



# MSD for Mothers Global Grants Program Responding to Local Maternal Health Needs

It all starts with a mother—she’s the beginning of a much bigger story. A healthy pregnancy and childbirth leads to a lifetime of benefits, both for a woman’s own health and prosperity, as well as that of her children, family, community and nation—for generations to come. We call this the “Mom Effect.” Working with collaborators across sectors, we’re making the Mom Effect a reality for communities across the globe.

## About MSD for Mothers

[MSD for Mothers](#) is MSD’s global initiative to help create a world where no woman has to die while giving life. Applying MSD’s business and scientific expertise, we are working across sectors to improve the health and well-being of women during pregnancy, childbirth and the months after. Our grantees and collaborators have reached over 19 million women in more than 60 sites around the world to support healthier pregnancies and safer childbirths, contributing to the global effort to help end maternal mortality and morbidity.



Global Grant Sites  
across the World

## Maternal Mortality Around the World<sup>1</sup>

- Every day, **over 800 women die** from preventable causes related to pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>1</sup>
- **94%** of all maternal deaths occur in low-and lower-middle-income countries.<sup>2</sup>

## Background

In 2012, we launched MSD for Mothers Global Grants — a corporate grant program that enables MSD offices around the world to support nongovernmental organizations that are improving maternal health. The program is designed to be responsive to local women’s needs, focusing on how resources can contribute distinctively to increase health equity in maternity care and support.

The program takes a distinctive approach in each region depending on the context. MSD offices have sponsored projects in their own markets as well as in places with great need. With over 70 unique and diverse projects around the world, the Global Grants Program is:

- Improving maternal health in local markets;
- Engaging MSD offices in MSD for Mothers; and
- Providing seed funding to test innovative approaches.

## Geographical Reach

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**45+** GLOBAL SITES

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**70+** PROJECTS

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**40+** MSD OFFICES

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## Global Grants Impact to Date

- More than **4.7 million women reached** and counting
- More than **75,000 health care professionals trained**

To date, the Global Grants Program has supported projects in sites all across the world, from Argentina to Vietnam. MSD offices have sponsored projects in their own countries as well as in countries with great need.

In **Europe**, we support maternal health organizations that link vulnerable pregnant women in medically underserved rural communities to care, family planning services and raise awareness of safe motherhood practices.

In **Latin America and the Caribbean**, we support a diversity of organizations to strengthen the capacity of health workers, including through the use of technology, to educate communities about reproductive and maternal health, and to address barriers that prevent women and girls from accessing the care they need. These programs also focus on the health rights of all pregnant women, including from migrant communities.

In **Africa and the Middle East**, we support an array of programs that improve access to antenatal care, family planning and provide support for pregnant women living with chronic health conditions. These programs also strengthen health providers’ skills and practices, while building strong referral networks to offer comprehensive, respectful care.

In **Asia Pacific**, our grantees and collaborators promote safe birth practices, strengthen midwifery education, improve access to family planning and promote health-seeking behaviors through workplace programs.

# Project Spotlight

**Brazil** | The National Supplementary Health Agency, Albert Einstein Hospital and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement's "Projeto Parto Adequado" identified innovative and viable models of high-quality care during labor and delivery, incentivizing vaginal delivery for uncomplicated births and reducing medically unnecessary Cesarean delivery (C-section) rates in maternity hospitals. The program has reached more than 320,000 women in over 100 different cities across Brazil. Additionally, around 450 health workers were trained and 113 maternity facilities strengthened their quality of care provision through this project. During the project, the rate of vaginal birth increased from 21.6% to 38% in 26 hospitals.

**Philippines** | MSD for Mothers joined the UN Foundation and UNFPA to launch Business Action for Family Planning (BAFP) – a partnership with business owners in the Philippines to provide maternal and reproductive health information to underserved women at the workplace. BAFP partnered with 11 private Filipino companies to implement the program, reaching 1.2 +million women with comprehensive family planning information and services. These efforts resulted in an 18% decline in absenteeism and a 43% reduction in staff turnover – yielding a 4:1 return on investment. This work led to the development of a return of investment tool which UNFPA is using to make the business case for other companies to invest in workplace health programs.



**South Africa** | The Foundation for Professional Development (FPD) and University of Pretoria developed and implemented a training program for emergency medical service staff, nurses and local clinicians to improve their skills, knowledge and quality of services they provided to pregnant women, emphasizing on respectful care. In three years, they have trained nearly 700 professionals in Eastern Cape. Additionally, there was a 16-20% increase in knowledge of how to manage obstetric patients and identify and respond to complications the project was endorsed by the government and has since contracted FPD to continue the program using the same model – FPD has agreed to train an additional 2,000 health professionals.

**Greece** | Through the Mother & Child project, Doctors of the World's Greek delegation is deploying mobile health units so that more refugee women and women in remote regions can receive the maternal health services they need; strengthening the capacity of health care professionals to serve these women and ensuring that antenatal and postnatal care is available to uninsured women.

<sup>1</sup> [World Health Organization – Maternal Mortality Factsheet 2019](#)

<sup>2</sup> [World Health Organization – Maternal Mortality Factsheet 2021](#)