

Stillbirths: A neglected tragedy - UNICEF social media pack for partners

The release of the first-ever estimates on stillbirth by the UN Inter-Agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation (IGME) will include the number of babies that are stillborn every year, as a result of pregnancy and birth-related complications, the absence of health workers and basic services. The report will include new data on the additional babies that could be stillborn due to COVID-19 related disruptions in child and maternal health services. The release is intended to increase visibility for this neglected tragedy and drive government action to address stillbirths. The launch on 8 October will include a joint press release by UNICEF, WHO, the World Bank, the United Nations Population Fund and a press briefing. A high-level online launch is also planned for 21 October.

These social media posts aim to support advocacy throughout that period. We will call for action to save lives and to support parents who have lost a child. And we are amplifying the voices of parents and health workers, to help end stigma and encourage open discussion of this important issue.

RESOURCES


- [Download quote graphics and photos for social media use](#). Spokespersons' personal stories and photos are restricted for use as intended. Photos are not available for archiving and other use.
- Report available for public download after launch: <http://uni.cf/stillbirthreport>



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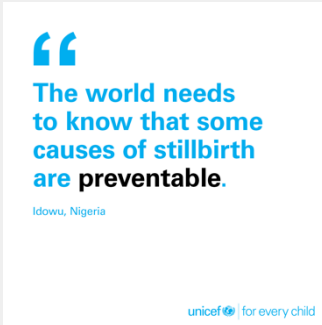
HEADLINE MESSAGES FROM THE REPORT


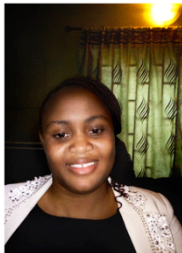
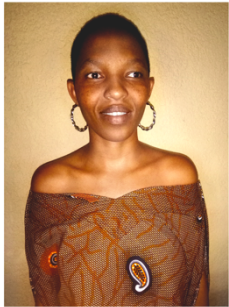
Graphic / photo	Instagram / Facebook / LinkedIn	Twitter / short version
 Download	Every 16 seconds, joy turns to grief as a pregnant woman delivers a stillborn baby. Now, COVID-19 is disrupting access to quality health care and threatening to leave even more families heartbroken. It's time to give this neglected tragedy the attention and action it deserves. We must give every woman access to high quality care throughout her pregnancy and childbirth.	Every 16 seconds, joy turns to grief as a pregnant woman delivers a stillborn baby. It's time to give this neglected tragedy the attention and action it deserves. We must give every woman access to high quality care throughout her pregnancy and childbirth.



 <p>Download</p>	<p>Aruna found hope in the midst of the pandemic, giving birth to a precious baby thanks to skilled health workers in India. But around the world, COVID-19 is disrupting health services and taking a terrible toll: nearly 200,000 more babies could be stillborn within a year. We're calling for urgent support to ensure all mothers can give birth safely and experience the joy of a healthy newborn.</p>	<p>Aruna gave birth to a precious baby in India. But globally, #COVID19 is disrupting health services and taking a terrible toll: nearly 200,000 more babies could be stillborn within a year.</p> <p>Mothers must have support to give birth safely and experience the joy of a healthy newborn.</p>
 <p>Download</p>	<p>We are losing too many babies before they take their first breath. Globally, almost 2 million are stillborn every year - each a profound loss for an expecting mother. The trauma of giving birth to a stillborn baby is enormous, yet the death of an unborn baby remains a taboo in many cultures. Too often, women and families endure this tragedy in silence. We must break the stigma and give bereaved parents the full support they deserve. By talking more openly, we can help families cope and build the awareness we so urgently need to help save lives.</p>	<p>We are losing too many babies before they take their first breath, with almost 2 million stillborn every year. Too often, women and families endure this tragedy in silence.</p> <p>We must break the stigma and give bereaved parents the full support they deserve.</p>

