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**New Global Initiative Launched to Prevent and Manage  
Preterm Birth and Low Birth Weight Babies  
24 Countries Identified to Tackle Biggest Cause of Death for Children Under Five**

**Washington, DC**—Every year, about 15 million babies are born prematurely and more than one million babies die due to complications of preterm birth. A strategic partnership among PCI (Project Concern International), the Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and Stillbirth (GAPPS), and the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) has been formed to support USAID's global effort to reduce newborn mortality by preventing and managing preterm birth (PTB) and low birth weight (LBW) complications.

"We are excited to be working on this critical agenda with the U.S. Agency for International Development and in close partnership with the global maternal and newborn health community, including national governments, non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, and the private sector," said **Judith Robb-McCord, Director of Every Premie—Scaling, Catalyzing, Advocating, Learning, Evidence-driven (Every Premie—SCALE)**. "Our goal is to ignite change at the community, national, and global levels to ensure that care for premature and small babies is prioritized within country-led policies, protocols, and initiatives."

Prematurity is the leading cause of newborn deaths in the first four weeks of life and the leading cause of death among children under five around the world. At the same time, low birth weight is a major contributor of newborn deaths globally. The new **Every Premie—SCALE** program is a \$9 million, five-year award from USAID to expand evidence-based and underutilized PTB and LBW interventions in 24 priority countries across Africa and Asia.

"Solutions to improve the survival of these vulnerable preterm and LBW babies exist," said **Dr. Jim Litch, Director at GAPPS Perinatal Interventions Program**. "Every Premie—SCALE will address critical knowledge gaps about how to implement and scale up proven interventions. Working with global partners, we will provide evidence on which PTB and LBW interventions can be successfully implemented at scale to save lives."

Every Premie—SCALE will increase the prioritization and utilization of PTB and LBW interventions within program countries and will lead change at both the national and local level to strengthen the capacity and performance of care at health facilities and within communities.

"Many babies throughout the world are born with limited access to health care. In order to increase their chances for survival, it is imperative that communities and families value preterm and LBW babies and that we strengthen the skills of frontline health workers and ensure they have the necessary equipment and supplies to provide quality care," said **Suzanne Stalls, Vice President, Department of Global Outreach at ACNM**. "This program offers a unique opportunity

to shine a spotlight on PTB and LBW and the involvement required from policymakers, clinicians, communities, and families so that these babies get the care they need.”

**About PCI:** PCI’s mission is to prevent disease, improve community health and promote sustainable development worldwide. Motivated by a concern for the world’s most vulnerable children, families and communities, PCI envisions a world where abundant resources are shared, communities are able to provide for the health and well-being of their members, and children and families can achieve lives of hope, good health and self-sufficiency. For more information, visit [www.pciglobal.org](http://www.pciglobal.org).

**About GAPPS:** The Global Alliance to Prevent Prematurity and Stillbirth (GAPPS), an initiative of Seattle Children’s, leads a collaborative, global effort to increase awareness and accelerate innovative research and interventions that will improve maternal, newborn and child health outcomes around the world. Join us on Facebook and Twitter, and learn more at [www.gapps.org](http://www.gapps.org).

**About ACNM:** The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional association that represents certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) in the United States. ACNM promotes excellence in midwifery education, clinical practice, and research. ACNM’s Department of Global Outreach (DGO) has more than three decades of experience strengthening the capacity of midwives and other health care professionals in developing countries. [www.midwife.org/global-outreach](http://www.midwife.org/global-outreach).

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