



November 2022
Newsletter



Julie's Heart Cry

Bringing Hope to Women Globally

Abuse of women giving birth continues to happen



Dear Friends and Partners,

It's hard for Americans to fathom that women in labor and newborns are dying every day due to abuse, ignorance and lack of care. U.S. hospitals are filled with cutting-edge technology, current medications and professional staff trained to provide excellent care – including lifesaving measures for women and babies in distress.

But step into a developing country and it's like taking a step back in time. Generally, there are no hospitals or medical clinics near rural villages; **pregnant women must rely on traditional midwives to help them through labor – a decision that costs numerous women their lives.**

“A life-or-death lottery”

Midwives in most impoverished countries have no real training, making giving birth “a life-or-death lottery.” Rather than assist women in labor, these midwives actually cause more harm than good; the majority don't even know how to perform basic CPR. It is not uncommon for midwives to withhold pain medication, beat, slap, kick or pinch a woman during childbirth. In fact, my biological mother died at the hands of an abusive midwife while giving birth to me.

And the abuse isn't limited to physical. These midwives use emotional and mental abuse in the form of berating, threatening and intimidating women in labor.

(over)

Think about this statistic for a moment: In East Africa, **a woman has a 1 in 30 risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes.** The equivalent figure in developed countries is 1 in 4,900.

This stat both saddens and infuriates me. Why is this kind of abuse continuing to happen? A lot of factors figure in to that answer. In many impoverished countries, health care systems face administrative and financial management problems, a lack of medical supplies and equipment, poor quality of care and a lack of accountability. Plus, there is low motivation among health care workers because of their meager salaries.

You can help change the narrative

So, what's the solution? Well, if these governments could provide funds, training and oversight, it would be a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, most of these governments are either strapped for money or any available funds are directed toward bigger health challenges such as HIV/AIDS.

But I feel burdened to help these overlooked women escape the trauma of an abusive delivery. That's why Julie's Heart Cry is focused on providing birthing centers in underprivileged areas of Africa, where women can feel comfortable delivering their babies in a safe and loving environment. These centers would be staffed with trained professional health workers.

In addition, birthing centers can bridge

the gap for women who live too far away to access a hospital. The centers also could help alleviate the influx of pregnant women on existing facilities. Most hospitals are under-resourced and overwhelmed with patients.

We are on the cusp of holidays where we are reminded to be thankful for what we have and that it is always more joyful to give than to receive. Please pray for this ministry, that God will bless us with the funds necessary to provide facilities for these vulnerable expectant mothers.

One of the most effective ways we can express our outrage over this barbaric treatment of women is with our pocketbooks. Your donation of \$15, \$25, \$50 or more will enable Julie's Heart Cry to show these women compassion and let them know they are valued. Together, we can send a clear message that properly trained staff, professional facilities and adequate medical equipment are not an option – they are a necessity.

To learn more about our birthing centers ministry, visit our website and click on "Our Ministries" and select "Birthing Centers." You can also make a donation by clicking on the "Donate" button on the right of the website. And with one click, you can become a monthly donor!

Please consider making a year-end, tax-deductible donation toward the birthing centers ministry. Thank you!

Julie Mad-Bondo