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IHI AWARDED \$9.6 MILLION TO IMPROVE HEALTH OUTCOMES FOR MOTHERS AND NEWBORNS IN ETHIOPIA

With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, IHI partners with the Ethiopian Ministry of Health to accelerate progress toward national health care quality aims

Cambridge, MA – September 2, 2015 – The [Institute for Healthcare Improvement](http://www.ihionline.org) (IHI) today announced it has received a \$9.6 million grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to reduce maternal and newborn mortality in Ethiopia. Over two-and-a-half years, IHI and its partners will support the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH) in its pursuit of an ambitious agenda to rapidly close gaps in national health outcomes through the coordination of quality planning, quality assurance, and quality improvement (QI).

“In the last few years, Ethiopia has made remarkable gains in health care delivery,” said Nneka Mobisson-Etuk, Executive Director of Africa Operations, IHI. “We look forward to working together with the Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health, partners, communities, and patients alike to dramatically and sustainably improve the health of Ethiopian mothers and babies. We cannot overstate the importance of this work. To invest in the health and quality of care delivery for women and neonates is to invest in the lives of Ethiopian generations to come.”

Despite steady progress in overall maternal and child health in Ethiopia over the last ten years, mortality rates for mothers and newborns remain persistently high. A set of ambitious initiatives by the Ministry of Health in conjunction with several global and local partners has led to a two-thirds decrease in child mortality since 1990, thus achieving Millennium Development Goal Four (MDG 4). Despite the tremendous efforts and achievements to increase skilled birth attendance in the country, maternal mortality and neonatal mortality rate reduction has been minimal with a maternal mortality ratio of 420 per 100,000 live births^[1]. Forty two percent of under-five deaths in Ethiopia are neonatal, occurring within the first 28 days of life^[2].

Drawing on extensive experience supporting government and large population-based health systems, IHI will support the Ministry of Health in developing a unified Ethiopian National Health Care Quality Strategy that builds on existing initiatives to improve the quality and equity of care at all levels of the health care system. A scalable model of health system improvement will be launched and tested in health facilities and communities across four regions in the country, with the ultimate goal of scaling up to all 9 regions and 2 city administrations in Ethiopia.

“We’ve worked in partnership with IHI since 2013 to explore how QI methodologies might bolster our efforts to improve outcomes for mothers and newborns. The resulting plan is the roadmap we need to help

^[1] WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank, and the United Nations Population Division. Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013. Geneva, World Health Organization, 2014

^[2] Measure DHS. EDHS Report. 2011. Measure DHS. <http://measuredhs.com/pubs/pdf/FR255/FR255.pdf>. Accessed February 5, 2014.

achieve our aims and to strengthen and develop a sustainable, self-sufficient Ethiopian health care quality culture and capability,” said Dr. Abraham Endeshaw, Director of the Medical Services Directorate, Ethiopian Federal Ministry of Health. “This project has come at the ideal time when the FMOH has prioritized quality and equity through the health sector transformation plan. We look forward to continuing our work with IHI, and drawing on the organization’s history of successfully supporting governments through transformative QI initiatives.”

IHI’s work across Africa – including Nigeria, Malawi, Ghana, Liberia, South Africa, and now, Ethiopia – supports governments and partners as they aim to close the gap between current and optimal population health outcomes. Globally, IHI strives to work with partners to rapidly and sustainably improve health outcomes at scale, demonstrating that rapid, significant improvements are possible on a large scale, even in resource-poor regions.

Most recently in Africa, IHI worked with patients, communities, and leaders from health care facilities, districts, and regions across Ghana to build their understanding and use of QI methodologies to accelerate significant reductions in avoidable deaths in children under five years of age. The initiative, called [Project Fives Alive!](#), impacted 134 hospitals in Ghana (80% of Ghana’s public hospitals) drove a 31% reduction in under-5 mortality, a 37% reduction in post-neonatal infant mortality, and a 35% reduction in the under-5 malaria case fatality rate over a six-year period. The work was completed in partnership with the National Catholic Health Service of Ghana, and with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

For the project in Ethiopia, IHI will work in close collaboration with the FMOH, regional health bureaus and other local and global partners working in Ethiopia to improve the health of the Ethiopian population.

About the Institute for Healthcare Improvement

IHI is a leading innovator in health and health care improvement worldwide. For more than 25 years, we have partnered with visionaries, leaders, and front-line practitioners around the globe to spark bold, inventive ways to improve the health of individuals and populations. Recognized as an innovator, convener, trustworthy partner, and driver of results, we are the first place to turn for expertise, help, and encouragement for anyone, anywhere who wants to change health and health care profoundly for the better. To advance our mission, IHI’s work is focused in five key areas: Improvement Capability; Person- and Family-Centered Care; Patient Safety; Quality, Cost, and Value; and Triple Aim for Populations. Learn more at ihi.org.

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