

New UN-backed campaign aims to give ‘Big Push’ to global health challenges



Special Envoy for Malaria Ray Chambers. UN Photo/Mark Garten

25 September 2012 – The United Nations and its partners today launched “The Big Push,” a campaign to raise support for global health goals that need support and funding to achieve success.

The campaign was initiated by organizations that are mobilizing efforts to reach health-related Millennium Development Goals ([MDGs](#)) by 2015, as well as by Ray Chambers, the Secretary General’s Special Envoy for Malaria and an MDG Advocate, and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria.

“What we need is the funding to deliver on these goals,” Mr. Chambers stated in a news release. “We have made tremendous progress, but there is further to go. We can’t stop now.”

Reducing child mortality rates and improving maternal health are long-term goals that have been strongly endorsed by [Secretary-General](#) Ban Ki-moon, who two years ago launched the Every Woman Every Child initiative.

To date, 260 partners have come together and made ambitious commitments to advance the goal of saving 16 million lives by 2015. Also, billions of dollars in new funding for women's and children's health have been mobilized and \$10 billion has already been delivered.

Later today, on the margins of the opening of the General Assembly's high-level General Debate, Mr. Ban will host a special event related to the initiative to highlight maternal and child health and to encourage government leaders to keep them high on national agendas.

The UN-backed Global Fund has supported numerous programmes that focus on eliminating deaths from malaria among women of child-bearing age and among children under the age of five, the most vulnerable populations. In many cases, additional funding is needed to expand successful programs into areas where demand has not been met.

“We have a historic opportunity to save the lives of millions of people, if we take practices that are already effective and expand them,” said Gabriel Jaramillo, General Manager of the Global Fund. “We need help. We need a Big Push.”

At a joint press conference with Mr. Jaramillo at UN Headquarters, Margaret Chan, Director-General of the UN World Health Organization ([WHO](#)), noted that great progress has been made in the last 20 years in women's and children's health.

“The challenge for all of us is how to maintain this good momentum and the progress so that we can see further improvement,” she stated, noting that there are only two and a half more years to go until the 2015 deadline for achieving the MDGs.

In addition to child and maternal health, the MDGs – agreed by world leaders at a UN summit in 2000 – sets specific targets on poverty alleviation, education, gender equality, environmental stability, HIV/AIDS reduction, and a ‘Global Partnership for Development.’

It is vital to ensure that “we do not drop the ball on the MDGs,” said Dr. Chan. “We still have two and a half years to go, we must give the MDGs a Big Push.”

News Tracker: past stories on this issue

[Ban praises work of commission on access to medicines for women, children](#)