

Campaign launched today amplifies the voices of healthcare professionals leading the care of pregnant women, newborn babies and children under five.

The healthcare professional associations 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) announce the launch of the Together We Can campaign.

Health professionals are a critical force in driving forward improvements in reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health. Our healthcare 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. We are coming together in the *Together We Can* campaign so that we can champion a shared agenda and ensure that the experts who care for mothers, newborns and children are at the centre of health policy decisions.

The *Together We Can* campaign supports the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*, includes the targets to reduce maternal deaths and end preventable newborn and child deaths- which is at the centre of this new initiative. The campaign also contributes to the development of the health professional workforce in developing countries, another priority in SDG3. Together we can make a difference to global health.

Many mother and newborn deaths are preventable. Our new data, released at the launch of the *Together We Can* campaign, highlights the nine main causes which are responsible for the high mortality rates in the 20 countries with the highest instance of these death. These nine main killers are: Hemorrhage, Hypertension, Maternal Sepsis, Prematurity, Asphyxia, Neonatal Sepsis, Childhood Pneumonia, Diarrhea, Malaria. Simple interventions to the way mothers and babies are cared for could make a significant difference, interventions like the rotavirus and hib vaccinations, active management of third stage labour (AMTSL) and kangaroo care.

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.

We need your help to spread the word so that together we can deliver safer pregnancy, better birth and a healthier childhood. We want every health professional whose life life has been touched by the care of a gynecologist, obstetrician, pediatrician, midwife or nurse to share their story using the hashtag #TouchingStories. Visit www.TogetherWeCan.world to find out more and download our campaign pack.