

[FCDO launches new approach to improving global health](#)

The Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) has today (14 December) launched two papers that reaffirm the UK's commitment to improving health around the world through development, diplomacy and research.

The [Ending Preventable Deaths Approach Paper](#) sets out how the UK will work with partners to address the reality that every six seconds, a pregnant woman, newborn baby or child dies somewhere in the world.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought this situation into sharp relief. Recent estimates suggest that there have been more than two maternal and child deaths for every official COVID-19 death in low-income countries. Most of these deaths are preventable.

The FCDO's work will be focused on tackling barriers that stand in the way of protecting the lives of mothers, babies and children – such as poor-quality health services, lack of nutrition, unsafe water and inadequate sanitation. Work will also address deeper inequalities that drive these deaths, whether through a lack of choice and access for women and girls, or through inadequate services for people who are disabled.

Strengthening health systems is at the heart of the UK's approach. When health systems are stretched, mothers are forced to give birth alone, babies do not get the essential care they need, and children miss out on life-saving immunisations. Strong health systems are the foundation for achieving better health and wellbeing for everyone, including women and girls, and for making societies more secure and prosperous.

The second strategy, the [Health Systems Strengthening Position Paper](#), sets out how the FCDO will work with international partners to build strong, resilient and inclusive health systems able to cope with unexpected shocks such as COVID-19 and climate change, while at the same time delivering quality, inclusive, equitable and accessible health services that people need and trust.

Together, these papers set out a comprehensive approach to helping achieve the health-related Sustainable Development Goals agreed at the United Nations and the role the UK will play both as a willing partner to other countries and an actor on the global stage to leave no one's health behind.

Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Minister Wendy Morton said:

We are committed to working with our partners to end the preventable deaths of mothers, babies and children by 2030. With the right care, most of these tragic deaths are avoidable.

Working with countries and our partners to build a foundation of

strong, resilient and inclusive health systems around the world will be at the heart of what we do. This will not only help to end preventable deaths but strengthen our health security and our resilience to climate change as we learn the lessons from COVID-19 and deliver on our COP26 commitments.