

Maternal Mortality

Maternal mortality remains one of the leading causes of death among women of reproductive age in developing countries. Approximately 800 women die while giving life every day. For every woman who dies, at least 20 more suffer injury, infection or disability. Maternal mortality is one of the oldest and most preventable ongoing medical tragedies, and one that reflects global disparities with 99% of all maternal deaths occurring in developing countries. Experts say that as many as 90% of the maternal deaths from complications are preventable. Maternal deaths cluster around labor, delivery and immediately postpartum. More than 80% of maternal deaths are caused directly by complications such as bleeding, high blood pressure, obstructed labor, and infection.

The United Nations' Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) seek to address the world's greatest development priorities through time-bound targets. As stated in the *Countdown to 2015* report, "Building a Future for Women and Children," released in June 2012, the world has made impressive progress towards MDG 4, which calls for a two-thirds reduction in child deaths by 2015, and MDG 5, which calls for a three-quarters reduction in maternal deaths by 2015. However, despite this progress, the world is not on pace to meet either MDG 4 or 5, and both maternal and child health remain inadequately financed.

About Saving Mothers, Giving Life

Saving Mothers, Giving Life (Saving Mothers) was launched with the goal of supporting countries where women are dying at alarming rates during pregnancy and childbirth to aggressively reduce maternal mortality. The effort intends to help mothers during labor, delivery, and the first 24 hours postpartum – the period when two out of every three maternal deaths and 45% of newborn deaths occur. Programs are underway in four districts in Uganda and four districts in Zambia, which are among the countries with the highest mortality ratios in the world. *Saving Mothers* is focused in countries with the political will and commitments to reduce maternal mortality in a significant way.

The founding partners have pledged more than \$280 million USD in financial resources and additional in-kind resources.

Their goal is to support countries to reduce maternal deaths by up to 50 percent in targeted districts in resource-limited countries by accomplishing the following three objectives:

- Develop models of quality maternal health services through district health network strengthening to achieve maximum, sustainable impact
- 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

In addition to saving mothers' lives around the world, this endeavor will contribute to broader benefits by strengthening health systems and integrating health services that will not only improve the lives of women, but also improve the well-being of their families and community members.

About the Partners

Saving Mothers represents a unique partnership of leaders in the global health field from the public, private and non-governmental organization (NGO) sectors. Each partner is contributing distinct, but complementary, expertise and resources to help make a dramatic impact on saving women's lives. The *Saving Mothers* Partnership is actively seeking out new partners in order to more rapidly save women's lives.

Global partners include:

The United States Government

Through its Global Health Initiative (GHI), the U.S. Government is providing leadership and strategic direction to coordinate *Saving Mothers, Giving Life* activities on the ground in collaboration with partner countries. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), along with the U.S. Departments of State, Defense, Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and U.S. Peace Corps, are bringing the vast skills and expertise of these agencies to support *Saving Mothers, Giving Life* interventions that protect mothers and newborns during labor and delivery. The U.S. Government is also leveraging its expansive U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and Maternal and Child Health (MCH) platforms to build on lessons learned and long-standing relationships at the national and local levels.

Merck for Mothers

Merck for Mothers is an initiative of Merck (known as MSD outside of the United States and Canada), a global healthcare leader working to help the world be well. *Merck for Mothers* is a 10-year, half-billion-dollar effort to create a world where no woman has to die giving life. The initiative will speed up access to life-saving solutions for women across the globe, develop new technologies, and bring the issue of maternal mortality to the forefront of global consciousness. *Merck for Mothers* supports *Saving Mothers, Giving Life* by guiding the strategic direction of the initiative, supporting on-the-ground program implementation and evaluation, working with partners to raise public awareness, and serving as the Secretariat.

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (The College) is the nation's leading group of physicians providing healthcare for women. It provides technical and clinical leadership expertise and leverages its members and other professional associations to support *Saving Mothers, Giving Life*. As a private, voluntary, nonprofit membership organization of approximately 57,000 members, The College strongly advocates for quality healthcare for women, maintains the highest standards of clinical practice and continuing education of its members, promotes patient education, and increases awareness among its members and the public of the changing issues facing women's healthcare.

Every Mother Counts

Every Mother Counts (EMC) is an advocacy and mobilization campaign to increase education and support for reducing maternal mortality. It is raising public awareness, advocating for global maternal health, and initiating fundraising efforts led by its founder, Christy Turlington Burns. EMC seeks to engage new audiences to better understand the challenges and the solutions while encouraging them to take action to improve the lives of girls and women worldwide.

The Government of Norway

Improving maternal health is a cornerstone of Norway's international development policy. As one of the founding members of *Saving Mothers, Giving Life*, Norway provides leadership globally by mobilizing international support through partnerships with African leaders and with other donor governments as well as by drawing on related global and regional initiatives such as the UN Secretary-General's "Every Woman, Every Child." The Government of Norway also supports program implementation with a particular focus on scale-up, commodities, supply chain and promoting sustainability.

Project C.U.R.E.

Project C.U.R.E. is the largest distributor of donated medical supplies and equipment, serving over 130 countries since 1987. Project C.U.R.E. will provide customized supplies, equipment and related services to *Saving Mothers, Giving Life* initiatives. Additionally, Project C.U.R.E. will conduct onsite needs and post assessments, supply chain management and medical supply and equipment delivery services.

The Government of Uganda

The Government of Uganda is partnering with *Saving Mothers, Giving Life* through joint planning efforts involving the Ministry of Health and regional and local government bodies. The Ministry of Health's mission is to provide the highest possible level of health services to all people in Uganda through the delivery of preventive, curative, palliative and rehabilitative health services at all levels. The Ministry envisions a healthy and productive population that contributes to socio-economic growth and national development.

The Government of Zambia

The Government of Zambia is committed to supporting maternal, neonatal and child health. Through its Ministry of Health (MOH) and the Ministry of Community Development, Mother and Child Health (MCDMCH), the government provides leadership at the central and district levels in support of *Saving Mothers, Giving Life*.

To learn more, including how you can get involved and help donate to the cause, visit
www.SavingMothersGivingLife.org.

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