

Tara's story

When Tara's mother heard that her daughter was in labour she rushed to her side. She found Tara leaning against a wall with her baby's head already crowning. It was late at night and there were no hospitals or health clinics nearby so Tara, her mother and Tara's mother-in-law delivered the baby boy themselves.

When, after several days, Tara had still not delivered the placenta, her family decided she had to go to hospital. Taking a loan from her neighbour, Tara's mother fashioned a homemade stretcher, and Tara's husband carried her to the hospital. The three day walk saved her life.

A few months later Tara fell pregnant again and similarly didn't receive proper postnatal care after the birth. She said, "My mother-in-law cut the umbilical cord with a sickle¹."

This time Tara suffered uterine prolapse - the falling of the uterus from its normal position. Some 600,000 women suffer from this condition in Nepal alone.

¹ A sickle is a hand-held agricultural tool with a curved blade typically used for harvesting grain crop or cutting grass for hay.



We Need Your Help!

World Vision's **Child Health Now** campaign calls for an end to the health crisis that is killing millions of children and mothers every year.

Please join us today in the fight against one of the biggest human rights abuses our world faces.

To learn more about the campaign and how you can become part of the movement, please visit **www.childhealthnow.com.au** or become a friend of Child Health Now Australia on Facebook.

Together we can hold our world leaders accountable to the promises they made when they signed the MDGs. Together we can end preventable deaths.



CHILD HEALTH NOW



Maternal mortality

- Every year more than 340,000 women die as a result of complications during pregnancy, birth and the first few days after birth. Of the women who do survive a difficult birth, like Tara, millions go on to suffer debilitating injuries.
- A child whose mother dies is 10 times more likely to die before their fifth birthday.
- There are over 215 million women in the world who want to use contraception but cannot access it.
- More than 40 percent of mothers still give birth without a skilled birth attendant (60 million births per year).
- MDG 5 aims to reduce maternal deaths by two-thirds by 2015. At the current rate, the goal is well off-track and will not be achieved in Asia until 2076 and many years later in Africa².
- At least 20 percent of maternal deaths are linked to poor nutrition.

² Citation in Lanet from Impact <http://www.impact-international.org/index.php?id=1>

The solutions to maternal deaths are well known, proven and cost-effective:

- 80 percent of maternal deaths could be avoided if women had access to basic maternal health services.
- The most urgent need is access to skilled birth attendants such as midwives, before, during, and after childbirth.
- Up to 35 percent of maternal deaths could be averted through better access to family planning services, education about birth spacing (e.g. leaving at least 2 to 3 years between each pregnancy and birth), and greater access to contraceptives.

Child Health Now

Website: **www.childhealthnow.com.au** Follow us on Facebook: **Child Health Now Australia**

For more information about The Millennium Development Goals go to: **www.un.org/millenniumgoals/**

To track progress on maternal, newborn and child health go to: **www.countdown2015mnch.org/**

For more information about World Vision's global Child Health Now campaign go to: **www.childhealthnow.com**



"No woman should die giving birth to life. No child should die from an easily preventable disease. Through the Child Health Now campaign we urge world leaders to fulfil their MDG promises to save women's and children's lives." - Tim Costello

THE HEALTH OF CHILDREN IS CLOSELY LINKED TO THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS. ADDRESSING PREVENTABLE CHILD DEATHS MEANS ADDRESSING MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH TOGETHER.



EVERY 3 SECONDS A CHILD DIES FROM PREVENTABLE CAUSES. EVERY MINUTE A WOMAN DIES DURING PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH.

CHILD HEALTH NOW IS WORLD VISION'S GLOBAL ADVOCACY CAMPAIGN TO END THE PREVENTABLE DEATHS OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN.



A silent emergency

Child Health Now

Every year, over 8 million children under the age of five die from preventable causes like neonatal complications, pneumonia, diarrhoea and malaria. Undernutrition contributes to more than one in three child deaths. And every year, more than 340,000 women die from complications during pregnancy and childbirth. Ultimately, most of these deaths occur because of poor knowledge, poor funding priorities and a lack of political will.

Through our work in 90 countries, World Vision knows progress is possible. Globally we have seen under-five child deaths decline by 35 percent in the last two decades, but more must be done. World Vision's global advocacy campaign, Child Health Now, calls for determined action by governments in both developed and developing countries to address this silent emergency.

The MDGs

In 2000, at the largest gathering of world leaders in history, governments committed themselves to eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) to halve extreme poverty by 2015. These goals, if met, will have a significant impact on poverty alleviation in developing countries, saving millions of lives.

