

# Elizabeth's story

"Elizabeth" is 17 and pregnant with her second child. She and her husband live with Elizabeth's mother and have been married for eight months. Her husband hits her when he is drunk, and the beatings usually coincide with the arrival of his monthly paycheck. She is worried that he will kill her someday — he almost did the last time he attacked her.

"I came home from work, and my husband was drunk. Later that evening, he started to insult me. He hit me, and I asked him to respect my mother's home. My husband said he didn't care and continued to hit me — on my arms, not my face. Then he grabbed my shirt and punched me twice. I put his clothes in a box, left them outside, and told him he had to leave.

"He stabbed me and ran away. The neighbours caught him — the guy who did almost got stabbed as well. My mother was shouting, 'He killed my daughter!' There was a lot of blood — he had perforated my intestines and I had to hold my hand on the wound. When I walked out of the house, I fainted. They brought me to hospital in a pickup truck. I stayed in hospital for a week, and I lost an ovary. My husband knew that I was pregnant when he attacked me.

"I want the police to keep him under arrest for a while. There is going to be a trial. I feel threatened because if he didn't kill me this time he will kill me the next time. I am worried he will come after the baby and me. We women are alone. There is no one to protect us."

Elizabeth's mother, pictured above with a policewoman and a neighbour, witnessed the attack. "Some of us women take these men to the police station. But then the men's families try to convince us to stop the process."

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