January 2015 National Grassroots Conference Call, Global Campaigns

(Points not otherwise covered in companion PowerPoint)

---------------------------

I understand some of you may have had difficulty understanding me on the conference call today. We always try to get those kinks worked out before the call, so I apologize for the technical difficulties.

If you missed it, here’s the key piece for your 2015 planning: building on our campaign for Gavi, in 2015 our top priority will be working to accelerate progress toward the end of preventable child deaths.

There will be two important, complementary objectives in this work:

1. Developing, introducing, and advancing legislation to increase the impact of U.S. foreign assistance for maternal and child health through greater focus, transparency, and coordination.
2. Increase funding for Maternal and Child Health and Nutrition programs through the appropriations process.

The number of young children dying from preventable and treatable causes has been cut in half, falling from 12.7 million in 1990 to 6.3 million in 2013. With the support and urging of RESULTS, in the last two years the U.S. has taken steps to accelerate these gains in child survival. In 2012, the U.S convened a Child Survival Call to Action, a global summit which forged a consensus that ending preventable child deaths within a generation is possible. In 2014, the U.S. convened a follow up Acting on the Call event, which included a [report](http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/global-health/acting-call-ending-preventable-child-and-maternal-deaths-report) with action plans for 24 priority countries, and a plan to realign some $2.9 billion in spending to achieve greater impact in maternal and child health. USAID is also adopting a series of reforms [recommended (PDF)](http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/blue-ribbon-advisoy-panel.pdf) by a Blue Ribbon Advisory Panel, including the appointment of a high-level coordinator, to increase the impact of U.S. resources invested to improve maternal and child health.

While these changes are promising, they are fragile. These reforms are not mandated by Congress, and could change with the shifting priorities of new leadership at USAID and a new Administration. Moreover, the overall level of funding for maternal and child health is still insufficient.

This work will kick off in earnest right after the Gavi pledging conference. The President is expected to release his budget proposal to Congress on February 2, and we’ll be working throughout the appropriations process to make sure our priorities are heard. We are planning to have child survival legislation introduced by Mother’s Day, and will use our [2015 International Conference](http://www.cvent.com/events/results-2015-international-conference/event-summary-6e6e2b145a02421a805078305ffdcb1f.aspx) and August recess meetings to build support.

Lots more to come on this. Apologies again for the audio problems today, and thanks for all of your terrific work and dedication.

John Fawcett, Legislative Director, Global Campaigns