Making Mothers: Reducing the Maternal Mortality Rate in Rural Sierra Leone

Abstract
Maternal mortality is a concern in developing nations, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa. In order to reduce the maternal mortality rate (MMR) in rural Sierra Leone, an organization which distributes birthing kits to Sierra Leonean women to aid with home deliveries was created. A reduction of maternal deaths caused by hemorrhage and infection is anticipated.

Background
- Most maternal deaths are preventable and occur in underdeveloped nations.
- MMR in Sierra Leone = 890 deaths per 100,000 live births (5th highest worldwide)
- < 50% of deliveries occur with skilled attendants, <20% occur in health facilities

Methods

The Kit:
One time use sterile birthing kit
Targets maternal death caused by hemorrhaging and infection.
Contents: plastic sheet, alcohol free hand wipes, gloves, cord tie, razor blade, gauze, pamphlet

Results
- Positive community response, majority participated
- 25% decrease in maternal mortality
- 40% decrease in hemorrhaging
- 60% decrease in infection

Conclusions
- Increase in educated birth attendants lead to a decrease in unsafe birthing procedures
- Significant decrease in MMRs are expected (~20%) in future
- MMW could partner with UNICEF or the WHO to expand program to other underdeveloped nations

References