



WOMEN DELIVER: WHAT NEXT?

A GUIDE FOR FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Women Deliver, a landmark global conference held in October 2007 in London, brought together nearly 2,000 global leaders in the broad health and development community to highlight the links between health of women, mothers, and newborns and the health of nations. The conference mobilized political will and financial commitments for maternal and newborn health, and demonstrated that investing in women is a primary engine for economic, social, and political progress.

Seventy cabinet ministers and parliamentarians from over 30 countries committed to increasing resources to achieve MDG 5 [maternal health] and MDG 4 [child health] and, in their final statement, urged a UN General Assembly Special Session to craft a global plan to end maternal deaths. The Japanese government pledged to put global health on the agenda at the next G8 meeting in Tokyo in July 2008. Throughout the conference, participants contributed to the vision of a world where pregnancy is safe and freely chosen.

What now, what next?

Following Women Deliver, government leaders, advocates, and health providers returned home with a renewed sense of commitment and urgency to work towards the goals articulated at the conference. This document provides those who attended Women Deliver, as well as others committed to advancing the health and rights of women, mothers, and newborns, specific ideas for carrying out follow-up activities in their home countries to continue the momentum generated at, and a result of, Women Deliver.

Below is a list of possible actions that various stakeholders can take to promote and position MDGs 4 and 5 in the national policy agenda, based in part on activities that various Women Deliver participants and supporters have already initiated.

UN country offices:

- Convene a high-level meeting or briefing bringing together the members of the Women Deliver country delegation (Ministers of Health and Planning, members of Parliament, and civil society representatives) to highlight the key outcomes and recommendations generated from Women Deliver, with particular focus on how national priorities can be linked to programming and policy making highlighted at Women Deliver.

Ministers of Health and Planning:

- Work with your Ministry of Foreign Affairs to propose an UNGASS on maternal health to the UN General Assembly.
- Share the outcomes from Women Deliver within your Ministry and government.
- Identify maternal and women's health as a priority within national policies and strategic frameworks, and work to ensure that needed financial and human resources are allocated towards achieving MDGs 4 and 5.

Civil society leaders/health advocates:

- Share the key recommendations from Women Deliver with other civil society and public sector organizations, in an effort to move national policy and programming forward on maternal health.
- Bring together civil society (and other, as appropriate in the national context) organizations to form an advocacy or accountability coalition to track government and donor commitment to women's/maternal health issues, as articulated at Women Deliver.
- Work with media representatives to highlight the key commitments made by high-level policymakers in national and local press.

Members of parliament:

- Introduce legislation within parliament in support of women's and maternal health.
- Hold a debriefing meeting with other members of parliament to highlight the key actions and recommendations arising from the conference.
- Introduce the Ministers' Forum statement from Women Deliver into cabinet and/or parliament.

Health providers:

- Work with national ob/gyn, midwifery or nursing professional associations to widely share the three pillars for improving maternal health (comprehensive reproductive health care, skilled care, and emergency obstetric care) with other health service providers.

Media representatives:

- Support national champions for maternal health by highlighting in national and local press the commitment of the Minister of Health, Planning and/or member of parliament to achieve MDGs 4 and 5.