RAISING VOICES; BREAKING THE SILENCE




Parents and health workers have kindly shared their personal stories and photos, with assistance from the Stillbirth Advocacy Working Group at the International Stillbirth Alliance. **This content is restricted for use in advocacy, as outlined in this document, and photo files are not available for archival use.**
[Download quote graphics and photos for social media.](#)

Graphic / photo	Instagram / Facebook / LinkedIn	Twitter / short version
	<p>"It is never a pleasant experience when a midwife delivers a stillborn baby. Seeing a woman beg you to save her child is heart wrenching. Mothers and their husbands need emotional and psychological support from midwives throughout and investigating the cause of stillbirth is key to supportive care. The reduction in the rate of stillbirth is possible in Nigeria if accessible and affordable healthcare services become</p>	<p>"Seeing a woman beg you to save her child is heart wrenching. The reduction in the rate of stillbirth is possible in Nigeria if accessible and affordable healthcare services become available to all pregnant women." Idowu, midwife in Nigeria.</p>

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<p>“ There must be good antenatal care, and support for women who have experienced stillbirth.</p> <p>Oyele, Nigeria</p> <p>unicef for every child</p> 	<p>“After losing my baby, I was faced with so much psychological trauma. Stillbirth could be prevented if only we know the cause. In my own case it was caused by hypertension which could be well managed if detected earlier. There must be good antenatal care, and support for women who have experienced stillbirth. Mothers should not be blamed for their situation.” Oyele, Nigeria</p>	<p>“After losing my baby, I was faced with so much psychological trauma. There must be good antenatal care, and support for women who have experienced stillbirth. Mothers should not be blamed for their situation.” Oyele, Nigeria</p>
<p>“ Gynaecologists, midwives, pregnant women and health researchers should work hand in hand.</p> <p>Sabine, Rwanda</p> <p>unicef for every child</p> 	<p>“It was so painful; being told that my baby of 37 weeks was dead and that they couldn't detect the cause before I could give birth. Being in the same room with other mothers holding their babies was unbearable. Once home, I cried day and night. In the neighbourhood, hearing dehumanizing words toward my baby and myself was the worst.”</p> <p>“Gynaecologists, midwives, pregnant women and health researchers should work hand in hand. People should consider stillborn babies as any other human being. Family and friends should cry along with the person who has experienced stillbirth.” Sabine, Rwanda.</p>	<p>“Once home, I cried day and night. In the neighbourhood, hearing dehumanizing words toward my baby and myself was the worst. Family and friends should cry along with the person who has experienced stillbirth.” Sabine, Rwanda.</p>

<p>“ As a health worker I try to give positive encouragement.</p> <p>Istiyani, Indonesia.</p> <p>unicef for every child</p> 	<p>“As a health worker, providing support to mothers and families who experience stillbirth is not an easy task. I really feel deep sadness from the mother and her family, but as a health worker I try to give positive encouragement that makes the mother able to get through her mourning period.” Istiyani, midwife in Indonesia.</p>	<p>“Providing support to mothers and families who experience stillbirth is not an easy task. I really feel deep sadness from the mother and her family, but I try to give positive encouragement that makes the mother able to get through her mourning.” Istiyani, midwife in Indonesia.</p>
<p>“ Shayen. I want the world to know and remember his name.</p> <p>Priya, UK</p> <p>unicef for every child</p> 	<p>“And he said, ‘your baby doesn’t have a heartbeat. He’s gone.’ I went from amazingly happy and elated... to this dull, sad pain that just started to consume me all over.”</p> <p>“Shayen. I want the world to know and remember his name. I want people to remember that although he was born sleeping – he was STILL BORN. And that he is very much a part of our family.” Priya, UK.</p>	<p>“Shayen. I want the world to know and remember his name. I want people to remember that although he was born sleeping – he was STILL BORN. And that he is very much a part of our family.” Priya, UK.</p>
<p>“ His memory will live on in our hearts forever.</p> <p>Chris, UK</p> <p>unicef for every child</p>	<p>“Our first child, Henry, was stillborn at 38 weeks. It’s almost impossible to describe the overwhelming grief caused by the unexpected death of your child, but I believe it to be the single most devastating event that any parent can experience. He was here for but a moment, yet his memory will live on in our hearts forever. I want the world to know that talking to bereaved parents about</p>	<p>“Our first child, Henry, was stillborn at 38 weeks. Talking to bereaved parents about their babies that have died doesn’t remind us that they died – we haven’t forgotten. It reminds us that they lived, and that you remember them – and that is a precious gift.” Chris, UK.</p>

