and, most of all, governments. "As I travel, it is very rare that I have a discussion of providing services for mothers ... We have to ensure that safe motherhood is given a priority in the countries in which we are operating. It's right socially, it's right morally and it's right economically ... The World Bank will be there in the front, in the back, in the middle. Wherever you want us," he promised.

Many countries, including the U.S., have failed in the goal of cutting maternal mortality in half by the year 2000, said Mrs. Clinton. However, she said there is great cause for hope. Mrs. Clinton noted that infant mortality remains far too high in Washington, D.C., but it has been reduced in much of the rest of the country. "It is unacceptable that in a country which spends 14 percent of its product on healthcare, we have 41 million without health insurance ... I hope I live long enough to see this changed," she said.

Hillary Rodham Clinton spoke of visiting a village in Senegal where women decided to bring an end to the centuries-long tradition of female circumcision. They had learned that it led to hemorrhages, AIDS and complications in childbirth. They put on a skit and enlisted fathers, husbands and brothers. The village agreed to ban the practice. Men who had become convinced by the arguments walked from village to village explaining why they had banned female genital mutilation. Thirteen more villages followed their example. The President of Senegal heard about this and said that he would bring forward a bill to outlaw the practice throughout the country. The First Lady of the U.S. asked the women what had prompted them to begin their campaign. "They told me they had studied human rights and especially the right to health," Mrs. Clinton said.

It is relatively easy to prevent many of the deaths of mothers and children, according to the wife of the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Dato' Seri Datin Paduka Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohd. Ali. Dr. Siti Hasmah is a physician and world leader in the cause of women's health issues. She has introduced a number of pioneering programs in her own country. The number of deaths amongst pregnant women there has dropped from 240 per hundred thousand in 1980 to 20 per hundred thousand in 1996. "Malaysia's story is that of many who have spent their lives unheard and unrecognized but saved the lives of our women and children," she said.

A UNICEF video screened at the meeting showed specialist teams at rural hospitals in Bangladesh saving lives by helping women with hemorrhages. Many of the patients arrive on carts or carried by family members, but these are the lucky ones who are treated. A Bangladeshi woman told the meeting that her father had watched her mother die during childbirth rather than break with tradition and allow her to be cared for by a male doctor.

These leaders spoke at a meeting to mark World Health Day 1998. The theme of the day, safe motherhood, was established by the World Health Organization and Wolfensohn noted that the World Bank policy gathering was just one of many such events around the world. Today, four thousand women gathered in Kathmandu, Nepal to commemorate the 4,000 Nepalese who die every year in pregnancy and childbirth. Kenyan women held up signs reading "invest in women's health" on every road leading into the capital, Nairobi.

Recognition of the global need for a safe motherhood initiative was also affirmed strongly by Sir George Alleyne director of the Pan-American Health Organization, who said that women in poor countries were forty times as likely to die in pregnancy or child birth than women in rich countries. Said Professor Mahmoud Fathalla of The Rockefeller Foundation, "Maternal mortality is women who have names and faces. We have seen these faces in the throes of agony and despair. These are faces we continue to see. It is not simply because they are young women, it is not simply because they die the most painful of deaths. It is such a human tragedy because in almost every case, these deaths could be prevented. It must weight heavily on the conscience of the world."

SOURCE World Bank

/CONTACT: Benna Holden, 202-973-0369, for World Bank/

DEPT FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT/ Safe childbirth should be a right, says Clare Short

Date: Wednesday, April 8, 1998

Source: M2 PRESSWIRE

M2 PRESSWIRE via NewsEdge Corporation : * World Health Day, 7 April 1998

As international political leaders and UN agency heads gather in Washington to mark the International Year for Safe Motherhood, International Development Secretary Clare Short says the world is ignoring the health needs of millions of women.

"The global community has failed poor women when it comes to safety in pregnancy and childbirth," she said.

HEALTH: Giving Birth A Leading Cause of Death

by Gretchen Sidhu

Women's Feature Service

Washington, DC, April 13 (WFS) - It doesn't matter whether a woman toils in a rural village or makes millions in a high-tech business: she still has a 40 percent chance of developing a potentially serious complication during pregnancy or birth. Whether she survives or not, however, depends on where she lives.

This was one of several conclusions a consortium of powerful international agencies announced last week, as they declared 1998 the year of safe motherhood. The group includes the World Bank, the United Nations, the Population Council and International Planned Parenthood. Called the Safe Motherhood Initiative, it has met for the past decade to study the impact of pregnancy on women's health.

"We have found that, contrary to common assumptions, you absolutely cannot predict which women are going to be at risk, even among those who eat well and regularly go to the gynecologist," says Jill Sheffield, president of Family Care International, a New York-based nongovernmental organization that has helped plan the initiative.

