

# Introducing *Countdown*



Countdown to 2015 for Maternal, Newborn and Child  
8 June, 2010  
Washington DC, USA

Presented on behalf of Countdown by:

**Zulfiqar A Bhutta**

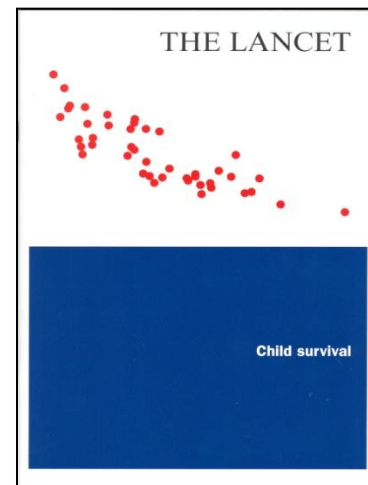
Co-Chair, Countdown Coordinating Committee

The Aga Khan University, Pakistan

# Origins - 2003

## LANCET CHILD SURVIVAL SERIES:

- ⇒ 10 million child deaths globally in 2000
- ⇒ Effective interventions are available & can make a difference
- ⇒ Coverage is unacceptably low and inequitable
- ⇒ We need to MAKE NOISE



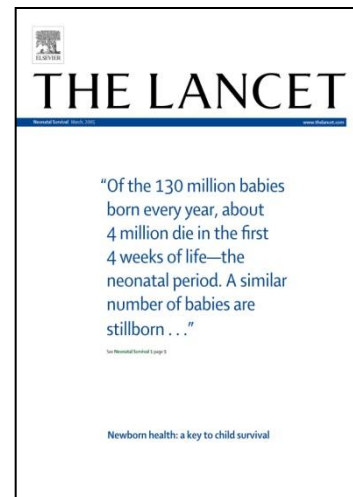
***“We commit ourselves to convening a series of meetings, every 2 years, ...[to] provide regular opportunities for the world to take stock of progress in preventing child deaths, and to hold countries and their partners accountable.”***

# Origins – 2004-5

## LANCET NEONATAL SERIES:

- 4 million newborns die each year
- Effective interventions are available
- Coverage is unacceptably low
- We need to MAKE NOISE

***“At the international level, greater accountability could be promoted, including ... assessing the progress in neonatal health at the planned biennial conferences on child survival, the first of which will be held in December, 2005.”***



# Momentum built...

**Who's got the power?  
Transforming health systems  
for women and children**  
Summary version



Achieving the Millennium Development Goals

 MillenniumProject

The World Health Report 2006  
**Make every mother  
and child count**



- UNICEF makes child survival the #1 priority
- PMNCH created



 **WOMEN  
DELIVER**

# *The Lancet* provided a spotlight

- Series, e.g.,
  - ⇒ Maternal survival (2006)
  - ⇒ Sexual & reproductive health (2006)
  - ⇒ Child development (2007)
  - ⇒ Undernutrition (2008)
- Special Issues, e.g.,
  - ⇒ Countdown (2005 & 2008)
  - ⇒ Women Deliver (2007)
  - ⇒ Preterm birth (2008)
  - ⇒ Alma Ata (2008)
  - ⇒ And more!

- Editorials, commentaries
- Outlet for good science
- Forum for debate

“The Countdown process ... has evolved rapidly into a scientific and social movement to prevent the needless deaths of millions of mothers and children.”

*Richard Horton*  
*The Lancet*

# Global Countdown Conferences...

**2005 in London**

**2008 in Cape Town**

## Tracking Progress in Child Survival Countdown to 2015

The first in a series of two-yearly rolling reviews of progress in child survival as called for in the Bellagio/Lancet Child Survival series 2003.



