

Response to Save the Children's 'No Child Born to Die' campaign

I am proud that the Government is committed to spending an additional £2.1 billion on women's and newborn health between 2010 and 2015. This funding will help to save the lives of at least 50,000 women in pregnancy and childbirth, and 250,000 newborn babies by 2015. It will also support at least 2 million safe deliveries providing long lasting improvements to maternity services, such as better trained doctors and midwives.

DFID works in 28 countries to strengthen health systems, and ensure the supply of appropriate drugs to treat complications affecting newborns. In these countries, DFID helps build better health systems by supporting efforts to train and better distribute health workers to serve those in greatest need, and ensure more births are attended by a doctor or midwife.

Several specific programmes illustrate the significant effort already underway on this issue. Through the Making it Happen Programme and the 'Health Partnership Scheme', DFID is helping to train and mentor doctors, nurses, midwives and other clinicians in emergency obstetric care in 11 countries. The 'Evidence for Action' Programme is helping policy makers, health planners, clinicians and communities use evidence to improve the quality of newborn health services in 5 countries.

DFID also supports the Global Health Worker Alliance (GHWA), which champions the role of health workers internationally, and aims to ensure that human resources for health remain an area of focus in the post Millennium Development Goal agenda. All of these programmes contribute to improved prospects for newborns.

Newborn mortality in developing countries is a DFID priority, and will continue to be so in 2014.

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