"The difference is whether or not a woman has access to people who are trained to recognize the danger signs, and move her along to the appropriate level of health care."

Access to care means that in the industrial world today and in wealthy pockets of developing countries, dying during child birth is almost unheard of. Nearly every woman knows another woman who has had a miscarriage, or complications that led to a cesarean section. But these are mostly dealt with by routine modern medicine.

By contrast, in the developing world, especially where education is bad and use of contraceptives is low, almost every family has a mother who has bled to death or suffered agonizing fatal infections from poor hygiene. In 1996, according to figures released by the consortium, skilled birth attendants were present at only 53 percent of the births in the developing world.

As a result, nearly 50 million women endure serious problems in pregnancy every year, and 600,000 die. According to the World Bank, giving birth is the leading cause of death in developing countries for women between ages 15 and 49. Most never receive the kind of simple, inexpensive treatments -

like a safe abortion or a clean sheet - that can carry a woman through pregnancy complications.

Mothers who die also leave behind children who are at a higher risk of not making it beyond childhood. A World Health Organization (WHO) study in Bangladesh found that for every thousand maternal deaths, nearly 200 daughters and 100 sons die as well. Basic maternal care before, during and after delivery, according to WHO, could save the lives of 1.5 million children a year.

The Safe Motherhood Initiative plans to spend the coming year publicizing these grim statistics and educating women on how to recognize the danger signs through a series of public service announcements. It hopes that developing country governments - and their industrial world financiers - will get the message that they need to act.

The initiative kicked off the campaign last week through a meeting presided over by World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn. It brought together high level politicians, such as the first ladies of the United States and Malaysia, and international development advocates, including the heads of the UN population and children's funds and representatives from WHO.

"This is a very serious issue that should be on the forefront of the agenda," Wolfensohn told a packed assembly hall at bank headquarters. "Why does one woman die every minute? It's because people don't care. We need to convince the world that safe motherhood is a human right. It is also a vital social and economic investment."

Wolfensohn pointed out that about 90 percent of the women who die could be saved through fairly simple measures that could cost as little as a few dollars per pregnancy.

But most governments have shown scant interest in the issue, despite some notable successes in confronting child mortality. Some claim that additional health programs are too expensive in the era of down-sized government; others are simply unaware or don't care. Wolfensohn pointed out that few of the finance ministers he meets to discuss development loans from the World Bank have even considered the subject.

Hillary Rodham Clinton said she had seen great progress being made during her recent trip to Africa, but that the numbers of women dying during childbirth there remain shocking. In Ethiopia, for example, one of every nine women dies from pregnancy complications. In the United States, the figure is one in 3,500, and in Canada one in 7,700.

"The tragedy is compounded by the fact that so much suffering could be avoided," Clinton said. "Motherhood should be the most sacred and safe event in any woman's life, anywhere in the world."

She pointed out that family planning reduces rates of abortion and unsafe pregnancies. However, she added, the best birth control is increasing the education and status of women.

Countries with a poor record on promoting the status of women generally have some of the worst rates of maternal mortality. Afghanistan, one of the most prominent examples of pervasive discrimination in the world, is at the bottom of the charts. One out of seven Afghani women dies giving birth; only 8 percent have skilled attendants during delivery.

Discrimination is often accompanied by limits on a woman's ability to seek health care. This may contribute as much to maternal deaths as physical illness. According to the Pan American Health Organization, a division of WHO, it is not uncommon for women in parts of Latin America to bleed to death simply waiting for their husbands to give them permission to go to the hospital.

In Bangladesh, according to a government report, the decision to seek care is usually left up to a woman's mother-in-law and her husband, who know little or nothing about detecting fatal complications.

Nafis Sadik, the Pakistani doctor who currently heads the UN Population Fund, told the meeting in Washington that it is ironic that even in societies that define women primarily as mothers, there is little support given to maternal health. She said this is one of many indications that women are still not valued or respected.

Like Clinton, Sadik advocates family planning as one route to fewer maternal deaths - unsafe abortions cause 13 percent of the total. Worldwide, 120 million women who want contraception still regularly go without it.

Both abortion and contraception continue to be hotly contested by the Vatican and some Islamic countries. Conservative factions in the US Congress regularly strive to link foreign aid to strict limits on both abortion and contraceptives

"Women don't get pregnant because they want to have an abortion," Sadik said scathingly. "The best way to avoid this is to prevent pregnancy in the first place. No religion or culture worth the name can be against family planning."

There have been some success stories in reducing maternal deaths. Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohammed Ali, a physician who has worked on women's health care and is the first lady of Malaysia, told about her country's efforts. They include upgrading the skills available in district hospitals, designing grassroots health and legal rights education campaigns, and using a color coding system to ensure that women with predictable high risks deliver with a doctor. Most of the people who run these initiatives are women themselves.