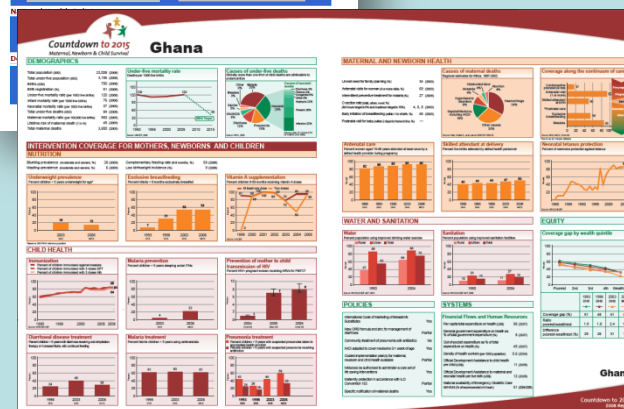
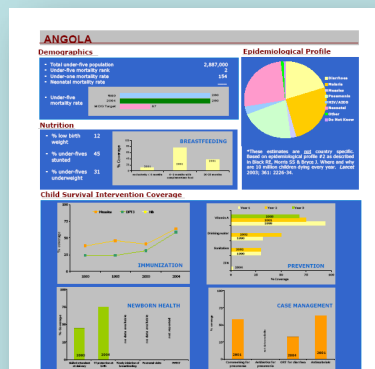
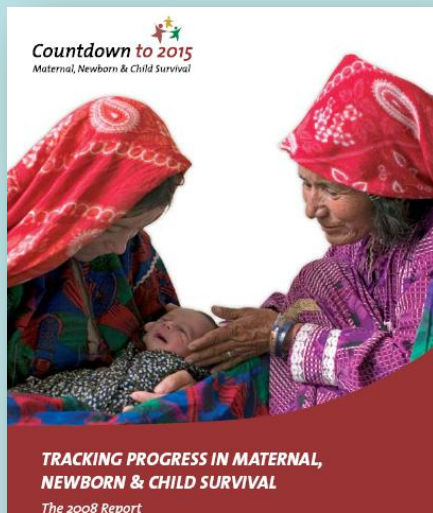
**61 country delegations!**

# ... and Countdown Products

## Reports & media materials

## Country Profiles

## Publications



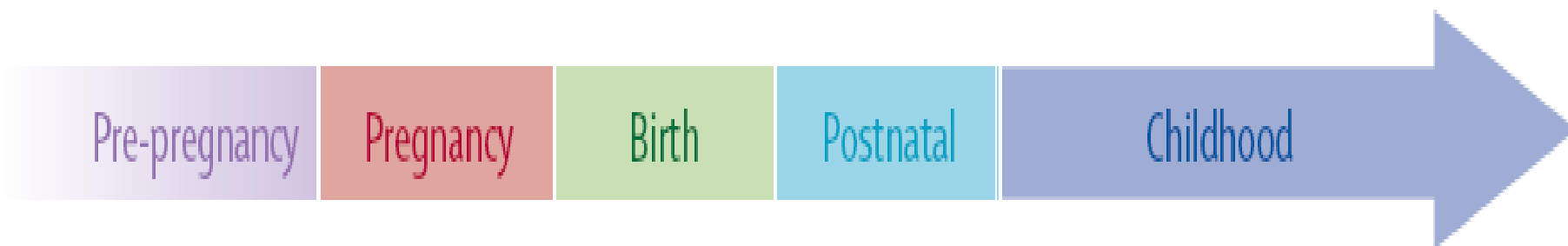
## From Technical Working Groups



## And from countries



# An evolution from child survival to the continuum of care



# Who is *Countdown*?

1. Individuals: scientists/academics, policymakers, public health workers, communications experts, teachers...
2. Governments: MNC policymakers, members of Parliament...
3. Organizations: NGOs, UN agencies, donors, medical journals...



THE WORLD BANK



THE LANCET



BILL & MELINDA  
GATES foundation



BASICS



THE AGA KHAN UNIVERSITY



London School of Hygiene  
& Tropical Medicine



UNIVERSITY  
OF ABERDEEN

# Countdown Principles

## ***1. Based on scientific evidence***

All Countdown work reflects an effort to report on the best available data, collected with care and reported in ways that are fully transparent and permit replication of all analyses and results.

