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## MD Writes...



Every year, around this time, our pulse beats faster. And by

mid-August it reaches a crescendo as we recount our 'tryst with destiny'- the birth of our nation - the Independence Day of India. But over the last 64 years, have we used this independence fully? Despite our freedom of speech, are we still not chained by the limitation of our thoughts? Despite the freedom to move, aren't we restrained by our fear to try? And despite the freedom to grow, have we not chosen to limit our potential? At IPE, we try to do our small bits to make this change happen - in india, and the world.



We also have a wallpaper (featured above) which you can download [here](#). Let us, this August, unchain

## Midwives: Delivering babies and more!

The role of [midwives](#) in preventing maternal and child deaths - crucial to achieve the [MDGs](#) - is a reality that few can deny. However, despite this, midwives seem to be the [unsung heroes of our times](#).



The ***State of the World's Midwifery Report (2011): Delivering Health Saving Lives*** seeks to change that! Launched at the [international conference of midwives](#) in Durban on 20 June 2011, it is the first document to address this critical but often overlooked aspect. Co-ordinated by [UNFPA](#) and supported by more than [30 agencies](#), it covers data from 58 countries and estimates a shortage of 350,000 skilled midwives to meet the requirement across the world.

The 3 main issues highlighted are:

- There is a **triple gap** - **competencies** (i.e. well-qualified midwives), **coverage** (of midwives and health facilities) and **access** (addressing issues from women's perspective);
- The triad of **education** (curricula, faculty and exposure), **regulation** (of the profession) and **association** (through networks of midwives) has had insufficient focus which reduces impact; and

the latent power hidden in all of us to make India the developed nation that it was destined to be!

- Ashwajit Singh

## Editorial

Dear All

Mid year already - that's what the July issue seems to say. But the good news is that the remaining half is starting! With incomplete resolutions, unfulfilled promises and burgeoning 'To-do's', it is easy for almost all of us to fall in the rut of doing things mechanically. But sometimes, it's worth to stop and ask some questions. As this issue of INSPIRE does.

From the role of midwives to the food security Act; from corruption in the road sector to a novel education experiment in India, this issue is sure to leave you thinking. But what is really needed is for us to react to these issues - to think in, speak out, act up and move forward.

That is the challenge of true growth - from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge. From the comfort of inaction to the satisfaction of achievement!

Stay Inspired. Stay Ahead!!

- Abdul Rahim &  
Preethi Thomas

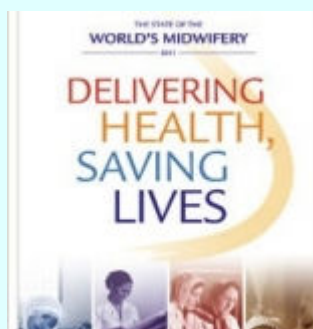
- **Policy coherence** is disjointed (i.e. centrality of midwives to healthcare is overlooked) and access to **strategic data** (about midwives) is low.

In particular, it urges governments to:

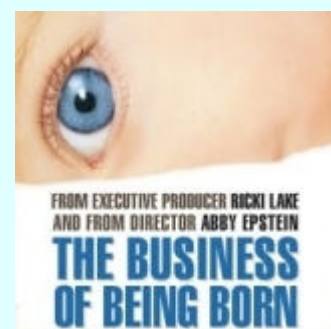
- Recognise **midwifery as a distinct profession**, core to maternal and newborn health, and promote it as a career;
- Ensure adequate availability and distribution of **emergency obstetric and newborn care facilities**; and
- Invest in human resource to **develop and maintain competencies** among midwives.

It also includes statistical tables and applicable global standards, collating relevant midwifery information into one reference document.

- Access the [Report Homepage](#)
- Read the [Executive Summary](#)
- View or Download the [Factsheet](#)
- View the [Country Profiles](#)
- Visit - [HNN Resources and Tools for midwives](#)
- Learn - UNFPA [Midwifery Resource Kit](#)
- Watch Video - [Story of Midwives](#)



Download the 'State of World's Midwifery' full report by clicking above (9 MB)



Click above to view trailer of how birthing is big business in developed countries.

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## World Bank predicts lower Global GDP Growth



The World Bank's **Global Economic Prospects: June 2011 (Maintaining Progress amid Turmoil)** [released on 7 June 2011](#) reviews the current global economic scenario. It asserts that although the global financial crisis is no longer the major force dictating the pace of economic activity, high fiscal deficits and rising sovereign debt pose medium-term challenges to a wide-range of high income countries. It also predicts a slowing of the Global GDP growth - from **3.8% in 2010 to 3.2% in 2011** on account of increasing food and fuel prices, policy tightening and natural disasters. In South Asia, it predicts high import costs and cuts to fight inflation, partially offset by trade, which will drive the global growth story.

Download the [Report](#) or watch a [Video](#) of its findings.



