



WISH joins Gates Foundation in raising maternal and newborn care for the world's poorest as a global priority

New report launched at Global Health Summit in Qatar highlights importance of lifesaving innovations for maternal and newborn care

Doha, Qatar 8 February 2015: The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH), an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development, today announces a joint effort with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to release a report highlighting the importance of integrated maternal and newborn healthcare at the second WISH summit taking place on 17-18 February 2015 in Qatar. The report, developed with Harvard University and Save the Children, is part of a partnership between WISH and Gates to highlight critical global health and development issues.

In 2013, more than 280,000 women and girls died unnecessarily due to complications of pregnancy and childbirth¹ while 2.9 million newborns died² due to lack of available care. As the health of mothers and their children are inextricably linked - biologically, socially, and through health systems - integrated care systems that use innovative approaches are desperately needed across the full range of reproductive, maternal, newborn, and child healthcare.

In partnership with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Harvard University and Save the Children, WISH will host a special panel session at the summit to present some of the report insights with an aim to tackle the critical unfinished agenda of reproductive, maternal, and newborn health.

The panel discussion will put forward the case for service integration and provide a platform for thought-provoking debate on both the critical issues and the opportunities that can be mobilised to ensure efforts to reduce maternal and newborn mortality remain a top priority. The briefing will also provide five recommendations for healthcare stakeholders who are committed to improving the health and wellbeing of mothers and newborns.

This unique WISH panel is timed to coincide with the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that will replace the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 ensuring that this vital issue of maternal and child health remain at the forefront of global and national health agendas. And it previews some of the proceedings expected at the Global Maternal Newborn Health Conference to be held in October 2015 in Mexico City.

"While we've seen advancements in maternal and newborn health these past fifteen years, comparatively maternal and newborn survival have not progressed as quickly as other health goals," said Mariam Claeson, Director of the Maternal, Newborn and Child Health program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. "Newborn mortality now makes up the majority of all under-five deaths, despite the existence of proven, cost-effective interventions that could save the lives of hundreds of thousands more women and newborns each year. At the Gates Foundation, we believe global health equity is

achievable and we want to make childbirth safe for all women and newborns. Innovation is the key to both the reach and uptake of this vision, which is why we're so pleased to be taking part in WISH's 2015 Summit, sharing our ambitions with healthcare experts whose duty it is to protect, educate and care for the world's newborns and their mothers."

Professor the Lord Darzi of Denham, Executive Chair of WISH, said: "This special WISH policy briefing aims to build the case for integrating policies and services in ways that improve the quality and accessibility of care for mothers and newborns. The subject of newborn and maternal health cannot be of greater importance to families, society and the world. This unique and timely panel will offer tangible, proven and applicable solutions for lowering costs and saving lives."

"We are proud to be partnering with The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, an organization that is recognized the world over as a champion in global health funding. Their passion for innovation and vision for global health are truly aligned with those of WISH and make them perfect partners for affecting change."

Guided by the belief that every life has equal value, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation works to help all people lead healthy, productive lives. In developing countries, it focuses on improving people's health and giving them the chance to lift themselves out of hunger and extreme poverty. In the United States, it seeks to ensure that all people—especially those with the fewest resources—have access to the opportunities they need to succeed in school and life. Based in Seattle, Washington, the foundation is led by CEO Sue Desmond-Hellmann and Co-chair William H. Gates Sr., under the direction of Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett.

Qatar Foundation has established WISH to bring about action in healthcare innovation locally in Qatar, regionally and globally. Through WISH, Qatar Foundation is supporting the nation in establishing healthcare initiatives for the benefit of the globe while remaining closely aligned to the vision of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

For more information about WISH and the 2015 Summit, please visit wish.org.qa.

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¹ Global Health Observatory. Maternal and reproductive health [Internet]. Geneva: World Health Organization; [cited 2014 Dec 5]. Available from: http://www.who.int/gho/maternal_health/en/

² Lawn JE, Blencowe H, Oza S, You D, Lee ACC, Waiswa P, et al. The Lancet Every Newborn Study Group. Every Newborn 2: Progress, priorities, and potential beyond survival. The Lancet. 2014;384(9938):189-205. Available from: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(14\)60496-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(14)60496-7)

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About the World Innovation Summit for Health

The World Innovation Summit for Health (WISH) is a global healthcare community dedicated to capturing and disseminating the best evidence-based ideas and practices. WISH is an initiative of Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development (QF) and is under the patronage of Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, its Chairperson.

The inaugural WISH Summit took place in Doha in 2013 and convened more than 1,000 global healthcare leaders. Through annual Summits and a range of ongoing initiatives, WISH is creating a global community of leading innovators in healthcare policy, research and industry.

Together, they are harnessing the power of innovation to overcome the world's most urgent healthcare challenges and inspire other stakeholders to action.

Qatar Foundation – Unlocking Human Potential

Qatar Foundation for Education, Science and Community Development is a private, non-profit organisation that is supporting Qatar on its journey from a carbon economy to a knowledge economy by unlocking human potential for the benefit of not only Qatar, but the world. Founded in 1995 by His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, The Father Emir of Qatar, QF is chaired by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser.

QF carries out its mission through three strategic pillars: education, science and research, and community development. QF's education pillar brings world-class universities to Qatar to help create an education sector in which young people can develop the attitudes and skills required for a knowledge economy. Meanwhile, its science and research pillar builds Qatar's innovation and technology capacity by developing and commercializing solutions through key sciences. Finally, its community development pillar helps foster a progressive society while also enhancing cultural life, protecting Qatar's heritage and addressing immediate social needs in the community.

For a complete list of QF's initiatives and projects, please visit qf.org.qa. For more information about QF, please contact our press office at pressoffice@qf.org.qa.