"Women are able to focus on the concerns of women, which has led to the success of our program," Ali told the gathering in Washington. She also emphasized Malaysia's broad approach, saying that there are multiple barriers to good health.

Statistics show her government must be doing something right. Fewer women die in Malaysia giving birth than in almost any other developing country in Asia: one in 270, compared to a regional average of one in 65. Almost 95 percent of Malaysian women deliver with skilled care, up from 51 percent in 1980.

But successes this dramatic still remain isolated examples. The Safe Motherhood Initiative has made clear that it plans to create a global coalition to push the issue in more directions, from the home to the finance ministry to the corporate boardroom.

Last week, it also announced that a group of 10 influential big business players has already agreed to chip in. These include the consumer products giant Johnson & Johnson; Ericsson, a maker of cellular phones; medical technology companies such as Becton Dickinson and Graphic Controls Corp., and the dairy producer Parmalat.

They have signed a charter promising to promote the issue among their business peers and in the communities in which they operate. They will also educate their own employees.

Wolfensohn, a well-heeled former Wall Street investment banker himself, told corporate representatives that the number of women dying is shocking in the era of technological advancement and economic growth. Corporations are investing \$250 billion a year in developing countries he said. They need to acquire a sense of social responsibility along with it.

"Multilateral institutions and the private sector must join together to save the lives of women, whose contributions to the workforce and to their families build the societies in which they live," he said.
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DATE April 8, 1998
TIME 7:00-9:00 AM
NETWORK ABC
PROGRAM Good Morning America

ACCOUNT NUMBER 63/6553XX
NIELSEN AUDIENCE 4,124,100

Lisa McRee, co-host:

Did you know that every year more than a half million women die because of complications during pregnancy or childbirth? Well, now several international agencies are coming together to try and reverse that trend, and they've declared 1998 the Year of Safe Motherhood. Joining us to explain what it all means is UNICEF spokesperson, supermodel Vendela, and the chief women's health specialist at the World Bank, Anne Tinker. Good morning to both of you.

Vendela, I had no idea so many women die in childbirth. Why is it?

Vendela (UNICEF, Spokesperson): Yeah. It's quite incredible, actually. For example, in Bangladesh three women die every hour from child-related...

McRee: Every hour?

Vendela: Yes.

McRee: What are the causes of the deaths?

Vendela: Different things. For example, maybe the water breaks early and people don't know how to--to get to a hospital or--or bleeding, or maybe a lack of vitamins or sanitation.

McRee: All sorts of reasons.

Vendela: All sorts of different things, yeah.

McRee: So what is it--what is it that UNICEF wants to try to do?

Vendela: Basically we would like to stop this, because it's every woman's right to have a safe pregnancy and deliver a healthy child into the world, and so basically we want to try to stop this and, together with people like the World Bank and other organizations, to make this--you know, basically have this go away.

McRee: Clinics and medicine and doctors and...

Vendela: Not just that. It's not even--you don't really need hospitals or big--it's not really expensive actually, but it's going out there, educating, talking. It's knowledge actually. That's what's so important.

McRee: Tell me, Anne, what the--what your role and what the World Bank's role is in this.

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Anne Tinker (World Bank): Well, the World Bank is in the business of reducing poverty, and absolutely essential to that is women's education and women's health. So we're now--ten years ago we had only ten projects with Safe Motherhood activities. We now have over a hundred around the developing world.

McRee: Yesterday was--there was an event...

Tinker: It was World Health Day, yes.

McRee: Tell me about that and who was there.

Tinker: We had an event at the World Bank, and it was just a fabulous opportunity for high-level people from governments, from first lady Hillary Clinton...

McRee: She was there.

Vendela: Yes.

Tinker: The first lady of Malaysia, and the heads of the U.N. agencies, and to hear first lady Hillary Clinton and Jim Wolfenson, who's the president of the World Bank, say: Central to economic and social development is women's health, and the ability to get through at least pregnancy safely in these countries, we've just got to do something about it.

McRee: Vendela, since you've taken on this role as the UNICEF spokesperson, you have been all over the place. Tell me about...

Vendela: Yes.

McRee: ...some of the trips and what you've learned.

Vendela: I mean, because--I know that you showed some footage from Bangladesh earlier, and I just--I was in Bangladesh a little while ago, and I visited, for example, Atana, which is a little village in Bangladesh where women could come to a house which somebody has donated in the village and learn about family planning, about safe motherhood basically, and how to have--give your--I gave a child vitamin A. That's really important. That's something that I'm giving my daughter, you know, now myself even, and you know, just--that's basically what...

McRee: You're really getting hands-on training?

Vendela: Yes.

McRee: In addition to this particular problem that you're talking about today, you've made other trips.

Vendela: Yes.

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Vendela: For--for UNICEF?

