



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DELIVER NOW FOR WOMEN AND CHILDREN

**Historic Global Drive to Improve Maternal Health
And Reduce Child Deaths is Launched in New York City;
Unveiling of Country Specific Programs in India, Tanzania to Follow**

September 26, 2007 – (New York, NY) – In an historic effort to eliminate maternal and child deaths and improve the health of women and children around the world, a global coalition of governments and organizations has come together to launch a major drive called Deliver Now for Women and Children.

Every year over 10 million mothers and children die from mostly preventable causes. Every minute of every day, a woman dies needlessly during pregnancy or childbirth. Every three seconds a child under five dies. Four million newborns die in their first four weeks of life, 3 million of those in the first week. And with 42 percent of pregnant women around the world experiencing a complication, up to 15 percent of which are life-threatening, the issue of protecting the lives of women and children during pregnancy, childbirth and beyond is one of the most critical facing the world today.

“Today is a day of hope for women and children. The cause of women’s and children’s health has remained in the shadows for too long and been neglected on the policy agenda. It is at last getting the political and public respect it has always deserved,” said Dr. Francisco Songane, Director of The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health, the driving force behind the development of Deliver Now. “We are hopeful that this initiative will result in large-scale action to ensure health services are available for all with prompt access and without discrimination.”

Deliver Now will be launched September 26 amidst rallies in Manhattan and the Bronx and awareness-raising events across the city to build popular support for the drive throughout the week. The launch will also coincide with the convening of a panel at the United Nations, “Saving 77 Million Lives”, featuring women UN leaders and global health activists discussing the critical issues facing women and children around the world.

The launch will be followed by other global events, such as the high-profile conference Women Deliver in London, October 18-20 (www.womendeliver.org), and the roll out of intensive local programs in individual countries, beginning in 2008 in India and Tanzania. In these countries, Deliver Now will bring together local government agencies, civil society, media and other national and international members of the initiative to allocate resources and more effectively bring basic health services to women and children. The results of these programs will be closely monitored to ensure success and accountability.

Deliver Now is coordinated by The Partnership for Maternal, Newborn & Child Health and is being launched in support of a new global push to achieve the UN’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) related to health. It is part of the Global Campaign for the Health Millennium Development Goals, which will be unveiled September 26 by Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg of Norway at the Clinton Global Initiative in

New York City. The Global Campaign is supported by several governments including the UK, Norway, Canada, France and Germany, as well as a number of prominent global health and advocacy organizations. The launch of Deliver Now follows the recent launch of the International Health Partnership in London by British Prime Minister Gordon Brown and other world leaders. Deliver Now is specifically dedicated to advancing MDGs 4 and 5, which call for the reduction of child deaths by two-thirds and annual reduction of maternal deaths by three-quarters by 2015.

Deliver Now's first country-specific programs will include:

- **Advocacy for Maternal and Child Health in India** – Currently, 20 percent of the world's births are in India but 25 percent of the world's child deaths and 20 percent of the world's maternal deaths occur there as well. Deliver Now will work with local organizations to implement a program to build political will to ensure delivery of services and raise awareness in the Indian states of Orissa and Rajasthan.
- **Advocacy for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health in Tanzania** – Tanzania currently faces a critical shortage of qualified health workers to assist during childbirth, with 54 percent of women receiving no skilled attendance. As a result, a woman dies of pregnancy-related complications every hour of every day. Deliver Now will work to deliver services and raise awareness in the Tanzanian districts of Geita, Monduli, Sumbawanga, Morogoro and Babati.

A number of celebrities including Nicole Kidman, Chaka Khan, Ricki Lake and Liya Kebede are participating in and supporting the Deliver Now initiative. To read their expressions of support, please visit press at www.delivernow.org.

To view a PSA on Deliver Now and the urgent situation of women and children around the world, please visit press at www.delivernow.org.

To find out more about Deliver Now for Women and Children, visit www.delivernow.org.

#

For more information, contact: Josh Epstein/Colleen Roche
Linden Alschuler & Kaplan Public Relations
212-575-4545
jepstein@lakpr.com/croche@lakpr.com