

For the first time, the end of preventable child and maternal deaths is within reach. U.S. leadership and international partnerships have helped to cut the number deaths of children by half and drive down maternal mortality by more than 40% globally since 1990.

Still, every day 15,000 children under the age of 5 die from mainly preventable or treatable causes—5.6 million children each year, almost half of them newborns. Additionally, almost 800 women die each day due to complications during pregnancy and childbirth.

U.S. programs save lives

- The U.S. government has committed to saving the lives of 15 million children and nearly 600,000 women between 2012 and 2020 in 25 priority countries, as a milestone toward helping to end preventable maternal and child deaths by 2035. These goals are based on cost-effective solutions—from training birth attendants to vaccinating children—that have been proven to work.
- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) developed a roadmap, *Acting on the Call*, to create efficiency and focus on impact—the ability to save a mother or child’s life—by coordinating activities across relevant accounts: Maternal and Child Health (MCH), malaria, family planning, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).
- USAID’s leadership has encouraged partner governments to invest more of their own money in global health—and trained their health ministries how to budget more effectively.

The Reach Act

The bipartisan Reach Every Mother and Child Act (S.1730 and H.R.4022) seeks to end preventable maternal, newborn, and child deaths across the globe. In particular, the bill makes USAID’s Child and Maternal Survival Coordinator position permanent to ensure alignment across the agency’s relevant programs. The bill also supports country ownership, transparency and accountability, and sustainable financing.

The Reach Act was introduced by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Chris Coons (D-DE) and U.S. Representatives Dave Reichert (R-WA), Dan Donovan (R-NY), Betty McCollum (D-MN), and Barbara Lee (D-CA).

Helping babies survive

- Through Helping Babies Survive, a suite of evidence-based training programs designed to reduce neonatal mortality in resource-limited environments, the AAP is partnering with USAID to address leading causes of newborn death through breastfeeding education (which could save approximately 800,000 children’s lives per year), thermal protection for preterm newborns (which could avert 20% of neonatal deaths caused by preterm birth complications), clean cord care (for a potential 23% reduction in the of risk of neonatal mortality), and the early identification and management of infections (which contribute to almost a quarter of newborn deaths).
- Helping Babies Survive is modeled on Helping Babies Breathe, a low-literacy curriculum developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) which has been used to train more than 400,000 birth attendants in 80 countries since 2010. Over 50 of the programs are coordinated by national governments. Studies have shown that early newborn deaths were cut by nearly 50%. Through the Global Development Alliance model with USAID, private sector partners such as Johnson & Johnson match USAID investments at least 1:1.

