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www.TheEliminateProject.org

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UNICEF announces maternal and neonatal tetanus elimination in half of at-risk countries

Kiwanis International reaches US\$30 million raised for The Eliminate Project

INDIANAPOLIS—Maternal and neonatal tetanus, one of the most deadly diseases a mother and her newborn can face, has been eliminated in more than half of affected countries targeted by UNICEF just 13 years ago. The milestone was announced Wednesday at the annual meeting of the Maternal and Neonatal Tetanus Elimination Initiative at UNICEF headquarters in New York.

Since 2011, Kiwanis International has been working to raise US\$110 million for The Eliminate Project to eliminate this centuries-old disease that kills one baby every nine minutes.

“From our oldest Kiwanis member to our youngest K-Kids member, our Kiwanis family has been working hard raising money to save lives,” says Stan Soderstrom, executive director of Kiwanis International. “Today, we are \$30 million closer to achieving our goal of raising \$110 million by 2015. And, we’re excited the disease is no longer a risk for mothers and babies in half of the originally targeted countries.”

Soderstrom says Kiwanis International’s fundraising is on-track and expects the campaign will bring in an additional US\$12 million by the end of the year.

“Besides personal giving, our members are organizing golf outings, dinners, bake sales and even flash mobs to help raise awareness and funds to eliminate MNT,” he says.

MNT results when tetanus spores, which are present in soil everywhere, enter the bloodstream. It is mainly caused by a lack of access to sanitary birthing conditions, unclean instruments used to cut the umbilical cord and unclean post-partum cord care.

MNT is easily prevented by giving women of childbearing age a series of three vaccine doses, which costs roughly US\$1.80. This cost includes vaccinations, syringes, safe storage, transportation and more.

The countries that have eliminated MNT are: Bangladesh; Benin; Burkina Faso; Burundi; Cameroon; China; Comoros; Congo (Republic of); Cote d' Ivoire; Egypt; Eritrea; Ghana; Guinea Bissau; Iraq; Liberia; Malawi; Mozambique; Myanmar; Namibia; Nepal; Rwanda; Senegal; South Africa; Tanzania; Timor Leste; Turkey; Togo; Uganda; Vietnam; Zimbabwe and Zambia.

The countries that are still working toward elimination include Afghanistan; Angola; Cambodia; Central African Republic; Chad; Congo DR; Equatorial Guinea; Ethiopia; Gabon; Guinea; Haiti; India; Indonesia; Kenya; Lao People's Democratic Republic; Madagascar; Mali; Mauritania; Niger; Nigeria; Pakistan; Papua New Guinea; Philippines; Sierra Leone; Somalia; Sudan; South Sudan; and Yemen.

About The Eliminate Project

The Eliminate Project, Kiwanis International's Global Campaign for Children, will save or protect millions of mothers and their future babies. In partnership with UNICEF, Kiwanis is eliminating maternal and neonatal tetanus (MNT), a disease that kills one baby every nine minutes and a significant number of women each year, by immunizing women of child-bearing age. Since 1999, UNICEF and its partners have eliminated MNT in 31 countries, and Kiwanis' pledge to raise US\$110 million will help fund elimination of the disease in the 28 countries that remain at risk.

About Kiwanis

Founded in 1915, Kiwanis International is a global organization of clubs and members dedicated to serving the children of the world. Kiwanis and its family of clubs, including Circle K International for university students, Key Club for students age 14–18, Builders Club for students age 11–14, Kiwanis Kids for students age 6–12 and Aktion Club for adults living with disabilities, dedicate annually more than 18 million service hours to strengthen communities and serve children. The Kiwanis International family comprises nearly 600,000

adult and youth members in 80 countries and geographic areas. For more information about Kiwanis International, please visit www.kiwanis.org.

About global MNT elimination efforts

The MNT Elimination Initiative is an international private-public partnership that includes national governments, UNICEF, WHO, UNFPA, GAVI, USAID/Immunization Basics, CDC, UNICEF National Committees, the Government of Japan, Save the Children, PATH, RMHC, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Kiwanis International, Pampers – a division of Procter & Gamble, and BD.

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