The Global Respectful Maternity Care Council, a robust community of maternal health researchers, practitioners, advocates, policymakers and programmers, convened by White Ribbon Alliance, is proud to launch the updated *Respectful Maternity Care Charter: Universal Rights of Women and Newborns* as the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women presents her report to the UN General Assembly.

A record 128 member states, non-governmental organizations, independent institutions and academics – many of whom are part of the Global Respectful Maternity Care Council – made submissions to the report, titled, “A human rights-based approach to mistreatment and violence against women in reproductive health services with a focus on childbirth and obstetric violence,” providing an excellent opportunity to more fully align the Respectful Maternity Care Charter: Universal Rights of Mothers and Newborns with the human rights laws on which it is grounded.

This work builds on the original Respectful Maternity Care Charter which has raised awareness and created policy change worldwide. The Charter and new set of materials are meant to help you and your partners educate, inform and advocate for all women to receive respectful care during pregnancy and childbirth.

We envision a world where all women and girls realize their right to quality health and well-being.
WHERE WE STARTED
In 2011, the Global Respectful Maternity Care Council released the groundbreaking Respectful Maternity Care Charter, which has been widely recognized as a pioneering document, firmly establishing respectful maternity care as a human right.

WHERE WE’RE GOING
Members of the Global Respectful Maternity Care Council came together to update this charter, which clarifies and articulates the rights of women and newborns while receiving maternity care within a healthcare facility. It delineates how human rights are implicated during the time of pregnancy and childbirth and affirms the basic inalienable rights of women and their newborns. Many of these rights are clearly established in international law and have been interpreted and applied to issues arising during pregnancy, childbirth and in relation to the care provided immediately after birth. These rights are well-known and articulated in separate human rights conventions, however, to affirm adherence to them during pregnancy and childbirth, we have brought them together in one document with that singular focus.

October 2019
KEY DATES FOR ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

**OCTOBER 4TH**
Report by the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women to the UN General Assembly

**NOVEMBER 17TH**
World Prematurity Day

**NOVEMBER 20TH**
International Day of the Child

**NOVEMBER 25TH - DECEMBER 10TH**
16 Days of Activism

**MARCH 8TH**
International Women’s Day

**APRIL 11TH**
International Day for Maternal Health & Rights

**MAY 5TH**
International Day of the Midwife

**MAY 28TH**
International Day of Action for Women’s Health

**AUGUST 1ST**
World Breastfeeding Week

October 2019
This toolkit provides background information, key messages, film and graphic assets and specific opportunities to bring Respectful Maternity Care advocates together to speak loudly and with one voice, so that all women and newborns can receive the respectful and dignified care they deserve.

Partner Handles
@UNHumanRights
@WRAGlobal
@UNFPA
@UNICEF
@UN_EWEC

Hashtags
#StandUp4HumanRights
#RespectfulCare
#RMC4All
KEY MESSAGES

• The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women urges government action to address the structural and systematic causes of violence in childbirth, including stereotypes on the role of women in society.

• The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women urges member states to address the lack of respectful care during pregnancy and childbirth.

• The UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women calls for those across sectors to actively collaborate to realize the rights of women and newborns during pregnancy and childbirth.

• No matter the country, pregnancy and childbirth are momentous events with deep personal and social significance in the lives of women, families and communities.

• The well-being of women and newborns is interconnected and depends on whether women are supported throughout pregnancy and childbirth.

• A woman’s relationship with maternity care providers and the maternity care system during pregnancy, childbirth and the postpartum period is vital.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS, DEMAND YOUR RIGHTS
KEY MESSAGES

- Women’s experiences with caregivers can empower and comfort or inflict lasting damage and emotional trauma adding to or detracting from women’s confidence and self-esteem.

- Newborns’ experiences with caregivers also have significant and lasting impact: newborn babies feel pain and discomfort, and can experience emotional distress, particularly when separated from their families in the first hours of life.

- Good early care has a lasting positive impact on the health and well-being of newborns throughout their lives.

