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3 in 4 maternal, newborn and young child deaths occur in just 20 countries, report reveals

- *75% of all maternal, newborn and child deaths occur in just 20 countries. The major causes of death are largely preventable, a new report reveals*
- *The International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO), the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), the International Council of Nurses (ICN) and the International Pediatrics Association (IPA) are coming together to launch the Together We Can campaign to reduce these deaths*
- *By focusing on nine key causes of mortality in these countries up to 50% of lives could be saved by 2035*
- *The nine main cause of maternal, newborn and child death are: Hemorrhage, Hypertension, Maternal Sepsis, Prematurity, Asphyxia, Neonatal Sepsis, Childhood Pneumonia, Diarrhea, Malaria*

Helsinki, Finland, 24.11.16- Today FIGO, ICM, ICN and IPA announce the publication of a report showing the global burden of maternal, newborn and young child deaths and launch the *Together We Can* campaign to tackle it.

Most maternal, newborn and child deaths are preventable. The new report highlights nine main killers which are responsible for the high mortality rates in the 20 countries with the highest instance of these deaths; Hemorrhage, Hypertension, Maternal Sepsis, Prematurity, Asphyxia, Neonatal Sepsis, Childhood Pneumonia, Diarrhea, Malaria. Simple interventions to the way mothers and babies are cared for could save up to 50% of these lives by 2035, interventions like the rotavirus and hib vaccinations, active management of third stage labour (AMTSL) and kangaroo care.

Health professionals are a critical force in driving forward improvements in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health. Health professional associations, FIGO, ICM, ICN and IPA, represent millions of gynecologists, obstetricians, midwives, nurses and pediatricians, whose expert care touches the lives of billions of people each year. These globally respected organisations are now coming together in the Together We Can campaign to advocate for safer pregnancy, better birth and healthier childhoods and ensure that the experts who care for mothers, newborns and children are at the centre of health policy decisions.

FIGO President, Professor Chittaranjan Narahari Purandare, said: FIGO is delighted to launch the *Together We Can campaign* with our colleagues in ICM, ICN and IPA. It is critical that we provide much needed antenatal care during pregnancy, deliver them safely with healthy newborns, look after their wellbeing during the postnatal period and give the children healthier childhoods.

ICM President, Frances Day-Stirk, said: The global data on maternal mortality indicates that most preventable maternal and newborn deaths occur in low and middle income countries. The key to ensure that progress is made in achieving SDGs 3 and 5, more

qualified and supported healthcare professionals are needed – all working together to make the change.

ICN Chief Executive Officer, Dr Frances Hughes, said: The *Together We Can* campaign demonstrates the critical role of the health workforce in reducing maternal, newborn and child deaths. As nurses, we know that it is only by working together effectively that we can promote the interventions which work best to protect these vulnerable populations.

IPA President, Dr Zulfiqar Bhutta, said: Health professionals' hands-on work gives us unique experience in improving and saving lives. This campaign will put us where we need to be - at the centre of health policy and implementation.

Together We Can has produced a short film showing the journey of one woman from newborn to adult and the role health professionals play in her life. Visit www.TogetherWeCan.world to find out more and download our campaign pack or share a story of how the work of a health professional has touched your life using the hashtag #TouchingStories

Notes to editors

- The Together We Can report can be found at www.togetherwecan.world/resources
- Together We Can is led by the *International Confederation of Midwives* (ICM), the *International Council of Nurses* (ICN), the *International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics* (FIGO), and the *International Pediatric Association* (IPA)
- *International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics* (FIGO) is a non-profit organisation that brings together obstetrical and gynecological associations from 130 countries/territories worldwide. It is dedicated to the improvement of women's health and rights and to the reduction of disparities in healthcare available to women and newborns, as well as to advancing the science and practice of obstetrics and gynecology. Based in London, the organisation hosts a triennial World Congress that draws more than 7,000 women's health scientists, clinicians, and other allied health professionals to present the latest science and best clinical practice in obstetrics and gynecology.
- The *International Confederation of Midwives* (ICM) is an accredited non-governmental organisation and represents midwives and midwifery organisations worldwide to achieve common goals in the care of mothers and newborns. ICM has 130 member associations in 113 countries across every continent
- The *International Council of Nurses* (ICN) is a federation of more than 130 national nurses associations representing the millions of nurses worldwide. Operated by nurses and leading nursing internationally, ICN works to ensure quality care for all and sound health policies globally.
- Founded in 1910, the *International Pediatric Association* (IPA) is the internationally respected global membership organization for pediatric societies. We represent over a million pediatricians who improve the health and save the lives of more than a billion children. IPA connects pediatricians from over 140 countries, enabling them to work together to improve the physical, mental and social health of all children, from birth to adolescence. We advocate globally, nationally and

locally for high quality, evidence-based and child-centered pediatric care. IPA: working for every child, every age, everywhere. www.ipa-world.org

- The Together We can campaign supports the Sustainable Development Goals, including Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*, and in particular the targets:

- By 2030, reduce the global maternal mortality ratio to less than 70 per 100,000 live births
- By 2030, end preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age, with all countries aiming to reduce neonatal mortality to at least as low as 12 per 1,000 live births and under-5 mortality to at least as low as 25 per 1,000 live births
- Substantially increase health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries, especially in least developed countries and small island developing States

- 75% of all maternal, newborn and child deaths occur in just 20 countries. The major causes of death are largely preventable
- By focusing on nine key causes of mortality in these countries we can save up to 50% of lives by 2035
- The nine main cause of maternal newborn and child death are: Hemorrhage, Hypertension, Maternal Sepsis, Prematurity, Asphyxia, Neonatal Sepsis, Childhood Pneumonia, Diarrhea, Malaria
- The greatest impact can be achieved by increasing the coverage of interventions to 90%
- The *Together We Can* campaign is kindly funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
- Contact elizabeth.somerville@m4id.fi with questions and for interviews with health leaders