

## On New Year's Day, UNICEF challenges nations to join fight to help more newborns survive first days of life

1 January 2018 – Nearly 386,000 babies will be born on New Year's Day and some 90 per cent in less developed regions and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is challenging nations around the world to make sure more newborns survive their first days of life.

This New Year, UNICEF's resolution is to help give every child more than an hour, more than a day, more than a month more than survival, Stefan Peterson, UNICEF's Chief of Health, said Monday.

The agency reported that Kiribati's Christmas Island in the Pacific would most likely welcome 2018's first baby; the United States, its last. Globally, over half of these births are estimated to take place in nine countries:

- India 69,070
- China 44,760
- Nigeria 20,210
- Pakistan 14,910
- Indonesia 13,370
- United States 11,280
- Democratic Republic of Congo 9,400
- Ethiopia 9,020
- Bangladesh 8,370

While many babies will survive, some will not make it past their first day. In 2016, an estimated 2,600 children died within the first 24 hours every day of the year. UNICEF said that for almost two million newborns, their first week was also their last.

In all, 2.6 million children died before the end of their first month. Among those children, more than 80 per cent died from preventable and treatable causes such as premature birth, complications during delivery, and infections like sepsis and pneumonia.

We call on governments and partners to join the fight to save millions of children's lives by providing proven, low-cost solutions, said Mr. Peterson.

UNICEF-supported non-rounded estimates on births and life expectancy by countries: [here](#)

Over the past two decades, the world has seen unprecedented progress in child survival, halving the number of children worldwide who die before their fifth birthday to 5.6 million in 2016. But despite these advances, there has been slower progress for newborns. Babies dying in the first month account for 46

per cent of all deaths among children under five.

Next month, UNICEF will launch 'Every Child Alive,' a global campaign to demand and deliver affordable, quality health care solutions for every mother and newborn. These include a steady supply of clean water and electricity at health facilities, the presence of a skilled health attendant during birth, disinfecting the umbilical cord, breastfeeding within the first hour after birth, and skin-to-skin contact between the mother and child.

"We are now entering the era when all the world's newborns should have the opportunity to see the 22nd century," added Mr. Peterson, but unfortunately, nearly half of the children born this year likely will not. "A child born in Sweden in January 2018 is most likely to live to 2100, while a child from Somalia would be unlikely to live beyond 2075," he lamented.