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**TURKMENISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Embracing Happy and Healthy Births in Turkmenistan

**Safe Motherhood promotes safe and comfortable births for women and infants**



Photo: Quality Health Care Project

*"During my time in the hospital, I could move freely, I chose my labor position, the staff talked to me, and they were attentive. The next time I'm pregnant, I will come here to give birth. Thank you very much!"*

*-Mahym M., a patient of Turkmenistan's Ene Myakhri Maternity Hospital after her successful and comfortable birth.*

In Ene Myahri Maternity Hospital, which means "Mother's Gentleness" in Turkmen, Mahym Muradova successfully and happily gave birth to her second child in May 2011. "I felt safe and confident. The midwife was helping me a lot, and the medical staff was supportive, watching my status and listening to my child."

For Mahym, who has given birth before, her time at Ene Myahri was different than her previous delivery. "My first labor was not a pleasant experience." Thanks to collaborative efforts between the Government of Turkmenistan, the USAID Quality Health Care Project, and the United Nations Population Fund, health care providers at Ene Myahri, as well as many health care providers throughout the district, recently attended training workshops on providing safe, more comfortable birthing experiences for mothers and babies like Mahym and her infant.

Beginning in 2006, the Government of Turkmenistan initiated a campaign to implement the World Health Organization's Safe Motherhood program to reduce maternal and infant mortality. To support roll-out and scale-up of this program, USAID and other international partners have provided training opportunities since 2007 to health care providers on evidence-based, patient-centered standards of practice. In the program's first year, participating pilot facilities decreased the use of unnecessary and potentially harmful medications by over 25% and supported partner-assisted births and active management of labor to prevent post-partum hemorrhage in 93.5% and 82.4% of patient cases, respectively. Since 2007, joint USAID-UNFPA programs have trained over 1,700 Turkmenistani obstetricians, gynecologists, neonatologists, midwives, family physicians and nurses in high-quality maternal and infant care.

Today, USAID and its partners continue to support the efforts of the Government of Turkmenistan by expanding training opportunities for health care providers and institutionalizing the Safe Motherhood program through monitoring and mentoring to build local capacity and patient satisfaction.