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Launching the Maternal Health Task Force *Reaching Consensus on the MHTF Terms of Reference*

Washington D.C., February 17-18, 2009



Background

July–November 2008:

- *Advancing Maternal Health: Action, Architecture, Engagement*

Meeting convened by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) seeking input on the development of a new coordinating and convening entity to advance maternal health agendas globally

- BMGF invited EngenderHealth to submit a proposal to host the new entity (approved in Nov. 2008)



Background

November 2008–February 2009:

- Officially announced MHTF and survey sent to broad base of stakeholders
- Conducted interviews with small number of critical partners
- Started more detailed discussions with members of the Board and staff of the PMNCH
- Developed draft Terms of Reference
- Designed February launch meeting



Overarching Goal

Build common, evidence-based agendas in...

- *research and evidence*
- *application and evaluation*
- *advocacy and policy*



...to advance maternal health at the global and country levels

Objectives

Objective 1: To provide an inclusive, collaborative, and vibrant space for dialogue and consensus building on maternal health agendas

Objective 2: To guide identification of critical areas of debate and gaps in the maternal health field, and establish effective mechanisms to address them



Objectives II

Objective 3: To stimulate new thinking, approaches, and action to improve maternal health

Objective 4: To compile and develop instruments to empower constituents to carry out maternal health agendas



Highlights of February 17-18, 2009 Meeting

- Approximately 65 colleagues engaged in lively and productive discussion
- Endorsement of the MHTF
- Willingness to engage in detailed discussions to identify opportunities to complement each other and avoid unnecessary duplication
- Concern about sustainability beyond the life of the project
- Agreement on most procedural components of ToR
- Great debate on the specific areas of focus on the MHTF



MHTF: Linking Multiple Dimensions

The Maternal Health Task Force is a catalyst that:

- Provides the ‘glue’ to navigate across several different dimensions:**
 - Country-driven and global
 - Technical and political
 - Ideal and pragmatic
- Leverages existing initiatives, events and organizations to add new value to move the maternal health agenda forward**



Next Steps

- Develop the next version (almost final) of the ToR (with emphasis on governance, decision making and participation)
- Develop a meeting summary report
- Define the MHTF year one work plan (and solicit ideas on year two) using the actions brainstormed together
- Build and implement a three-month communications plan
- Engage in an immediate and concrete dialogue to identify mechanisms for collaboration
- Start implementation



Thank you!

