

## **G8 Accountability for Maternal & Child Health and Food Security**

Since the L'Aquila Summit in 2009, the G8 has placed significant emphasis on becoming more accountable and effective in their development efforts. Important steps were taken in 2010 to enhance tracking, monitoring and reporting of G8 commitments, including the release of the first G8 Accountability Report. Now 2011 provides an opportunity for the G8 to show progress towards greater accountability, demonstrated through the release of specific reports in relation to maternal and child health and food security as well as outlining detailed action plans for how commitments will be translated into effective, coordinated action that will save the lives of millions of women and children.

Given this focus on accountability, World Vision has evaluated the G8 on three key components:

- **Accountability for financial commitments** – this is the most often cited element of accountability and was the primary focus of the 2010 Muskoka Accountability Report. Delivering on funding commitments is key to ensuring the G8's credibility and cementing its leadership role in global development, as well as ensuring progress in key areas such as maternal and child health. However recent figures show that collectively G8 countries only provided 50% of their 2005 Gleneagles pledge to double aid to Africa. **Verdict: Must do better**
- **Accountability to deliver resources effectively** – World Vision welcomes recent commitments from the G8 to support country-led development, especially relating to the Muskoka Initiative, but encourages the G8 to further harmonise and coordinate their support to countries, between G8 members and other donors or initiatives. The G8 made a commitment to review their 'aid effectiveness commitments' at the 2011 Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness. This review should expand to assess how the principles of aid effectiveness are being applied to the delivery of **all** G8 commitments. **Verdict: Can do better**
- **Accountability of governments to their citizens** – At the 2010 G8 Development Ministers meeting, Ministers "emphasised the importance of accountability to their own citizens for the effective use of international assistance" while also reinforcing "the ownership and accountability of partner countries to their citizens". This accountability chain must be strengthened to ensure that citizens in developing countries, who are often the intended beneficiaries of international development efforts, are also included in the accountability process in meaningful ways. **Verdict: Should do better**

### **Saving women's and children's lives – implementing the Muskoka Initiative**

In 2010 the G8 played a key role in drawing attention to maternal and child health and galvanizing political momentum to address the most off-track Millennium Development Goals. Through the Muskoka Initiative, a self-declared 'comprehensive and integrated approach to accelerate progress on MDGs 4 and 5', the G8 provided a catalyst for the development and launch of the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health in September 2010. This strategy,

described as the 'best prospect in a generation for advancing the wellbeing of millions of the world's poorest and most disadvantaged women and children', outlines a collective commitment for the G8 and other stakeholders to maximize the impact of their contributions and save a potential 16 million lives by 2015.

With a mandate from the UN Secretary General, the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health is currently developing an accountability framework that will be implemented at both national and global levels to track resources and results for maternal and child health in line with the Global Strategy. This framework must also extend its focus to include sub-national accountability, involving families and communities.

World Vision calls on the G8 to:

- 1. Provide a clear timetable and action plan for outstanding financial commitments for maternal and child health as part of its review of action to date under the Muskoka Initiative*
- 2. Commit the required financial and technical support required to implement the recommendations of the Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health and support efforts to extend accountability for maternal and child health commitments to the local level, ensuring that national governments develop inclusive processes that place children, families and communities at the centre of the accountability framework.*

### **Ensuring adequate food and nutrition security - implementing the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative**

Poor nutrition is the single biggest cause of ill health and death for children under five and is particularly critical for pregnant women and young children. Although there are many causes of child undernutrition, there is one goal: getting the right food and nutrition interventions to vulnerable children at the right time. Specific health system nutrition programmes for women and children must be backed up by food security for all communities. This is a complex task which requires a range of responses from emergency food supplies, to agricultural research, producer incentives and land use planning.

The world is once again experiencing a significant elevation in food prices which is likely to plunge even more people into hunger – the number currently stands at around 1 billion. During the last price shock in 2007 to 2009 the G8 and other countries agreed to take urgent action to reverse the decline in agricultural investment and to improve the global food security, agricultural and nutrition architecture.

Through the 2009 L'Aquila Food Security Initiative (AFSI) donor countries committed \$22 billion over three years to agricultural development and to maintaining levels of emergency food funding. But there is a lack of a clear timetable and action plan that would enable the G8 members to be accountable for the delivery of their specific financial commitments.

#### **Recommendations**

- 1. The G8 should, as part of its review of action to date under the L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, provide a clear timetable and action plan for outstanding financial commitments and ensure new commitments are made to sustain current levels of food security funding*
- 2. All G8 supported food security and agriculture programmes should include key indicators relating to improvements in child and maternal nutrition*