



June 2010

**Open letter to all G8 Leaders - being issued in all G8 countries**

It is a global scandal that millions of women and newborn babies die or suffer severe injury during childbirth every year – despite the fact that the vast majority of these injuries and deaths are preventable.

99% of these deaths are in the developing world, devastating families, communities and societies. Until they stop there can be no real progress in tackling global poverty.

This is a human rights crisis demanding immediate action.

The international community has promised action, Millennium Development Goal 4 and 5 aim to reduce child deaths by two thirds and maternal deaths by three quarters by 2015, yet it's these goals that have made the least progress and we still have a very, very long way to go in making them happen.

This year's G8 has an opportunity to change this once and for all. We, the undersigned<sup>i</sup>, call on our G8 leaders to commit to:

1. Double international aid for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health.

And use this additional funding to:

2. Recruit, train and deploy additional skilled health workers to fill the shortfall of 2.5 million health professionals and 1 million community health workers.
3. Remove barriers of access to health care, with services for women and children being free at the point of use where countries choose to provide it.

This should be done within international commitments to sexual and reproductive health and rights such as access to information and family planning.

Increased investment could save the lives each year of approximately 1 million additional children and between 200,000-330,000 women.

The G8 must put its leadership squarely behind the UN Secretary General and make an ambitious contribution to a concrete plan of action to accelerate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5.

Signed:

*Ai Tominaga, Angelique Kidjo, Annie Lennox, Claudia Winkelman, Celine Dion, Davina McCall, Diana Quick, Jarvis Church, Jermain Jenas, Dame Judi Dench, Joanna Lumley, Jilly Black, June Sarpong, Kirstie Allsopp, Kristin Davis, Liya Kebede, Livia Firth, Margaret MacMillan, Mariella Frostrop, Mena Suvari, Minnie Driver, Maureen McTeer, Naomi Campbell, Rjo Ferdinand, Scarlett Johansson, Wendi Murdoch.*

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<sup>i</sup> All the undersigned people and organisations have read and agreed to the points made in this letter.