McRee: For UNICEF.

Vendela: Yes. I've been to India, for example. And well, we're planning a trip to Africa, and that was cancelled because I--I got pregnant myself and needed to sort of take care of myself and make sure that I wasn't, you know, jeopardizing my pregnancy myself, but...

McRee: But why--why get involved like this? Why go out there and do things? You--you're--you're the only supermodel I know who is doing something like this. You're the only supermodel I know, so...

Vendela: Well, you know, this is something that's so close to my heart, and--I mean, I love children and I've always, always, always wanted to be with children, and so it's--it's fantastic to be able to do a little bit of something, you know, and it's something I would love to do more of and more on a full-time thing, I think. So...

McRee: Well, we wish both of you luck with this...

Vendela: Thank you.

McRee: ...program. And how is Yulia?

Vendela: She's great.

McRee: She's three months now?

Vendela: She's three months. She's in the hotel watching me right now.

McRee: Are you exercising yet?

Vendela: Actually, you know what?

McRee: This is a woman who doesn't exercise.

Vendela: No, I do exercise. I exercise.

McRee: Uh-huh.

Vendela: But the thing is, I actually--I think it's also important for the body to go back to normal so you're not, you know...

McRee: Right.

Vendela: ...hurrying up to the gym and because there are a lot of things, you know, bones and everything that needs to get...

McRee: Yeah, yeah. Take your time getting everything...

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Vendela: Thanks.

McRee: Thanks, Vendela. Thanks, Ann.

Tinker: Thanks.

WorldView

Experts Focus on Safe Motherhood

Aired April 7, 1998 - 6:23 p.m. ET

THIS IS A RUSH TRANSCRIPT. THIS COPY MAY NOT BE IN ITS FINAL FORM AND MAY BE UPDATED.

JUDY WOODRUFF, CNN ANCHOR: Tuesday marks World Health Day, and this year some experts are focusing on safe motherhood. A conference here in Washington will address the issue, and offer solutions involving governments and businesses. Each year 50 million women suffer health complications during pregnancy that too often end in death. CNN's Jonathan Karl reports.

(BEGIN VIDEOTAPE)

(CRYING)

JONATHAN KARL, CNN CORRESPONDENT (voice-over): The miracle of life means death for too many mothers in the developing world. Every minute a woman dies because of complications in pregnancy, a total of 585,000 women a year. According to new study by the World Health Organization, almost 90 percent of those deaths occur in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

DR. PRAMILA SENANAYAKE, INTERNATIONAL PLANNED PARENTHOOD FEDERATION: Unfortunately, it is a matter of some situations where women are almost expected to die during pregnancy. If one in 10 women are dying in some villages due to pregnancy-related causes it's almost taken for granted.

KARL: A coalition of women health organizations have dubbed 1998 the year of safe motherhood, and launched a drive to reduce the maternal mortality rate by half by the year 2000. To accomplish that the groups are calling for aid agencies and multinational corporations to fund programs that support maternal care.

ANNE TINKER, HEALTH SPECIALIST, WORLD BANK: In many cultures pregnancy is considered just a normal course of events. Women don't get special care, they don't eat special foods, and we're trying to change that situation.

KARL: The three leading causes of maternal death are: severe bleeding, infection, and unsafe abortion.

It's an issue first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton has repeatedly addressed on trips to the developing world. Although it fares better, in the U.S. there are approximately 300 pregnancy-related deaths a year. The World Bank is trying to convince businesses that healthy mothers mean a healthy economy.

TINKER: In many countries we're beginning to see more program action: more midwives trained, more women delivering in institutions. But it takes time.

KARL (on camera): Healthier mothers also means healthier babies. Two-thirds of infant deaths occur in the first month of life, and are caused either because the mother was in poor health or received inadequate care during delivery.

Jonathan Karl, CNN, Washington.

(END VIDEOTAPE)

International Press



First Lady: Hillary Clinton at an International Planned Parenthood Federation panel on safe motherhood, at the World Bank in Washington DC yesterday Photograph: AFP

Country: UK
Publication: The Independent
Date: 8 April 1998

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Tuesday, April 7, 1998 Published at 12:08 GMT 13:08 UK

Special Report

Dying for a baby



Ninety-nine per cent of all pregnancy related deaths occur in developing countries

The most natural thing in the world is a life-threatening event for millions of women. Every year around 600,000 women die from complications connected to pregnancy or childbirth.

In developed countries the risks to women's health have been greatly reduced because most women have easy access to medical care. This is not the case in the poorest parts of the world. Ninety nine per cent of the women who die every year as a result of pregnancy or childbirth come from developing countries.

Deaths 'avoidable'



The WHO wants to cut maternal mortality by 75%

Most of these deaths, the many cases of disease and disability and also the deaths of over 1.5 million children each year could be prevented by better access to medical care, according to the World Health Organisation.