More progress must be made on MDGs 4 and 5:

MDG 4: Reduce child mortality by two-thirds by 2015

MDG 5: Reduce maternal mortality by three-quarters by 2015

To achieve MDGs 4 and 5, we need to press our governments to prioritise maternal and child health, by investing in health system strengthening and lifesaving interventions at the household and community level.

Neonatal Complications

Neonatal complications claim the lives of 3.5 million children a year. Two million babies die on the day they are born and a further two million die in their first month of life.

Pneumonia

Pneumonia is an infection of the lungs caused by bacteria or viruses. Anyone can be affected, but newborns and young malnourished children are particularly susceptible because their immune system is weak. Pneumonia kills 1.6 million children under five every year.

Malaria

Malaria is an infectious disease transmitted by mosquitoes. It kills an estimated 700,000 children under five every year. In parts of sub-Saharan Africa, malaria is the leading cause of death in children under five.



Causes of child mortality

Diarrhoea

When sixteen-month-old baby Richard and his twin brother, Roderick, arrived at the Masamba Clinic in Zambia sick with diarrhoea, there was only enough medicine to treat one of them. Richard survived. His brother did not.

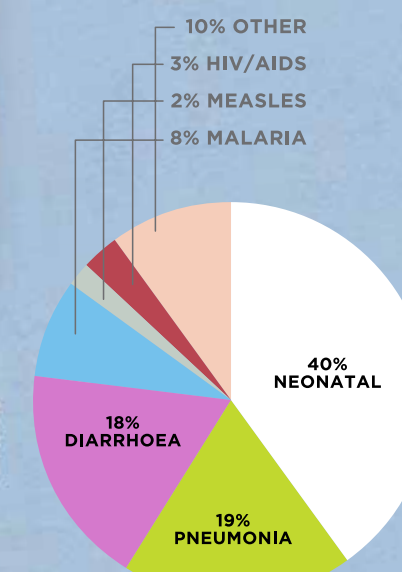
"Roderick would have survived like his brother if we had had enough drugs for diarrhoea to treat both of them," explained clinical assistant officer Joseph Bwali. "The boys were highly dehydrated by the time they arrived at the clinic because the diarrhoea had hit them badly. Unfortunately we lost one child because we only had a single drip available and had no oral rehydration salts."

A lack of basic supplies such as oral rehydration salts, drips and antibiotics is all too common in clinics across

the developing world. Insufficient stocks of equipment and medicines means that young children like Roderick are unable to fight and recover from a common, treatable illness that no longer kills children in developed countries.

What if the water you drank was killing you?

In poor countries, women and children often collect and drink from dirty water sources. The most severe threat posed by drinking dirty water is diarrhoea. Every year, around 1.5 million children under five die from diarrhoea because it causes severe dehydration and fluid loss. Children who are malnourished are most at risk of life-threatening diarrhoea.



Malnutrition is the underlying cause in 35% of all child deaths. Around 150 million children worldwide suffer from malnutrition.

The Solutions

There are five simple, affordable solutions that could save 6 million children every year.

- Bed nets, to protect against mosquitoes and malaria infection;
- Oral rehydration, especially in areas where water quality and sanitation levels are poor;
- Exclusive breastfeeding, because babies who are breastfed are 6 times more likely to survive;
- More skilled attendants to assist women during pregnancy and childbirth; and
- Immunisation programs to protect children against preventable conditions like measles.

Did you know?

- 85 percent of pneumonia deaths can be prevented by educating families and communities, promoting earlier detection and treatment with antibiotics, and increasing knowledge of hygiene and health.
- 45 percent of diarrhoeal diseases can be avoided by washing hands with soap before eating and after using the latrine.
- Access to safe drinking water could save the lives of 1.5 million children every year. Many families and communities do not know that diarrhoea can be prevented by boiling the water they have collected before drinking it.
- The cost of oral rehydration treatment, which can prevent a child dying from diarrhoea, is less than the cost of a postage stamp.
- Malaria can be prevented and treated using affordable, proven interventions. Educating families and communities to prevent malaria by sleeping under a treated bed net; spraying repellent in the home; and accessing health care services early to receive anti-malarial drugs will dramatically reduce the impact of malaria.



BED NETS



ORAL REHYDRATION



EXCLUSIVE BREASTFEEDING



SKILLED ATTENDANTS



IMMUNISATION

The solutions are simple

