

At White Ribbon Alliance, we envision a world where the right of all women to be safe and healthy before, during and after childbirth is upheld. Part of our approach to improve maternal and newborn health is to promote self-care as a vital component of any comprehensive maternal and newborn healthcare strategy. We know that when women are equipped with information and resources, they make the best health decisions for themselves and their families. Self-care supports individuals, families, and communities to improve and restore their own health, prevent disease, and limit illness. Self-care also contributes to reducing the burden on health care systems that we are advocating to improve.

In 2015, White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) in partnership with Bayer Healthcare, committed to work on a number of self-care initiatives focused on improving maternal and newborn health. These include:

- **Promote improved policies on self-care** through the development of policy recommendations for international and national policymakers.
- **Implement two community based self-care programs** focused on birth preparedness, nutrition, and newborn care.
- **Contribute to learning on self-care** by documenting lessons and sharing them across the Global Alliance and other key partners.

## SELF-CARE PROJECTS

**White Ribbon Alliance Bangladesh** is targeting the most vulnerable communities in the Patuakhali District. Facing severe natural disasters and infrastructure challenges, many women living in this area do not have access to medically trained birth attendants, quality health services, or emergency care. WRA Bangladesh will build the knowledge and skills of health workers so they can provide consistent, quality and respectful care. This will allow them to more effectively support pregnant women and their families in planning and preparing for a healthy pregnancy and child birth, ultimately setting a national standard.

**White Ribbon Alliance Zimbabwe** is addressing the high maternal mortality rate in Midlands Province by supporting effective birth preparedness in emergency situations, raising awareness of birth complications and informing community members of their rights to receive quality, respectful care. WRA is working closely with provincial and district health authorities to integrate self-care policies, working with the National Ministry of Health and Child Care. WRA Zimbabwe is also equipping health workers, community leaders and women's groups to monitor the delivery of respectful maternity care, and ultimately integrate self-care into the full spectrum of policies that impact maternal and newborn health.

**MSH Peru & WRA Partnership in Bolivia** WRA has partnered with MSH Peru to work with indigenous women of childbearing age to increase the use of micronutrients and nutritional supplements for pregnant women and newborns in Moxos municipality in Bolivia. They will equip women to make informed choices, particularly around obstetric emergencies and newborn complications. Female community leaders will support the implementation of the project and facilitate relationships with the indigenous communities.

