

USAID, Dasra launch \$14 mn program for women

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Mumbai: The US Agency for International Development (USAID), the Kiawah Trust of UK, and Dasra (India's leading strategic philanthropy foundation), launched a new \$14 million partnership to address the healthcare needs of adolescent girls, mothers, newborns, and children in India. The announcement was made at the Dasra Philanthropy Week 2013 in Mumbai.

Dasra's research report *Owning Her Future*, funded by the Kiawah Trust, shows the root cause of maternal and child mortality is closely linked to the age of marriage and first pregnancy. This in turn is heavily influenced by level of schooling, livelihood options, access to clean drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene.

Speaking at the occasion, Lynne Smitham, co-founder, Kiawah Trust, said that addressing these causes, "Leads to healthier, more prosperous and more stable families, communities and nations. Dasra, which will implement the alliance's operations, has expertise in creating actionable knowledge, forging strategic funding partnerships, and building the capacity of high-impact organizations. This will enable this partnership to achieve its desired results".

Dr Rajiv Shah, administrator, USAID, said, "At the forefront of global innovation and progress, India is leading the fight against some of our greatest challenges in development, from ending extreme poverty to realizing a world without hunger. But innovation alone will not lead us to solve the world's development challenges. Partnership and the inspiration born of local solutions hold the key to achieving unprecedented gains in human health, prosperity, and dignity."

Mr Deval Sanghavi, Dasra, said that, "Large-scale social change requires broad cross-sector and stakeholder involvement. We need different forms of capital, skills, and networks to collectively find impactful and scalable solutions for the millions of women and children living in poverty in our country. This collaboration has the potential to build collective action and attract like-minded parties."