



World Bank Group to Invest \$700 Million by 2015 to Improve Women and Childrens Health in Poor Countries

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NEW YORK CITY, September 23, 2013 ? Today at the United Nations, World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim will announce that the Bank Group projects at least \$700 million in financing through the end of 2015 to help developing countries reach the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for women and childrens health. This new funding comes from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank Groups fund for the poorest countries, and will enable national scale-ups of successful pilot reproductive, maternal, and child health projects that were made possible by support from the Bank Groups Health Results Innovation Trust Fund (HRITF) and IDA. This announcement follows President Kims September 2012 commitment to help scale up funding for MDGs 4 and 5 as part of the UN Secretary Generals Every Woman Every Child global partnership. "We need to inject greater urgency into our collective efforts to save more women and childrens lives, and evidence shows that results-based financing has significant impact, said World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim. "The World Bank Group is committed to using evidence-based approaches to help ensure that every woman and every child can get the affordable, quality health care necessary to survive and live a healthy, productive life. Today's \$700 million announcement comes on top of a September 2010 World Bank pledge to provide \$600 million in IDA results-based financing for MDGs 4 and 5 by 2015; the World Bank has delivered on that pledge two years ahead of schedule. This support has contributed to global declines in maternal and child mortality and expanded access to health care for poor women and children. Through results-based financing, the World Bank Group is working with countries to shift the focus from paying for inputs to paying for results. Payment to health service providers is explicitly tied to the successful delivery and independent verification of pre-agreed results. There is strong evidence that this approach works: In Afghanistan, the number of women delivering their babies with the support of skilled birth attendants more than doubled from April 2010 to December 2012 in treatment facilities. In Argentina, improved health services and accessibility for poor pregnant women and children led to a decrease in low birth weight and in-hospital deaths of babies in the first 28 days of life for program beneficiaries. In Burundi, over just one year, births at health facilities rose by 25 percent, prenatal consultations went up by 20 percent, and the number of children fully vaccinated increased by 10 percent. Further progress on women and childrens health will require a comprehensive approach to strengthening health systems, including investments beyond the health sector in critical areas such as water and sanitation, education systems, and labor markets. IDAs country-based approach reinforces national health strategies and priorities while building on the World Bank Groups areas of comparative advantage in providing a multi-sectoral and systems-based approach to improving health. The HRITF, supported by the Governments of Norway and the United Kingdom, in turn reinforces this by providing countries with incentives to scale up their investments through IDA. During the past decade from 2003 to 2013, financing support through IDA has led to: Nearly 600 million children immunized More than 194 million pregnant women provided with antenatal care More than 29 million births attended by skilled health personnel More than 210 million pregnant/lactating women, adolescent girls, and/or children under age five reached by basic nutrition services The World Bank Group and Health, Nutrition and Population The World Bank Group is a vital source of financial and technical assistance to developing countries around the world, with the goals of ending extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity. Improving health is integral to achieving these goals. The World Bank Group provides financing, state-of-the-art analysis, and policy advice to help countries expand access to quality, affordable health care; protect people from falling into poverty or worsening poverty due to illness; and promote investments in all sectors that form the foundation of healthy societies. In New York City Melanie Mayhew tel : +1 (202) 459-7115 mmayhew1@worldbank.org In Washington Patricia da Camara tel : +1 (202) 473-4019 pdacamara@worldbank.org 

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