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 BBC
 Correspondent
 Imogen Foulkes
 on the UN and
 women's rights

To combat the problem the WHO has designated 1998 the year of "Safe Motherhood" and it is also the focus of World Health Day, which takes place on 7 April.

One of its main aims is to cut global maternal mortality by 75% by the year 2015.

This ambitious plan is to be discussed on Wednesday at a high level meeting of world development agencies in Washington DC. Representatives from the World Bank, WHO and Unicef among others will sit down with the United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan and Hilary Clinton to discuss a co-ordinated approach.

'Journey into the unknown'



Hillary Clinton: to attend the conference in Washington

The Director General of the World Health Organisation, Hiroshi Nakajima, said: "In many developing countries ... each pregnancy represents a journey into the unknown from which all too many women never return."

"It must be recognised that the reduction of maternal mortality is not only a matter of effective health care but also one of social justice.

"The risks that women face in bringing life into the world are not mere misfortunes or unavoidable natural disadvantages but injustices that societies have a duty to remedy through their political health and legal systems," he said.

Britain's role



Clare Short: "We must do better"

In Britain the Department for International Development has said that it is taking "a leadership role" in investing in women's reproductive health around the world.

Its help has led to maternal health programmes being set up in Nepal and Malawi and bilateral co-operation with around 20 countries in Africa and South Asia.

Britain is contributing funds and expertise that go towards the training of health staff, renovating hospital departments, improving the supply of essential equipment and drugs and developing safe motherhood plans in conjunction with

local authorities.

Clare Short, Britain's Secretary of State for International Development said: "Nowhere are the obstacles faced by women to health - and the inequalities faced by poor women - revealed more starkly than in the figures for maternal mortality. Without better access to obstetric care, women will continue to die in pregnancy and childbirth.

"These are not principally matters of science. They are matters of political and moral choice and will," she said.

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More Effort Needed to Reduce Childbirth Deaths

Dying for Motherhood

"Successful
children
begin with
healthy
mothers."

— Florida Gov.
Lawton Chiles



These pregnant women are patients in a Bayamo, Cuba maternity house where difficult cases can be monitored. (Jose Azel/PNI)

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INTERACTIVE
MATERNAL HEALTH
MAP

By Jenifer Joseph
ABCNEWS.com

Pregnant women in Benin would rather suffer days of obstructed labor than ask for help during childbirth and risk being seen as weak.

In parts of Ghana, troubled labor is seen as a sign of infidelity, so women stall in calling for emergency care while they try to appease the gods to help with their delivery.

In southern Papua New Guinea, women are expected to give birth by themselves, a tradition stemming from a belief that female blood is contaminated and could sicken or even kill a birth attendant.

Each year, 585,000 women die from pregnancy and childbirth complications, and 50 million more are injured, despite the enormous medical advances of the past 50 years. And the large majority of these deaths are in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, where women often refuse care for reasons like those cited above.

To focus attention on these troubling trends in maternal mortality, leaders from around the globe gathered in Washington today to dedicate the World Health Organization's World Health Day to improving childbirth safety.

"No woman should ever die in childbirth," Hillary Clinton told the several hundred people at the conference.



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Hillary Clinton on
the Year of Safe
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Clinton told the several hundred people at the conference. "The vast majority of these deaths and so much of that suffering could have been avoided."

By the time she finished her speech, Clinton noted, 15 women around the world would have died in childbirth. "In the midst of this time of growth and promise around the world, we still fail to protect our most important citizens, the mothers of our children."

Malaysia's first lady, Dr. Siti Hasmah Mohamad Ali, said women are not empowered to turn their backs on the "cultural and social taboos" like those in Benin, Ghana and Papua New Guinea.

Unschooling Birth Attendants

One of the biggest problems facing developing nations is that for the past 40 years, much of the burden of childbirth duties has been left to poorly equipped "birth attendants."

World Health Organization
safe motherhood page

To get such a title, these mostly illiterate, elderly women take a three-week WHO training course and then set out on their own with \$1 birth kits in hand. Contents of these kits speak volumes about the crude conditions that pregnant women endure: a bar of soap, a razor blade, a plastic sheet and a piece of rope to tie the umbilical cord.

"Birth attendants have helped to support the women emotionally, but they could do nothing about complications," says Dr.

France Donnay, a Belgian gynecologist and women's health adviser to the United Nations Children's Fund. "They couldn't make a difference in mortality."

Now, Donnay and other international health experts are focusing on training young women to become midwives, which requires several years of medical training.

In Indonesia, for instance, health officials have already agreed to move away from traditional birth attendants and are now training 55,000 midwives in a campaign to place one midwife in each village.