## Unemployment Rate Falls

The 66th round of the National Sample Survey (NSS) [released on 24th June 2011](#), reports that the Indian unemployment rate has reduced from 2.3% (in 2005-06) to 2% (in 2009-10). However, it also finds a significant reduction in workforce (from 42% to 39%), largely due to [lower women participation](#). Despite [controversies](#) on the data, it reports near doubling of wage rate during the last 5 years. [Download NSS report.](#)



## RBI releases Financial Stability Report

The Reserve Bank of India released its 6 monthly [Financial Stability Report](#) on 14 June 2011. The report uses analytical techniques to conclude that the Indian financial system remains stable with strong fundamentals despite high inflation. Further, the financial market is stress free and the banking structure continues to be stable despite inherent risks due to its 'clustered' structure. [Download report.](#)



## Road to Corruption

On June 1 2011, the World Bank [released a new report](#) : *Curbing Fraud, Corruption, and Collusion in the Roads Sector*. The report analyses findings in 29 cases of misconduct in World Bank funded road projects and finds collusion among bidding firms the biggest area of concern. It then examines measures taken by developed countries to address these and how they can be adapted to developing countries as well. [Download Report](#)



## Maternal deaths fall by 17%

An [RGI](#) Bulletin released on 1 June 2011 shows that the [Maternal Mortality Ratio](#) (MMR) in India was 212 per 100,000 live births in 2007-09 compared to 254 in 2004-06, a fall of 17%. Among states, Assam has the [worst](#) performance (390), Kerala the best (89) while West Bengal (145) is the [only state to have worsened](#) during the period. As per the MDG targets, India needs to reach an MMR of 109 by 2015. Download [MMR Bulletin](#).



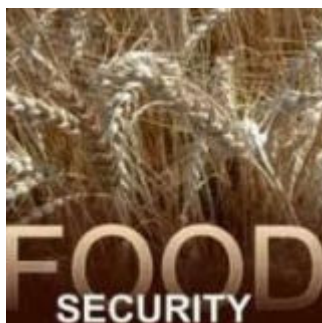
## Bihar: Inclusive development?

In this EPW Paper (June 2011), Gerry and Janine Rodgers examine the pattern of economic and social change in Bihar over the last decade. Based on studies of 2 villages on agricultural productivity, labour market, development, distribution and



## "Chavanni" is Dead !

The Reserve Bank of India had issued a statement that coins of [25 paise and below will cease to be legal tender](#) from July 1 2011. The 25 paise coin was introduced in 1957 and in 1988, its stainless steel version was first issued. Due to increase in prices and [negative seigniorage](#) i.e. where the material cost exceeds the currency value, the 25 paise coin like the other low value coins is being [phased out](#) by the government.



## Exiling Hunger in India

In this emotional essay by Harsh Mander published in EPW (18 June 2011), he writes about hunger and starvation prevalent in the country. He then asks *'to agree on a floor of human dignity below which we will not allow any human being to*



## 25% of India Desertified

India's 4th National Report to the [United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification](#) (UNCCD) released in June 2011 by the [Ministry of Environment and Forests](#) reports that 69% of it is dryland while 32% is affected by land degradation and 25% by [desertification](#). Coming close on the [World Environment Day](#) on 5 June, this raises new issues of livelihood, afforestation and sustainability. [Download report](#).



## DFID approach towards Health Research

DFID has released a Working Paper underlining the importance of generating new knowledge to deliver health services more effectively and efficiently. It plans to support health research investments to unlock and accelerate

social practices, they conclude that migration is the primary trigger for change, and despite some social progress, economic transformation remains slow. [Download paper.](#)



### Mind over Map

Stuck writing that presentation or report? Maybe you're procrastinating, and feeling guilty about it. Here's a tip – use a [mind map](#). Created over 35 years ago by [Tony Buzan](#), Mind Maps have become a unique tool exercising both parts of the brain with visual representations of analytical thought processes. Here is a [tutorial](#) on using this tool for government business writing. With this tool, you can think better and freely; no matter what your [thinking style!](#)

*fall...Can we agree that whatever this costs, we will pay?'* As a first step, he advocates a [comprehensive Food Security Act](#) to combat hunger in India. [Download paper.](#)



### Hole in the Wall

Despite criticism of the Indian education system, its students show great urge for learning. This is brought out in a [TED](#) talk by [Sugata Roy](#) about his 'Hole in the Wall' Project which proved that illiterate children able to access a computer through a hole in the wall, learn to use it themselves. He asserts that even without formal teaching, children can teach themselves and each other if they're motivated by curiosity and peer interest. View the [video](#) (20 mins).

progress towards the health MDGs across the world. [This article](#) shows the turmoil of a woman in the absence on proper health services. Download DFID Working Paper [here](#).



### Getting faster email responses

*"I can't tell if my emails are being read or not. I hate it when people don't respond."* If that sounds like your pet grouse, then maybe you need to make some changes in your emailing habit. From the very useful [Lifhack](#) site, here are 5 tips to get a faster response: 1) Write shorter emails 2) Send fewer emails 3) Ask for a response 4) Start with a deadline and 5) Send individual rather than group mails. Read the [full article](#).