



THE FAITH-BASED COALITION FOR

**Healthy Mothers & Children**  
WORLDWIDE

## **Our Declaration and Commitment**

Our faith traditions, spiritual values, and commitment to justice lead us to believe that families living in extreme poverty worldwide should not suffer needlessly because they lack access to health services, including the education and tools to allow them to time and space their pregnancies in a healthy way.

We acknowledge that the challenges around healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies are substantial. Each year, nearly four in 10 pregnancies in developing nations are unintended. An estimated 350,000 newborn children in these countries lose their mother in childbirth. For every woman who dies as result of childbirth, another 30 sustain serious illness or injury. Over 600,000 newborns die each year, and one out of five pregnancies end in abortion. Ensuring healthy timing and spacing of pregnancies will help to address these tragedies as well as to achieve Millennium Development Goals #4 (reducing child mortality) and #5 (improving maternal health).

We seek to enable women and couples in developing nations to determine the timing and spacing of their pregnancies in a manner that includes the voluntary use of methods for preventing pregnancy—not including abortion—that are harmonious with their values and religious beliefs.

We know that stronger, healthier families and communities result when couples jointly plan the births of their children, and we affirm that women and families should plan the timing and spacing of their pregnancies based on their own faith and needs.

We commit to leveraging our networks in the United States to support education and tools to enable families in developing countries to plan the healthy timing and spacing of their pregnancies, consistent with their faith. We recognize that influencing government and donor policies and funding is an important part of this goal. We call on others to support our effort, to influence government and donor policies and funding, and to champion this essential aspect of maternal, newborn, and child health.