U.S. Women Also at Risk

In India, 147,000 women die each year during pregnancy and delivery; in Africa, 235,000 women die annually.

In those countries, giving birth on a dirt floor in a hut with no running water or pain medication is common. In the United States, where a relatively small number of

The risk of an individual woman dying from pregnancy or childbirth during her lifetime (developed nations):

Hong Kong 1 in every 9,200

Canada 1 in every 7,700

Norway 1 in every 7,300

Italy 1 in every 5,300

UK 1 in every 5,100

U.S. 1 in every 3,500

Japan 1 in every 2,900

women die in childbirth each year—around 2,500—we tend to ignore the problem of maternal deaths.

But according to Barbara Herz, who co-founded the Safe Motherhood Initiative at the World Bank 10 years ago, the U.S. figures can be deceiving. The childbirth mortality risk for black women in America is as high as for women in many developing nations, she points out. And one-quarter of all pregnant women in the United States suffer complications while in labor.

"Why is it that a woman dies every minute? The answer is that people don't care," says World Bank President James Wolfensohn. "We assume that women are there. We have never taken enough concern about the rights of women."

The only way around these problems, health officials say, is access to family planning services and to medics if birth complications arise. Paying for such maternal and newborn health services would cost an average of \$3 per person per year—a small price to pay to save a mother's life. ■

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Wednesday, April 8, 1998

First Lady Urges More Global Attention to Maternal Health

From Associated Press

WASHINGTON--In the time it took Hillary Rodham Clinton to deliver her World Health Day speech, she said, an estimated 15 women died around the globe from pregnancy complications or unsafe abortions.

"No woman should ever die in childbirth," Mrs. Clinton declared Tuesday, calling for renewed global attention to maternal health. "The vast majority of these deaths and so much of that suffering could have been avoided."

Nearly 600,000 women and girls, most in developing nations, die each year while pregnant or in labor because of complications, including self-induced abortions, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Breaking down the statistics, Mrs. Clinton said that every minute, a woman or girl dies, 40 have unsafe abortions, 110 experience a pregnancy-related problem and 190 face an unplanned pregnancy.

Mrs. Clinton, speaking to several hundred health care professionals and private and public policymakers at World Bank headquarters, said countries should develop better family planning and education programs for women and children to combat maternal mortality.

On that point, she criticized conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which critics contend lead to abortions.

"Without it [family planning] women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more of all maternal deaths," Mrs. Clinton said.

"I would like to stress that point because there are some in our Congress and in our country who do not understand how providing family planning services helps reduce the rate of abortion."

Mrs. Clinton, who last week returned from a 12-day tour of sub-Saharan Africa with President Clinton, noted that she and her husband visited projects promoting women and children to underline U.S. support for "human rights and particularly the right to health."

Supporting Mrs. Clinton at the World Health Day celebration, Malaysia's first lady, Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, called for the elimination of "cultural and social taboos" that often prevent women and girls from making their own reproductive decisions.

"Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said.

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Global conference focuses on pregnancy-related deaths

U.N.: Africa, Asia have highest maternal-death rate

April 7, 1998
 Web posted at: 1:00 p.m. EDT (1700 GMT)



In this story:

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GENEVA (CNN) -- The miracle of life means death for too many mothers in the developing world. Every minute, a woman dies because of complications in pregnancy and childbirth. That's 585,000 women a year, the World Health Organization (WHO) said Tuesday.

According to the Geneva-based U.N. agency, almost 90 percent of such deaths occur in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. By comparison, the United States has about 300 pregnancy-related deaths a year.

In a report marking World Health Day, the WHO report also said nearly 8 million babies are stillborn or die in the first week of their lives. Most early infant deaths occur because the mother was in poor health or received inadequate care during delivery.

The issue was being addressed at a Washington conference called "World Health Day-Safe Motherhood & Reducing Maternal Death." U.S. first lady [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#) and World Bank President James Wolfensohn were among the scheduled participants.

'Women don't get special care'

WHO listed the three leading causes of maternal death:





- Severe bleeding (25 percent)
- Infection (15 percent)
- Unsafe abortion (13 percent)

The report also cited indirect causes such as anemia, malaria and heart disease.



A coalition of international health organizations has dubbed 1998 "The Year of Safe Motherhood" and launched a drive to reduce the maternal mortality rate by half by 2000.

To accomplish that, the groups are calling on aid agencies and multinational corporations to fund programs that support maternal care.



"If one in 10 (women) die in some villages due to pregnancy-related causes, its almost taken for granted," said Dr. Pramilla Senanayake of the International Planned Parenthood Federation. "There's no one recognizing this and doing things to save women's lives (by) providing health care (and) nutritional care."

🔊 (130 K / 11 sec. [AIFF](#) or [WAV](#) sound)

In many cultures, said World Bank health specialist Anne Tinker, "women don't get special care, eat special foods. We're trying to change that situation."

