



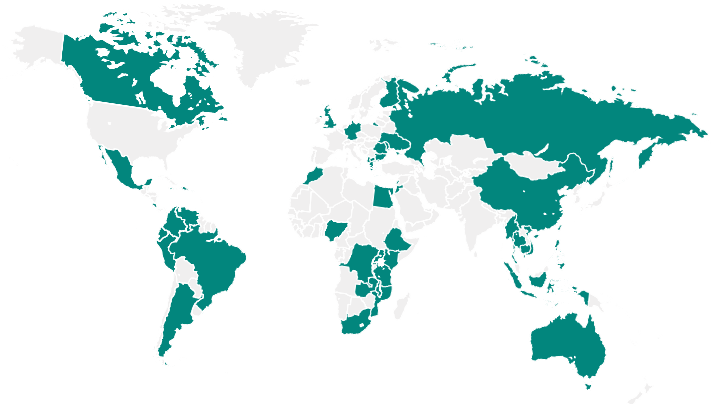
Merck for Mothers Global Grants Program

Responding to Local Maternal Health Needs in Communities Around the World

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 grantees and collaborators across sectors, we’re making the Mom Effect a reality for communities across the globe.

About Merck for Mothers

Merck for Mothers is Merck’s global initiative to help create a world where no woman has to die while giving life. Applying Merck’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 20.8 million women in more than 65 sites around the world to support healthier pregnancies and safer childbirths, contributing to the global effort to help end maternal mortality and morbidity.



Global Grants Sites
Across the World

Maternal Mortality Around the World

- Every day, **over 800 women die from preventable causes** related to pregnancy and childbirth¹
- Almost **95% of all maternal deaths** occur in low-and lower middle-income countries²



Background

In 2012, we launched Merck for Mothers Global Grants — a corporate grant program that enables Merck offices to support organizations that are improving maternal health around the world, beyond Merck for Mother's focus countries India, Kenya, Nigeria and the United States. The program is designed to be responsive to local women's needs, focusing on how resources can contribute distinctively to increase equitable access to care and support around pregnancy and childbirth.

The program takes a distinctive approach in each region depending on the context. Merck offices have sponsored projects in their own markets as well as in places with great need. Merck for Mothers Global Grants aims to:

- Improve maternal health in local markets;
- Engage Merck offices in Merck for Mothers; and
- Provide seed funding to test innovative approaches.

Geographical Reach

45+ GLOBAL SITES

85+ PROJECTS

45+ Merck SITES



Global Grants Impact to Date

- More than **4.7 million women reached** and counting
- More than **78,000 health care professionals trained**

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 improve access to health care around pregnancy and childbirth that is safe, high-quality, equitable and respectful.

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 **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.

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

Project Spotlight

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 provide to pregnant women, emphasizing respectful care. In three years, they have trained nearly 870 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.

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. Rapid advancement towards national scale up has helped the project reach more than 400,000 women in over 500 different cities across Brazil. Additionally, around 1,600 health workers were trained, strengthened their quality of care provision through this project. After determining that Afro-Brazilian women living in poverty were more likely to die from pregnancy and childbirth complications – due to less access to health education and prenatal care – the quality improvement model evolved to include anti-racism and racial equity training for staff and social workers across specific facilities. In addition, hospitals began collecting and stratifying maternal care indicators by race so that they can track progress in reducing racial disparities in care.



Philippines | Merck 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 Filipino private sector companies to implement the program, reaching more than 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.

Greece | Through the Mother & Child project, Doctors of the World's Greek delegation deployed mobile health units so that more refugee women and women in remote regions can receive the maternal health services they need; strengthened the capacity of health care professionals to serve these women and ensured that antenatal and postnatal care is available to uninsured women. In three years, the project was able to improve access to maternal health services to more than 40,000 women and train almost 2,000 health providers.

1. WHO (2023) [Maternal Mortality Factsheet](#)
2. WHO (2023) [Maternal Mortality Factsheet](#)

These programs are funded by Merck for Mothers, Merck's global initiative to help create a world where no woman has to die while giving life. Merck for Mothers is known as MSD for Mothers outside of the U.S. and Canada.