

Lifetime Achievement Award



Gary Cohen

Gary is a global leader who applies business sector skills in collaboration with the public and nonprofit sectors to advance progress on challenging health and social problems. As a result of his leadership, immunization programs are safer for children, health workers are better protected from occupational injuries, health systems capacity is stronger in sub-Saharan Africa, national governments are combatting sexual violence against children, diverse stakeholders are mobilizing to combat antimicrobial resistance, and innovation is advancing to reduce the burden of maternal and newborn mortality.

Gary is CEO and cofounder of Maternal Newborn Health Innovations (MNHI), a Public Benefit Corporation focused on innovating to improve maternal and newborn health outcomes worldwide. MNHI is developing the OdonAssist™ inflatable device for assisted vaginal birth, designed to safely assist the delivery of newborns during circumstances of prolonged, difficult second-stage labor in childbirth. Approximately 2.4 million newborns and 287,000 mothers died from childbirth-related causes in 2020, an additional ten million women and girls experience serious pregnancy-related complications annually, and there are 2 million stillbirths.

Gary also serves as chair of the Corporate/CDC Roundtable on Global Health Threats, board chair and founder of Together for Girls and founder of the Rutgers Institute for Corporate Social Innovation.

Gary previously had a 37-year career at BD (Becton, Dickinson and Company) including 25 years as an executive officer of the company. He also served as a UN Commissioner on Life Saving Commodities for Women and Children, as board chair of the CDC Foundation, as board director of UNICEF USA, as board director of the Accordia Global Health Foundation, and on the Scientific Advisory Board of Grand Challenges Canada. He has been an expert speaker at the United Nations, Vatican, World Bank, World Health Assembly, U.S. Department of State and World Economic Forum-Davos. He holds B.A. and an M.B.A. degrees from Rutgers University. In 2016, he was named a Rutgers 250 Fellow in association with the university's 250th anniversary.