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<p>“ I cherish the hours that I got to hold him. I miss him every day. Jill, USA</p> <p>unicef for every child</p> 	<p>“My son Caleb was stillborn when I was 37 weeks pregnant. I want the world to know that he existed. He was and is my son. Prevention must start with raising awareness and educating women about the risks of stillbirth. Simple things like educating women on the importance of monitoring fetal movement can help prevent stillbirth. Awareness can also help... women feel comfortable sharing their stories if they desire so.” Jill, USA.</p>	<p>“My son Caleb was stillborn when I was 37 weeks pregnant. I want the world to know that he existed. He was and is my son. Prevention must start with raising awareness and educating women about the risks of stillbirth.” Jill, USA.</p>
<p>“ You mourn the beautiful baby you love and were so excited to welcome into the world. Vicki, New Zealand</p> <p>unicef for every child</p> <p>[No photo available]</p>	<p>“The death of a baby shakes the very foundations of one's world. You mourn the beautiful baby you love and were so excited to welcome into the world; you juggle the enormity of grief and sadness with the everyday tasks of living; you try to make those around you understand the significance of this massive loss. Communities around the world need to provide compassionate and sustainable information and support to parents who experience this profound and unimaginable loss.” Vicki, New Zealand.</p>	<p>“The death of a baby shakes the very foundations of one's world. Communities around the world need to provide compassionate and sustainable information and support to parents who experience this profound and unimaginable loss.” Vicki, New Zealand.</p>

<p>“</p> <p>Caring for parents who have experienced a stillbirth is a true privilege and honour.</p> <p>Katrina, Australia</p> <p>unicef  for every child</p> 	<p>“Witnessing all kinds of parental love, both in life and death, is a position that no midwife should take for granted. Holding space for parents during this time of grief and loss is a part of midwifery that creates a lifelong impact on parents and families experiencing stillbirth and loss. I do not take it lightly, and I implore other midwives to lean in to this difficult portion of the role. Parents will thank you for it.” Katrina, Australia</p>	<p>“Witnessing all kinds of parental love, both in life and death, is a position that no midwife should take for granted. Holding space for parents during this time of grief and loss is a part of midwifery that creates a lifelong impact.” Katrina, Australia</p>
<p>“</p> <p>I went blank. All this was a dream, right?</p> <p>Lonce, Kenya</p> <p>unicef  for every child</p> <p>[No photo available]</p>	<p>“As usual, she tried to find the heartbeat – she couldn’t find it. I went blank. All this was a dream, right? The doctor confirmed that our son was no more. We broke down, we were confused – nothing made sense. We went to our car and sat there, blank – not talking, sweating and feeling cold at the same time; we were devastated! He will always be a part of us and we definitely miss him a lot.”</p> <p>“First time mothers should be educated on the danger signs of most common conditions and how to respond to them. We should have honest and open discussion surrounding pregnancy. Let there be a medium to tell our stories so that other people never go through this.” Lonce, Kenya.</p>	<p>“The doctor confirmed that our son was no more. He will always be a part of us and we definitely miss him a lot. We should have honest and open discussion surrounding pregnancy. Let there be a medium to tell our stories so that other people never go through this.” Lonce, Kenya.</p>