

Exploring Success Stories in Sierra Leone. MDG 5 – Maternal Health



What John said about visiting new Mothers:



In the past, Sierra Leone had one of the highest numbers of deaths of mothers giving birth in the world, so having a baby was very dangerous. To make this better, free health care for pregnant mothers was introduced in 2010.

This is Zainab and she's given birth to her son Hasan at hospital the day before. She told me that until recently she'd have had to pay £6.25 to have her baby in hospital. This would have been too much for her to afford. The fact that giving birth is now free persuaded her to come to hospital.

Women who can't have their babies in hospital because they don't have enough money usually give birth with the help of a traditional birth attendant (or TBA). This is a risky process. In Zainab's case her skin tore while giving birth, causing bleeding. It was quickly treated by the doctor and you can see she's healthy and happy. However, if Zainab was not in hospital the bleeding may not have been stopped and would have placed her life at risk.

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MDG 5 – Maternal Health

BEFORE

- Why do you think many women didn't go to hospital to have their babies in the past?
- What do you think women like Zainab worried about before it was free to have babies in hospital?
- What do you think women in Sierra Leone hoped for?

AFTER

- Why is it important for women to have the opportunity to have their babies in hospital?
- How could Zainab persuade other women to go to hospital to have their babies?
- How might women in Sierra Leone feel differently now that a doctor can help them to have their babies for free?