

The Philips Foundation partners with UNICEF

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UNICEF and The Philips Foundation, together with Concern Worldwide, Maker and Gearbox, have launched the Maternal and Newborn Health Innovations Project, to help save lives and improve the health of pregnant women and children in Kenya.

Under the leadership of the Government of Kenya and the Project's Steering Committee at the Ministry of Health, UNICEF and The Philips Foundation will facilitate the development of innovative health technology and solutions in the field of maternal, newborn and child health. This cooperation will help catalyze novel health interventions for the benefit of the most vulnerable mothers and children, and contribute to reducing the number of deaths of pregnant women and their newborn babies. This investment is in keeping with the Government of Kenya's commitment to investing in innovative, home-grown solutions for maternal and newborn health care.

In developing countries such as Kenya, maternal, newborn and child mortality rates remain unacceptably high.

By 2018, UNICEF and The Philips Foundation, together with partner organizations and local innovation hubs with guidance from the Government of Kenya, aim to develop and scale up innovative, low-cost and locally designed health care devices. These will contribute to improved and more equitable access to life-saving quality care for women and children across Kenya.

"For 1 million babies worldwide every year, their day of birth is also their day of death," said Mr Sharad Sapra, UNICEF Director of the "UNICEF" Global Innovation Centre. He added, "But with strengthened health systems and innovative solutions for both mothers and children, the chance for survival is greatly increased."

The Maternal and Newborn Health Innovations Project is financed by The Philips Foundation and uses the local expertise of Philips Research Africa in Nairobi to mentor social entrepreneurs and facilitate the transfer of health care technology know-

how in Kenya.

"At The Philips Foundation, it is our belief that programmes that combine innovation, partnerships and empowering people will make a lasting and meaningful difference in communities," said Ms Katy Hartley, Head of The Philips Foundation. She added, "In the case of the Maternal and Newborn Health Innovations Project, we are doing just that, as Royal Philips can offer expertise and support from its Philips Research Africa, together with UNICEF and our implementation partners, to enable social entrepreneurs to improve health outcomes for their own communities."

The project was launched ahead of the September 25-27 United Nations Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, where UNICEF is promoting greater involvement of the private sector in improving children's lives.