

## Tackle health inequalities to end preventable stillbirth, says human rights in childbirth charity Birthrights

New research published today by The Lancet has found that 2.6 million stillbirths continue to occur globally each year, the majority of which could be prevented. The *Ending Preventable Stillbirth* research series highlights that 98% of stillbirths happen in low and middle income countries and reveals that more than 4.2 million women are suffering in silence as they are left with long term depression. Of the 2% that happen in high income countries women in disadvantaged communities have double the risk of stillbirth.

Commenting on the research, Birthrights Director Rebecca Schiller said 'It is shocking that there are still such high rates of preventable stillbirth occurring globally. Closer to home we know that health inequalities impact significantly on stillbirth rates. In the UK women at the lowest end of the socio-economic spectrum, women from ethnic minorities and migrant women have an increased chance of stillbirth amongst a wide range of other poor outcomes they are more likely to suffer. We urgently need to better understand the link between these social and economic factors and health outcomes. It is critical that we address the inequalities faced by vulnerable women in the UK maternity system while pushing for investment in safe, respectful maternity care across the developing world.'

### ENDS

For further information please email [press@birthrights.org.uk](mailto:press@birthrights.org.uk) or call 07793084945

We can provide spokespeople.

### Notes to Editors:

Birthrights is the UK's only organisation dedicated to improving women's experience of pregnancy and childbirth by promoting respect for human rights. We believe that all women are entitled to respectful maternity care that protects their fundamental rights to dignity, autonomy, privacy and equality. We aspire to advance the human rights and lawful treatment of all child-bearing women.

What we do:

- Provide free, accurate and accessible legal information and advice on human rights and the law relating to childbearing women.
- Campaign on respect for women's rights in childbirth as fundamental human rights that maternity-service providers are legally obliged to respect and fulfil.
- Offer advice, assistance and training to caregivers, professional or otherwise.



Birthrights promotes women's right to receive evidence-based care that conforms to the best medical and midwifery standards. We do not hold views on clinical issues arising in maternity care.

Birthrights is a charitable incorporated organisation. Our registered charity number is 1151152. You can read more about our work on our [website](#) and read our press coverage [here](#).

