



## **Liberia's Maternal Mortality Rate Highest In The World**

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Liberia is said to have the most terrible maternal mortality rate in the world, with at least 800-900 women being reported dead out of every 100,000 that give birth here, Professor Elizabeth Bradley of the Yale University disclosed Wednesday.

Speaking to this paper in an interview via mobile phone from the United States, Prof. Bradley who is Professor of Public Health and Director of the Yale Global Health Initiative said they have had some studies on maternal mortality rate before but it's more like 750, saying Liberia's is the highest right now.

Prof. Bradley said even though the figure is alarming, it is quite normal for a country coming out of a prolonged brutal conflict.

"It is quite normal for a country that has been through a civil war like Liberia," Prof. Bradley said, adding that the figure could reduce in the next decade if Health officials here work assiduously to tackle the problem.

She said the rate could come down quickly over the next decade with good economic development.

Some five Liberian Health officials are currently at Yale attending that institute's Conference which is designed to strengthen countries' capacity to deliver high quality healthcare for all citizens. It is a key component of Yale President Richard Levin's framework for establishing a global academic institution that is dedicated to improving the human condition through dialogue, leadership development and strategic action.

Prof. Bradley said at Yale, the Liberian delegation, amongst them Dr, Bernice Dahn, is learning from other countries that have been through the same thing, and learning from experts in global health. She said Yale is giving them a methodology or "problem-solving approach" to help them bring change. in the area of health delivery.

She said lack of enough physicians, hospitals not well staffed, not enough medicines, etc, can all contribute to maternal mortality.

"Maternal mortality is an indicator of the general state of public health: if you can move that, it means you have addressed some of these problems... Liberia is working hard at it, but it can't happen over night" she said.

She added that one important thing that is coming out of the meeting is a real understanding that the problems Liberia faces are collective problems, saying "if one person suffers, we all suffer."

There are 5 different countries including Liberia and Ghana that are attending the conference as well as the executive director of the Global fund, leaders at the Rockefeller foundation, and heads of several schools of Global Health.