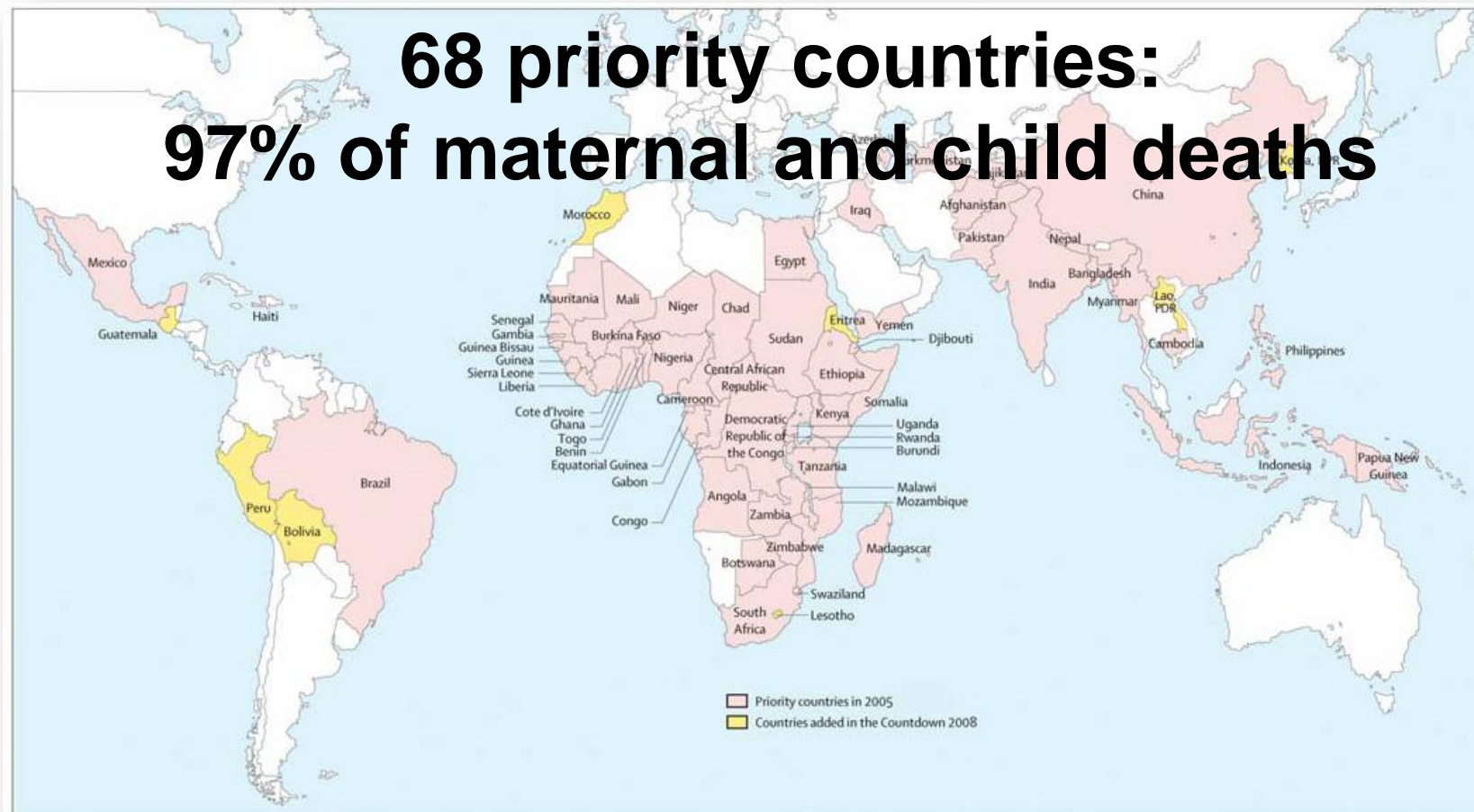
## ***2. Focused on strengthening country programs.***

Representatives of countries are involved in the decision-making processes of Countdown, including the selection of priority research topics and strategies for advocacy and accountability.

## ***3. Respects and holds accountable all partners who adhere to its principles.***

There is one set of rules that applies to all. Where gaps in evidence or disappointing outcomes are found, they are reported fully in the spirit of a multi-disciplinary “community of interest” with the shared mission of reducing MNC mortality.

# Where is Countdown?



New Countdown work is under way in Asia and the Pacific.

