



# African Leadership for Child Survival

## MEDIA ADVISORY

### **African Leadership for Child Survival: A Promise Renewed 16 – 18 January 2013**

**ADDIS ABABA, 15 January 2013**

**What:** Background briefing for journalists  
**When:** Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 08:00  
**Who:** Ethiopia Ministry of Health, UNICEF, USAID Experts on Child Survival  
**Where:** Addis Ababa, African Union Headquarters, Former Conference Center

**What:** Opening Plenary of A Promise Renewed – African Leadership for Child Survival  
**When:** Wednesday January 16, 2013 at 09:00 – 10:30  
**Who:** Tedros Adhanom, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ethiopia  
Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, Chairperson, African Union Commission  
Kesetebirhan Admasu, Minister of Health, Ethiopia  
Ministers of Health from all sub-regions of Africa including Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia, Benin, and Puntland, Somalia  
**Where:** Addis Ababa, African Union Headquarters, Former Conference Center

**What:** Welcome Reception  
**When:** Wednesday, January 16, 2013 at 18:30 PM  
**Who:** Dr. Kesete Birhan Admasu, Minister of Health, Ethiopia  
Hon. Donald Booth, US Ambassador to Ethiopia  
Dr. Peter Salama, UNICEF  
**Where:** Sheraton Hotel, Addis Ababa

**For further information, contact:**

**Ethiopian Ministry of Health:** Ato Assefa Ayde: +251 (0) 916 83 25 12 - assefadidi@yahoo.com

**UNICEF:** Alexandra Westerbeek: +251 (0) 911 25 51 09- awesterbeek@unicef.org

**USAID:** Nena Terrell: +251 (0) 911 511 434 – nterrell@usaid.gov



COMMITTING TO CHILD SURVIVAL  
A PROMISE RENEWED

# African Leadership for Child Survival

## Background Information:

Since 1990, the number of child deaths in sub-Saharan Africa has dropped by 39%. Many African countries are within reach of the 2015 millennium development goal to reduce the under-five mortality rate by two thirds. Yet even with the availability of proven, inexpensive, high-impact interventions for maternal, newborn, and child health, their adoption is slow and high rates of childhood illness and death persist in a number of countries. In sub-Saharan Africa 1 in 8 children die before they reach their fifth birthday.

In an effort to catalyze global action for child survival, the Governments of Ethiopia, India, and the United States together with UNICEF convened the 'Child Survival Call to Action' in Washington, D.C. in June 2012. <http://www.apromiserenewed.org/index.html>. Under the banner of 'Committing to Child Survival: A Promise Renewed', more than 160 governments signed a pledge to renew their commitment to child survival, to eliminate all preventable child mortality in two decades.

To maintain this momentum, the Government of Ethiopia, and former Minister of Health Tedros Adhanom, whose leadership raised Ethiopia's profile in child survival in the continent, committed to convene the 'African Leadership for Child Survival—A Promise Renewed' Meeting January 16-18, 2013, in Addis Ababa, the seat of the African Union. Ministers of Health and experts from across Africa will come together with peers and global experts to ensure child survival is at the forefront of the social development agendas across the continent and renew the focus of African leaders to head their own country's efforts and sustain the gains made over the last two decades.

### Focus of the meeting:

- Scientific evidence for high impact and behavior change interventions that can accelerate progress in maternal, newborn, and child health
- Progress in achieving national Millennium Development Goals for child survival
- Approaches (best practices) for scaling up high impact and behavior change interventions for maternal, newborn, and child health
- Galvanizing momentum and resources for country led national Child Survival Action Plans

### CHILD MORTALITY ESTIMATES FOR 2011

- In 2011, around 50 per cent of global under-five deaths occurred in just five countries: India, Nigeria, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Pakistan, and China. For Ethiopia, the number of under-five deaths reduced to 194,000 in 2011.
- Sub-Saharan Africa, though lagging behind the other regions, has registered a 39 percent decline in the under-five mortality rate from 1990 to 2011. Between 1990 and 2011, Ethiopia reduced their under-five mortality rate by more than 60%.
- In some countries, the total number of under-five deaths has increased: Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Somalia, Mali, Cameroon and Burkina Faso have experienced a rise in their national burden of under-five deaths by 10,000 or more for 2011 as compared to 1990.

## CAUSES OF DEATHS

- Globally, the five leading causes of deaths among children under five include pneumonia (14%); pre-term birth complications (14%); diarrhea (10%); intrapartum-related complications (9%); newborn infection (10%) and malaria (7%).
- Pneumonia is the leading killer of children under five, causing 18% (4% among newborns plus an additional 14% among infants and children under 5) of all under-five deaths worldwide - a loss of roughly 1.3 million lives in 2011, the bulk of which occur in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.
- Diarrhea's toll has dropped by a third over the past decade, from 1.2 million deaths in 2000 to 0.7 million in 2011.
- Nearly all of 0.5 million malaria under-five deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa in 2011. A decade of malaria prevention has saved an estimated one million children's lives overall.
- Around 40 percent of deaths among children under five occur during the neonatal period (i.e. during the first 28 days of life). In 2011 this amounted to about 3 million deaths worldwide. The heaviest burdens are in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, which have both the highest neonatal mortality rates among regions and the largest number of annual births. In Ethiopia in 2010, 42% of deaths among children under 5 years of age were due to neonatal causes.
- Globally, more than a third of child deaths are attributable to under-nutrition.
- Without treatment, 50 percent of HIV-infected children die before the age of two. In countries with high HIV prevalence in sub-Saharan Africa, HIV-associated mortality in 2010 among children under five ranged from 10 per cent in Mozambique and Zambia to 28 per cent in South Africa.

Region	Under-five mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births)		Number of under-five deaths (in thousands)		Decline in under- five mortality rate (%) 1990-2011
	1990	2011	1990	2011	
Africa	163	100	4,104	3,457	39
Sub-Saharan Africa	178	109	3,821	3,370	39
Eastern and Southern Africa	162	84	1,664	1,177	48
West and Central Africa	197	132	2,058	2,096	33
Middle East and North Africa	72	36	656	351	50
World	87	51	11,968	6,914	41