

## Material Resources: Birthing Kits



In Kemapa village, Liberia, traditional birth attendants and patients benefit from UMCOR-provided birthing kits which promote safe and healthy deliveries.

*Courtesy of Julie Warren, Medical Mission Volunteer Coordinator, Ganta Hospital, Liberia*

Perry came to the US from Liberia, a country struggling to rebuild after its 14-year civil war. He lives modestly, but is able to send money home to his family and support his dream—a small nonprofit organization. He hopes to raise enough money to help educate nurses, build a women's clinic and a school. His own mother gave birth in the dirt, under a tree and he wants other women to have more sanitary options.

UMCOR's birthing kit provides attendants with the basic tools they need to ensure a safe, healthy and clean delivery. Traditional birthing attendants are trained to deliver babies using these life saving kits, providing expecting mothers with cleaner conditions in which to give birth.

## Birth Facts

Each year more than 600,000 women die from complications during pregnancy and childbirth in developing countries. Approximately 9 million infant deaths occur each year. Of these, over half (53 per cent) occur during the first four weeks after birth, and more than one third (3.2 million) occur within the first week of life. Tetanus and other infections are among the leading causes of newborn mortality. Infants with neonatal tetanus often have concomitant cord infection caused by unclean delivery or unclean cord care practices.

## Help Assemble Birthing Kits

You can help a mother or a baby survive during delivery through the use of one simple kit. The birthing kit costs about \$8 to assemble and contains basic yet essential items to promote safe and healthy deliveries. They include:

- **One hotel-size bar of soap** – to clean the birth attendants hands both before delivery and prior to cutting the umbilical cord, and to clean the mother after delivery.
- **One pair of clean latex gloves** – to reduce disease transmission
- **One square yard of clear plastic sheeting** – to provide a clean surface to deliver the baby
- **Three pieces of clean string each 12 inches long** – to tie the umbilical cord.
- **One clean single use razor blade** – essential for clean cutting of the umbilical cord.
- **Two flannelette receiving blankets, each 1 yard** – one to dry and stimulate the baby, and one to swaddle the baby
- **One gallon zip lock bag** – to package the kit and to hold the placenta for safe disposal

These kits are distributed only to hospitals and clinics with programs in place to provide education on how to use them correctly.

## How to Give

Give toward the purchase of birthing kit supplies by sending your gifts to **Material Resources, UMCOR Advance #901440**. Write the Advance # and name on the memo line of your check.

### Online

[www.givetomission.org](http://www.givetomission.org)

### By Offering

For local church and Annual Conference credit, put your gift in the offering plate on Sunday.

### By Check

Make your check to **UMCOR** and mail to UMCOR, PO Box 9068, New York, NY 10087

### By Credit Card

Call toll-free (800) 554-8583



August, 2009

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