



Boosting Reproductive and Child Health in Ghana. Project abstract:

Ghana has made significant progress towards the attainment of MDG's 4 & 5. While taking pride in these accomplishments, it is acknowledged that much remains to be done. With less than half a decade to 2015, there is a need for accelerated reduction in under-five mortality and maternal deaths if Ghana is to be among the countries to achieve these goals.

Maternal and child mortality is related to a number of complex causes that require a holistic approach when being addressed effectively. The quintessence of the matter is the following:

- 15% of pregnancies are complicated and need skilled birth attendance, states WHO
- 58% of rural women in Ghana give birth at home without skilled birth attendance present.

As the clinical causes of death can be avoided by skilled attendants in well equipped health centres and WHO states that MDG 4 & 5 can be reached if 80% of deliveries are attended in that way, this project will:

1. Execute an intensive in service training programme for midwives and doctors to reach the 80% efficacy level as well as leadership training and training of community health workers and for remote rural postings;
2. Provide 37 districts most in need according to the EMONC survey with comprehensive obstetric equipment and the health centers and CHPS zones in these districts with basic obstetric tools;
3. Only where necessary, rehabilitate and refurbish existing maternities.

Focussing on the concerns expressed by mothers that are not planning to deliver their children in health centres, the project will:

4. Perform research in the selected districts during the Development Phase and will design and implement a demand stimulation program that will amongst others involve Village Health Committees in customer feedback to services provided.

Attending some of the other causes of maternal and child mortality, the project will moreover:

5. Provide mobile phones temporarily to distant pregnant women to facilitate reproductive health initiatives, support community temporary lodging initiatives, liaise with the national Malaria program to provide bed nets and align with the national AIDS program to reduce mother to child transmission of HIV.

This project is designed to save the lives of approximately 3,500 mothers and more than 22,000 children over a period of 9 years. Without calculating the impact on morbidity reduction, but only taking into account the impact on mortality, the project has an exceptionally high economic internal rate of return indicating it is amongst the very best infrastructural investments the GHS/MOH and ORIO can make in Ghana. Depending on the pace of project execution, the MDG's 4 & 5 as illustrated here will be reached by 2015 or before 2020 in the catchment areas.

