

JOINT AFRICA CALL FOR ACTION ON EFFECTIVE USE OF THE MCH HANDBOOK TO ACCELERATE ACHIEVEMENT OF MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS 4 & 5 BY 2015 AND BEYOND MADE DURING THE 8TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON MCH HANDBOOK HELD IN NAIROBI 22ND TO 25TH OCTOBER 2012:

Preamble

Recognizing the African Union's Campaign for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal Mortality in Africa (CARMMA) of 2009 and 2010 which also addresses improvement of Child health;

Welcoming the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for improvement of the health of every woman and every child (EWEC) of 2010 through which at least 16 million lives of women and children are to be saved between 2010 and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target date of 2015;

Acknowledging the consensus reached by the Commissioners of *the United Nations Commission for Information and Accountability for Women's and children's health* of 2011 on the need to take bold action to accelerate progress on MDGs 4 & 5.

Commending the outputs from the **Child Survival Summit** held in Washington DC in June 2012 and the **London Summit on Family Planning** of July, 2012;

The Situation

We, participants from fourteen African Countries and nine other countries from Asia, Europe and Latin America at the 8th *International Conference on MCH handbook* held in Nairobi 22nd to

25th October 2012: the first time this conference has been held in Africa,

Hereby affirm our commitment to the global acceleration of progress on MDG 4 & 5 for the achievement of these MDGs by 2015, particularly in the 75 priority countries that contribute 98% of maternal and child deaths and where concerted efforts are required for acceleration to occur;

Hereby express deep concern that 47 (62%) of the 75 priority countries are from Sub-Sahara Africa constituting 87% of African countries that points to the need for urgent actions in most African countries to accelerate progress towards achieving MDG 4 & 5 by 2015 and beyond;

The Joint Africa Call for Action:

Therefore, we, participants from fourteen African Countries and nine other countries from Asia, Europe and Latin America at the 8th *International Conference on MCH handbook* held in Nairobi 22nd to 25th October 2012: the first time this conference has been held in Africa,

Urge every African country to use the MCH Handbook as an effective integrated tool for accelerating coverage of high impact interventions for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) along the continuum of care. We urge every country with the MCH Handbook to review how to make its use more effective and where there is no handbook to take up, as a matter of urgency, its development and use.

Also urge every African country to set up a process to monitor progress of acceleration towards meeting MDG 4 & 5 and to point out what further tools and domestic resources need to be invested in support of the required concerted acceleration;

Call upon every African Government to institute modalities to significantly reduce adolescent pregnancies, including those within marriage, that very much increase the risk of death among adolescent mothers and among the children they bear;

Also call upon the partners of Africa's development efforts to rally around every African country in support of achieving MDG 4 & 5. In particular, we call upon agencies in *Harmonization of Health in Africa (HHA)*, *Partnership for Maternal Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)* and other agencies in each African country to support MCH services through effective means that include the use of the MCH Handbook as an effective tool for accelerating coverage of high impact interventions towards achievement of MDG 4 & 5 by 2015 and beyond.

25th October, 2012.

African Countries

Burundi, Uganda, Rwanda, Gabon, Ghana, Kenya, Senegal, Madagascar, Cameroon, Morocco, Lesotho, Malawi, South Sudan, Namibia and Zambia.

Others

Japan, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Bangladesh, Philippines, Thailand, Palestine, the Netherlands and Peru.