



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



**Kiwaniis**

## **USAID, Kiwanis Work to Eliminate Maternal & Newborn Tetanus**

### **For Immediate Release**

Tuesday, July 15, 2014

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** - The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is pleased to announce our increased engagement with Kiwanis International to eliminate maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT). As a development agency, USAID is proud to be able to work with Kiwanis and the Elimination effort to test and scale-up programs to make tetanus elimination sustainable.

USAID will initiate the program by providing funding for MNT programs in Kenya, through the Maternal and Child Survival Program. Additional funding will also be provided in support for MNT from USAID Washington health sectors to work with long-term policy developments to sustain MNT elimination in Kenya and across the African region.

School-based provision of tetanus vaccination could help achieve and sustain maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination goals in perpetuity at relatively low cost. USAID, through the Maternal and Child Survival Project, working with UNICEF and Kiwanis International and also the World Health Organization (WHO) are partnering to launch and evaluate a program in Kenya that will vaccinate primary aged boys and girls against tetanus. The WHO has noted that to maintain elimination over the long term requires continued strengthening of routine immunization activities (which includes routine immunization of pregnant women), achieving high levels of access to clean deliveries, reliable surveillance of neonatal tetanus, and introduction of school-based immunization.

Students will be given one dose of tetanus-containing vaccine annually for three consecutive years while they are in primary school. This strategy increases the immunity resulting from infant vaccinations containing diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTP) or pentavalent vaccine and extends it for more than 20 years, taking females well into their childbearing years, and protecting both Kenyan girls and their future children from tetanus for years to come.

Together with highly effective vaccination campaigns, countries are strengthening health systems to ensure delivery of all needed doses of routinely recommended vaccines including tetanus vaccine. USAID has a longstanding commitment to strengthening routine immunization as the platform that provides equitable and timely vaccination to protect women and children from vaccine preventable diseases. USAID maternal and newborn health efforts also support hygienic delivery practices to protect both the mother and baby from infection at the time of delivery, another key strategy for achieving and sustaining tetanus elimination.

USAID is proud to partner with Kiwanis International to Eliminate MNT and to sustain these achievements for generations to come.