Deepening global political commitments and resources for better health outcomes

Measures to improve the quality of aid are being complemented by growing political commitment and higher financial flows directed at maternal and newborn health. Several years ago, issues of maternal and child health were rarely addressed by world leaders. Today, maternal and child health are on the agenda of world leaders and major conferences, including the G8.

At the 2008 G8 summit meeting, the issue of maternal mortality was discussed, and the Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health asked leaders to increase spending on maternal and child health care and family planning by US$10.2 billion per year.8

In parallel with the 2008 G8 Summit, a G8 Health Experts Group was established. The group set out principles for action, pledging to take comprehensive action to address the health-related Millennium Development Goals, and underlining the importance of both disease-specific initiatives and health-systems strengthening. It also emphasized the need for a longer-term perspective that extends beyond the 2015 MDG deadline, and the imperative of mobilizing a wide range of stakeholders.

Action was pledged in five key areas: health systems strengthening;