🔊 (135 K / 11 sec. [AIFF](#) or [WAV](#) sound)

Healthy mothers = healthy economy

The WHO report said African women are most vulnerable to pregnancy-related deaths, followed by women in Asia and Latin America.

One out of every 16 women in Africa faced a lifetime risk of maternal death compared to one in 65 in Asia, one in 130 in Latin America and just one in 1,800 in the Western world -- one in 1,400 in Europe and one in 3,700 in North America.



The risks are calculated on the basis of maternal mortality and fertility rates. A figure of one in 100 is seen as high.

Maternal death is an issue Mrs. Clinton repeatedly has addressed on her trips to the developing world. The World

Bank is trying to convince businesses that healthy mothers mean a healthy economy.

"In many countries, we're beginning to see more programs ... but it takes time," Tinker said.

🔊 (126 K / 10 sec. [AIFF](#) or [WAV](#) sound)

Correspondent [Jonathan Karl](#) and [Reuters](#) contributed to this report.

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In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, Villagers Are Learning to Deliver Babies

AP

08-APR-98

WASHINGTON (AP) In Bangladesh and Sri Lanka, villagers are learning to deliver babies. In Ethiopia and Mongolia, mothers-to-be trek long distances to live in group maternity homes until they give birth.

The projects are aimed at reducing a worldwide death rate that takes the lives of nearly 600,000 women and girls during childbirth every year one every minute of every day, Hillary Rodham Clinton said Tuesday.

Mrs. Clinton, using World Health Day to kick off a renewed effort to combat these deaths, said most of those lives could be saved.

"We have the strategies. We have the resources. But we do not yet have the collective will to do what we know needs to be done," she said, speaking at a World Bank forum of policy-makers on safe motherhood.

"Today, women in every nation in the world, including my own right here in our nation's capital, lack basic health care that could save their lives and ensure the health of their babies," she added.

As a result, in the worst cases, one woman in seven dies of childbirth or pregnancy complications, including self-induced or unsafe abortions, in Afghanistan, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Somalia, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

In more than a dozen African and Asian nations, the lifetime chance that a pregnant woman or girl will die are one in eight to one in 10, compared to one in 9,200 in Spain the healthiest country for pregnant women and one in 3,500 in the United States.

"No woman should ever die in childbirth," Mrs. Clinton declared, calling for more family planning and prenatal care programs worldwide, especially among poor people where problems are the worst.

Breaking down the statistics, the first lady said that every minute, a women or girl dies, 40 have unsafe abortions, 110 experience a pregnancy-related problem and 190 face an unplanned pregnancy.

Addressing domestic critics, Mrs. Clinton attacked conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which they contend leads to abortions.



"Without family planning) women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more of all maternal deaths," Mrs. Clinton said, adding that "some in our Congress and in our country who do not understand how providing family-planning services helps reduce the rate of abortion."

Malaysia's first lady, Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, called for the elimination of "cultural and social taboos" that often prevent women and girls from making their own reproductive decisions. "Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said.

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Mrs. Clinton Urges Focus on Maternal Health

AP

07-APR-98

WASHINGTON (AP) In the time it took Hillary Rodham Clinton to deliver her World Health Day speech, she said, an estimated 15 women died around the globe from pregnancy complications or unsafe abortions.

"No woman should ever die in childbirth," Mrs. Clinton declared Tuesday, calling for renewed global attention to maternal health. "The vast majority of these deaths and so much of that suffering could have been avoided."

Nearly 600,000 women and girls, most in developing nations, die each year while pregnant or in labor due to complications, including self-induced abortions, according to the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

Breaking down the statistics, Mrs. Clinton said that every minute, a woman or girl dies, 40 have unsafe abortions, 110 experience a pregnancy-related problem and 190 face an unplanned pregnancy.

Mrs. Clinton, speaking to several hundred health care professionals and private and public policymakers at World Bank headquarters, said countries should develop better family-planning and education programs for women and children to combat maternal mortality.

On that point, she criticized conservative members of Congress who each year try to block U.S. government money for international family planning, which critics contend lead to abortions.

"Without it (family planning) women often turn in desperation to illegal, unsafe abortion procedures that can account for up to half or more of all maternal deaths," Mrs. Clinton said.

"I would like to stress that point because there are some in our Congress and in our country who do not understand how providing family-planning services helps reduce the rate of abortion."

Mrs. Clinton, who last week returned from a 12-day tour of sub-Saharan Africa with President Clinton, noted that she and her husband visited projects promoting women and children to underline U.S. support for "human rights and particularly the right to health."

Supporting Mrs. Clinton at the World Health Day celebration, Malaysia's first lady, Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali, called for the elimination of "cultural and social taboos" that often prevent women and girls from making their

own reproductive decisions.

