



MATERNAL HEALTH: ADVANCING QUALITY CARE FOR SAFE PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH

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Helping women survive pregnancy and childbirth is foundational to USAID's global health commitments. Although maternal deaths have declined since 2000, progress has stalled in recent years. Globally, more than 800 women still die every day from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Nearly 95 percent of these deaths occur in low- and middle-income countries, including the 25 countries USAID prioritizes for maternal and child survival.

Operating in tandem with newborn health programs, USAID provides global leadership, delivers quality health services, and strengthens health service networks for maternal health to not only save lives but support women and newborns to thrive. These essential investments accelerate progress toward achieving the 2030 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal three's target for maternal mortality, which is a two-thirds reduction in maternal deaths between 2010 and 2030.



SINCE 2000,
**MATERNAL DEATHS
HAVE FALLEN
BY 42 PERCENT**
ACROSS USAID'S
25 PRIORITY
COUNTRIES FOR
MATERNAL AND
CHILD SURVIVAL.



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

PRIORITIZING COVERAGE, QUALITY, AND EQUITY

USAID's strategic priorities for maternal health focus on scaling up the coverage and quality of proven interventions and strengthening health systems. A primary focus is preventing and treating postpartum hemorrhage, or excessive bleeding after delivery, which is the number one cause of maternal death and severe complications around the world. Supporting women to receive eight antenatal care contacts and give birth in a well-supported health facility are key interventions to either prevent or treat hemorrhage and other complications.

Improving the quality of care leads to better outcomes for mothers and babies. USAID's approach to high quality maternal health addresses each dimension of quality, including its effectiveness, safety, timeliness, efficiency, equity, and accessibility. Our approach includes supporting health providers to deliver services that comply with established clinical standards for care and hygiene and promote dignity and respect— regardless of who the patient is or where they seek care. To promote equity and respectful care, our programs listen to and support the individuals, predominantly women, who deliver that care.

DELIVERING GLOBAL LEADERSHIP, INNOVATION, AND PARTNERSHIP

USAID's leadership helps shape global recommendations and clinical guidance for maternal health, such as the World Health Organization's [Postpartum Hemorrhage Roadmap](#), [Strategy for Ending Preventable Maternal Mortality](#), and [Quality of Care Network](#). In turn, our country programs support partner governments to implement these guidelines and strategies, translating commitments into action.

USAID champions safe blood, surgical care, and maternal mental health—essential but often overlooked elements of care. Increasing supplies of safe blood helps women who experience excessive bleeding to recover. Safe surgical care means that women who need emergency interventions can survive. Addressing mental health, beginning in antenatal care, is part of our holistic approach to maternal health.

Through private sector partnerships, USAID supports innovations that can transform systems of care. The m-mama program, for example, leverages mobile technology developed by the private sector to swiftly transport and connect pregnant women and newborns to secondary or tertiary health facilities when they face complications.

INVESTING IN ESSENTIAL SERVICES AND PRIMARY HEALTH CARE

Investments in pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum care bolster primary health services, which include the referral networks and interdisciplinary teams needed to promptly address women facing complications. Through antenatal care, women receive serial health contacts, creating a unique window of opportunity to reach a woman and her family with a full range of essential services. This includes information on pregnancy danger signs, breastfeeding, and family planning methods, as well as the importance of eating a nutrient-rich diet, nutrition supplementation, immunization, and care-seeking for the whole family.

USAID MATERNAL HEALTH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

Essential Maternity Care

- Integrated/group antenatal care
- Quality labor management
- Immediate postnatal care and monitoring

Management of Complications & Safe Surgery

- Safe and appropriate surgical intervention
- Safe blood
- Fistula prevention and treatment

Systems of Care

- Networks of care and effective interdisciplinary teamwork
- Organized links between community and care levels
- Quality-assured maternal health commodities and supplies

Cross-Cutting

- Perinatal mental health
- Respectful maternal and newborn care



SINCE 2012, USAID HAS ENABLED **67.8 MILLION WOMEN** TO GIVE BIRTH IN A HEALTH FACILITY.



IN 2023, **7.6 MILLION WOMEN** RECEIVED **UTEROTONIC MEDICATIONS** TO PREVENT POSTPARTUM HEMORRHAGE THROUGH USAID-SUPPORTED PROGRAMS.