# What does *Countdown* do?

- Tracks country-level coverage for interventions proven to reduce maternal, newborn and child mortality and associated indicators for
  - ⇒ Policies and health system strength
  - ⇒ Financial flows
  - ⇒ Equity
- Analyzes country-level trends and recommends actions to accelerate progress
- Identifies knowledge and data gaps
- Promotes accountability for progress

# What “set” of interventions?

**All** interventions must have evidence of:

- Effectiveness
  - Feasibility
    - Affordability
      - Availability

**Plus** indicators of coverage that are available in and comparable across the majority of Countdown countries

# What is coverage?

The proportion of individuals who  
need a service or intervention who  
***actually receive it***

# What makes coverage a good choice for global monitoring?

- Complements country efforts
- Good proxy for impact
- Signals whether programme is operating adequately
- Serves as “red flag” for further action, **not** comprehensive info for programme management

## ***LiST***

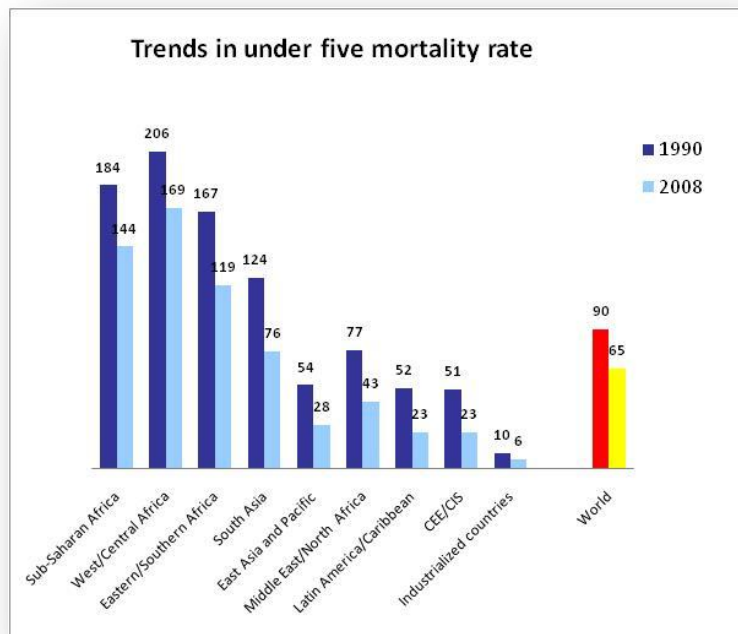
***(Lives Saved Tool)***

*A computer program  
that can turn  
changes in coverage  
for MNC interventions  
into estimates of lives saved.*

***A companion for  
Countdown!***

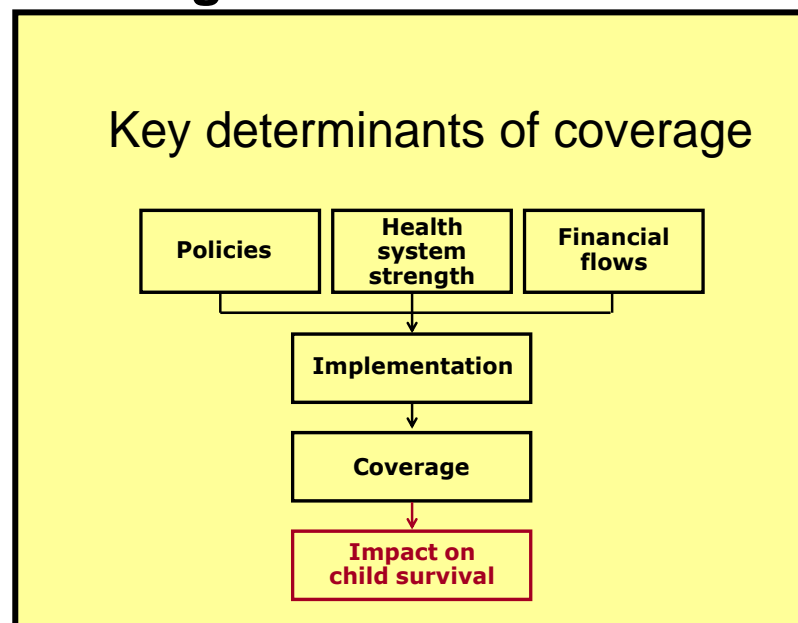
# What does *Countdown* track in addition to coverage?

## Mortality, nutritional status and causes of death



IGME, as reported in *Lancet*, 10 September 2009.

## Key determinants of coverage



## Equity in coverage

Beginning to include social determinants

## What does Countdown mean to people like me?

- An **independent**, credible body for marking progress or lack thereof in key areas of MNCH
- An **integration** platform: how can we do this together? Bringing in issues of
  - ⇒ Health systems
  - ⇒ Global & National investments
  - ⇒ Equity and Justice
  - ⇒ Social determinants
  - ⇒ Community engagement and empowerment
  - ⇒ Human Development