"Safe motherhood is a basic human right," she said. Carol Bellamy, executive director of the United Nations Children's Fund, said her visit last week to Afghanistan, where women suffer harsh discrimination under Taliban rule, demonstrated to her that women without equal human rights are in mortal danger.

"It is no coincidence that Afghanistan ... is distinguished both by severe economic and social restrictions on women and by the highest maternal mortality rate of any developing country 1,700 deaths per 100,000 live births a truly shocking number," Bellamy said.

In the United States, by comparison, from 10 to two dozen women die for every 100,000 live births, according to various federal surveys.

Bellamy and Mrs. Clinton said simple hygienic handling of mother and baby can save lives at an estimated cost of \$3 per person per year.

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Population-Women: Motherhood Still Not Safe, U.N. Warns

Inter Press Service
07-APR-98

UNITED NATIONS, (Apr. 7) IPS - More than 1,600 women die each day as a result of complications from pregnancy or childbirth, although their deaths could be prevented by health services at an annual cost of as little as two dollars per person, according to the United Nations.

Three U.N. agencies - the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA), U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) - added that, in addition to roughly 600,000 fatalities, some 50 million women suffer injuries every year from pregnancy or childbirth. The three U.N. bodies joined with population groups and governments today to condemn the heavy toll and to seek solutions.

"Now is the time to act upon what has been learned over the past 10 years of research and model projects, before one more woman's life is lost needlessly," said Jill Sheffield, president of Family Care International, which chairs an inter-agency group on safe motherhood comprising the U.N. and non-governmental organizations.

As much as one-quarter of all maternal deaths stem from severe bleeding, often linked to the delivery itself. Infections account for 15 percent of the fatalities, while unsafe abortions (13 percent), eclampsia (12 percent) and obstructed labor (8 percent) are also among the most common causes of death.

WHO argues that most maternal deaths occur during or shortly after childbirth, and stem from lack of access to basic medical care. Only 53 percent of deliveries in developing countries are assisted by either a doctor or midwife, even though such assistance could ensure that conditions for delivery will be hygienic and that complications can be managed efficiently.

A full program to prevent maternal deaths -- as well as those of at least 1.5 million children annually -- would require the presence of a skilled attendant at all deliveries; treatment of complications; and postpartum family planning and neonatal care, WHO says. In low-income countries, the cost of such programs would amount to three dollars per person per year -- and only two dollars for maternal health services alone.

"Simple measures ensuring safe motherhood would also eliminate untold amounts of suffering throughout the world," argued Sheffield.

Some of the efforts to provide simple maternal services can be difficult.

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however -- as UNICEF has learned in Afghanistan, which has the highest maternal mortality rate among all countries.

UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy said yesterday following a visit to Taliban-held parts of Afghanistan that her agency would continue to try to provide assistance there, but she added that the Islamist leaders of the Taliban made that task complex by placing restrictions on access to women.

UNICEF, in a statement, argues that a woman's health and access to healthcare in Afghanistan - where maternal mortality is estimated at 1,700 deaths per 100,000 live births - is "severely jeopardized by the restrictions on her movements, her mode of dress, her presence in public places and use of public transport."

Other countries pose different risks for mothers and pregnant women. In much of Western Africa, as well as Ethiopia, Somalia, Angola and Tanzania, fewer than half of all pregnant women have had at least one antenatal visit, according to WHO. Unsurprisingly, those same countries all boasted some of the highest maternal mortality rates in a 1990 WHO survey.

In Latin America, on the other hand, one of the greatest risks stems from unsafe abortions; the WHO estimates that all South American countries recorded rates of more than 30 unsafe abortions per 1,000 abortions in 1996. Unsafe abortions account for about a fifth of Latin America and the Caribbean's maternal deaths, the WHO adds.

Even the United States has had problems in making motherhood safer. According to UNICEF, maternal deaths in the United States may be under-reported, and may actually be double the stated level of 10 per 100,000 live births.

One of the major problems, the agency says, is the country's teenage pregnancy rate of 95.9 per 1,000 girls - "the highest among industrialized countries," UNICEF contends. An estimated one million teenagers become pregnant in the United States each year, it adds, with nearly one-third of those pregnancies ending in abortions.

In many cases, family planning may help to pave the way for safer births. "With the expanded availability of family planning information and services in many countries, more and more people can make their own choices about whether and when to have a child," said Charlotte Gardiner, a UNFPA senior technical adviser. "It's a tragedy that many women still cannot choose to have their baby in safety."

The inter-agency group is kicking off what it intends to be a full year of educational efforts to bolster awareness about the severity of the problem and of the need to foster safe motherhood initiatives. The campaign was supported today by U.S. first lady Hillary Rodham Clinton at a World Health Day commemoration at the World Bank.

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