

THE U.S. RESPONSE TO GLOBAL MATERNAL MORTALITY: *SAVING MOTHERS, GIVING LIFE*



“Every woman, whoever she is, wherever she lives, should be able to give birth without the fear she’s going to lose her baby or that her baby will lose her mother.”

– Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

MATERNAL MORTALITY

According to World Health Organization statistics, every day approximately 800 women die giving life, and many more suffer serious complications from pregnancy, labor, and delivery, which can result in long-term disabilities. Maternal mortality reflects global disparities, with 99 percent of all maternal deaths occurring in developing countries.

Maternal deaths, most of which are preventable, happen around labor, delivery and the immediate postpartum period. HIV/AIDS is increasingly a common cause of pregnancy-associated deaths in Africa.

Despite global progress to reduce maternal mortality, Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 5, which calls for a 75 percent reduction in the maternal mortality ratio by 2015, lags furthest behind all eight MDGs. Research shows that mothers’ lives cannot be saved by any one intervention alone. Dramatically reducing maternal mortality will require a comprehensive approach, significant resources and expertise.

U.S. GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MATERNAL MORTALITY

The U.S. Government has been a leader in supporting and encouraging countries to implement a full range of strategies to reduce maternal death, including:

- Increasing access to a range of contraceptive methods at the community level, integrating family planning with other health services
- Implementing integrated programming in family planning, and maternal and child health
- Convening summits on critical maternal health issues
- Driving innovations through the U.S. Agency for International Development’s Saving Lives at Birth Program
- Implementing Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission and treatment for mothers infected with HIV

- Establishing the Global Public/Private Partnership for Saving Mothers, Giving Life which focuses on strengthening district health systems in the areas of labor, delivery, and the 24 hours postpartum period

SAVING MOTHERS, GIVING LIFE: A GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP

Saving Mothers is a partnership of key government and private sector players in the global health field to reduce maternal mortality. The global partnership seeks to bring together partners’ strengths, experience, methodologies, and resources to address strategic gaps in maternal care. Founding partners include the U.S. Global Health Initiative; the Government of Norway; Merck, through its initiative Merck for Mothers; the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists; and Every Mother Counts. The partnership is also actively seeking new partners.

THE PARTNERSHIP’S WORK

Saving Mothers, Giving Life was established to aggressively reduce maternal mortality in countries where women are dying at alarming rates during pregnancy and childbirth. It began in Uganda and Zambia. The effort helps mothers during labor, delivery, and the first 24 hours postpartum – the period when two out of every three maternal deaths and 45 percent of newborn deaths occur.

Aiming to reduce maternal deaths by up to 50 percent in target districts, the program works to:

- Develop models of quality maternal health services by strengthening district health networks
- Galvanize the American public to create a domestic constituency to support saving mothers’ lives around the world
- Engage new public and private partners around the world to co-invest in saving mothers.

To learn more, visit SavingMothersGivingLife.org.