

Development aid for maternal and child health stalls, despite increasing number of donors

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Latest figures from the Countdown to 2015 group, published in *The Lancet*, show that official development aid for maternal, newborn, and child health activities stalled for the first time in 2010, with the total volume of aid given decreasing slightly, despite a growing number of donors being recorded.

The study examines trends in the quantity of official development aid (ODA) provided to the 74 countries monitored by the Countdown group.

While the total volume of aid provided to these countries increased steadily from 2003 to 2009, there was a decrease of 0.5% (\$32 million) between 2009 and 2010, even though the authors tracked six donors newly reporting provision of this sort of assistance in 2010.

As lead author Justine Hsu, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), points out, "This initial signs of a levelling off in funding for maternal, newborn, and child health is against a backdrop of a [slowdown](#) in the rate of increases in total ODA across all sectors in recent years. The recent slowdown in the rate of funding increases is worrying, and likely to partly result from the present [financial crisis](#)."

"For many of the countries who receive this aid, having a steady supply of aid is essential if they are to meet international targets for reducing

maternal and [child mortality](#). If aid begins to drop or becomes more uncertain, this could have devastating effects on the health—and survival—of millions of women and children worldwide."

Provided by Lancet

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