Building a global policy agenda to prioritize preterm birth: A qualitative analysis on factors shaping global health policymaking

Sara Kassabian, Sara Fewer, Gavin Yamey, Claire D. Brindis

## Semi-structured interview guide

**General:**

* Please begin by explaining your professional work with preterm birth.
* In your opinion, what are the key priorities in the global health field at present?
  + Why do you think these areas have received attention?
* How much of a priority is preterm birth on the global health agenda?
  + What have been the challenges with generating priority for preterm birth?
* \* Is preterm birth a priority for your agency? If yes, how much of a priority? If not, why is preterm birth not a priority?
* Have there been any successes with generating priority for preterm birth?

**Actor Power**

* Are there any key individuals/organizations that set major child health policy globally?
  + Is there agreement over the general direction in which to invest in child health? **OR** Is there consensus on where the money should be investment to prevent under-five deaths?
* Are there individuals or organizations that are leading the preterm birth field?
  + Are these leaders well connected—is there, for example, a network of leaders on preterm birth?
* There are many different actors who work in preterm birth and neonatal health. How much agreement or disagreement is there between them?
  + *Is there consensus on what the priority issues are?* (If there is disagreement, ask whether this disagreement has been a barrier to taking action on preterm birth)
* Is there civil society involvement or grassroots advocacy around preterm birth in LMICs?

**Ideas**

* How do you define preterm birth? Is this consistent with the WHO definition of preterm birth (any baby born before 37 completed weeks of gestation)?
  + Do other global health actors adhere to the same definition of preterm birth/prematurity (as outlined by WHO)?
* Do leaders in the field generally agree or disagree about the best methods for preventing preterm birth and caring for preterm infants?
  + If there is disagreement, does this get in the way of action?
* How should the issue of preterm birth be framed to political leaders in order to generate political support?

**Political Contexts**

* Have there been any windows of opportunity where preterm birth may have gained more traction?
* Are there any future windows to help preterm birth gain priority in global health?
  + How does the launch of the new Sustainable Development Goals shape your thoughts on global health priorities? Do you think preterm birth will have a space in this new agenda?
* Are there mechanisms for advocating for preterm birth at a global political level in multilateral organizations (UN, WHO)?

**Issue Characteristics**

* How reliable are the data on the burden of preterm birth?
  + Are researchers able to use these data to generate action?
* According to the 2010 Global Burden of Disease report, published recently in the Lancet, preterm birth is the now leading cause of death in children under 5 years. Has the severity of preterm birth been recognized by policymakers?
  + Has this lead to increased action around preterm birth?
* What preterm interventions are most important to scale up in LMIC?
  + What are some barriers to scale-up? **OR** Thinking hypothetically, if we had all the funding to make these interventions happen, what would be some of the barriers to scaling-up these interventions in LMIC?

**Closing**

* In your opinion, what are some of the lessons learned from the MDG era? What are the implications for the new post-2015 SDG era?
* Are there any specific papers, articles, or reports about preterm birth that you can direct us toward that should be included in our analysis?
* Is there anything else you would like to add?
* Who else do you think I should interview?