- Women’s memories of their childbirth experiences and the treatment of their newborns stay with them for a lifetime, and are often shared with other women, contributing to a climate of confidence or doubt around the healthcare system.

October 2019
SAMPLE MESSAGES

FREEDOM FROM HARM
Violence and mistreatment against women seeking reproductive and maternal health-care happens across the world and in all socioeconomic levels. It’s time to #StandUp4HumanRights and demand #RespectfulCare for ALL women, EVERYWHERE

OUR RIGHT TO CHOOSE
No one can force you to have any medical procedure against your will. You decide what is best for you and what is not. #KnowYourRights #DemandYourRights

OUR RIGHT TO PRIVACY
Pregnancy and childbirth are some of the most intimate and vulnerable experiences in a woman’s life. Our right to privacy must be protected; consent must be given before medical records are shared.
SAMPLE MESSAGES

OUR RIGHT TO RESPECT

#RespectfulCare must become the norm for a women’s experience during pregnancy and childbirth. #RMC4ALL

EQUALITY FOR ALL

Pregnancy and childbirth impact women, families and communities no matter which country is called home. All women and newborns have the right to #RespectfulCare regardless of race or circumstance. #RMC4All

PROFESSIONAL HEALTHCARE

Providers cannot withhold care or threaten women with physical violence before, during or after childbirth. Women have a right to #RespectfulCare without fear #ObstetricViolence #KnowYourRights #DemandYourRights

October 2019
SAMPLE MESSAGES

#RESPECTFULCARE

OUR RIGHT TO LIBERTY
DYK: Detaining women and newborns if unable to pay for care is a gross violation of human rights. The right to freedom must be upheld – nobody should be kept against their will #KnowYourRights #DemandYourRights

OUR RIGHT TO STAY TOGETHER
Newborn babies feel pain, discomfort and can experience emotional distress. When separated from their families in the first hours of life, it can lead to significant and lasting negative impacts. #NewbornRightsAreHumanRights
SAMPLE MESSAGES

OUR RIGHT TO CITIZENSHIP
Newborns have a right to name, nationality and citizenship. Birth certificates must be provided to all newborns. #KnowYourRights #DemandYourRights

OUR RIGHT TO FOOD & WATER
Denying women of basic necessities of life such as food and water is not only inexcusable – it’s inhumane and a violation of human rights. #KnowYourRights #DemandYourRights
CALL TO ACTION

We all have a part to play when it comes to ensuring that all women and newborns receive respectful, dignified care. Start by endorsing the Respectful Maternity Care Charter: Universal Rights of Women and Newborns.

OFFICIAL SUPPORTER

HTTP://BIT.LY/RMC_CHARTER

Once you’ve endorsed the charter on behalf of yourself or your organization, tell people about it and ask them to do the same.

October 2019
APPENDIX

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE PRESENTATIONS, POSTERS AND BROCHURES

- Respectful Maternity Care Charter: Universal Rights of Women and Newborns
- A poster listing all 10 Charter articles that is meant to be displayed in health clinics, maternity wards, schools, classrooms, offices and other public spaces.
- A brochure of various formats for easy printing
- A branded power point template that includes all 10 charter articles
- The Respectful Maternity Care logo, available in English, French and Spanish

Click here to download the new materials

DOWNLOADABLE FILMS AND GRAPHICS

Click here to access the White Ribbon Alliance’s film Know Your Rights, Demand Your Rights or go to the YouTube link: https://youtu.be/R5gDnnPTK7Q

Download clips here

Download graphics for Facebook | Instagram | Twitter

UNITED NATIONS SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON VIOLENCE

“A human rights-based approach to mistreatment and violence against women in reproductive health services with a focus on childbirth and obstetric violence”

Download the report in multiple languages.

Thank you for helping to ensure that every woman receives respectful care during pregnancy and that she and her newborn receive the same during childbirth! While most of the materials are currently only available in English, we are working to translate them into other languages, with Spanish and French coming soon. Please reach out to info@whiteribbonalliance.org if you would like to help in our effort to get them translated to as many languages as possible.

October 2019
RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE
SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT