

Making Strides, Saving Lives

Jhpiego Works to Ensure Healthier Futures for Women and Their Families



Healthy women are the foundation of a strong community, and healthy newborns are the future. Photo by Kate Holt, MCHIP

Each year, more than 300,000 women die of complications of pregnancy and childbirth, and an estimated 3 million newborns die within their first month of life.^{1,2} Most of these deaths occur in developing countries, where adequate health services are often unavailable or inaccessible—leading many women to give birth in facilities without adequate equipment and staff, or at home without skilled providers. Although still too high, the maternal and newborn death rates have declined since 1990, which validates the continued use of strategies to support stronger health systems that Jhpiego has promoted since its founding.

Jhpiego, an international health organization and Johns Hopkins University affiliate, has been working to bring lifesaving measures to mothers and newborns around the world since 1974. Jhpiego builds on more than four decades of global experience in maternal, newborn, and child health with funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Kingdom Department for International Development, UNICEF, and the World Health Organization (WHO), as well as from corporations and foundations, including ExxonMobil and the MacArthur Foundation. Since 1998, Jhpiego has led four consecutive USAID global flagship programs to increase maternal and newborn survival, including the current Maternal and Child Survival

Program (MCSP; 2014–2019), through which Jhpiego is implementing maternal and newborn health (MNH) programs in 11 countries. Outside MCSP, Jhpiego manages a portfolio of more than 30 MNH-focused awards across 16 countries. Jhpiego also partners with ministries of health and hundreds of international and local organizations to strengthen MNH services across the household-to-hospital continuum.

What Jhpiego Is Doing in MNH

To improve maternal and newborn outcomes and reduce related mortality, Jhpiego works to increase the coverage, quality, and equity of MNH care through:

- Strengthening antenatal care (ANC) by:
 - Supporting community- and facility-based service delivery mechanisms
 - Integrating other services (e.g., prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV and malaria in pregnancy services)
 - Improving the quality of family planning counseling provided during ANC
 - Introducing services to address the impact of concurrent disease in pregnancy, including diabetes
 - Increasing the detection and management of infections that can impact MNH
- Partnering with ministries of health, subnational health systems, and local professional associations to:
 - Increase the numbers and capacity of skilled birth attendants (SBAs) who can deliver quality MNH care, especially essential and emergency obstetric and newborn care.
 - Improve the quality of MNH care in health facilities.
 - Promote awareness and increase demand for deliveries in health facilities with SBAs.

- Targeting prevention and management of leading causes of maternal and newborn mortality, and working to improve prevention, screening, detection, and management of those causes, with a focus on:
 - Community- and facility-based prevention and management of postpartum hemorrhage
 - Screening, detection, and management of hypertensive disorders in pregnancy, including pre-eclampsia/eclampsia
 - Prevention and management of maternal and neonatal infection

Jhpiego also recognizes the need to accelerate the development, delivery, and impact at scale of new approaches to priority global health problems.

Getting What Works to Work

Jhpiego is committed to the integration of global best practices and clinical standards/guidelines within all of its programs, and frames each of its technical interventions accordingly. This includes a commitment to engage with key global technical leadership groups to assess the ever-evolving evidence and amend its guidance in ways that are most appropriate for low-resource settings in the low- and middle-income countries where Jhpiego works.

Working with WHO on Recommendations

Jhpiego regularly participates in WHO-led reviews of the latest evidence in MNH, including the recent review on ANC, which resulted in the *WHO Recommendations on Antenatal Care for a Positive Pregnancy Experience* (2016).

Drawing on our clinical expertise in obstetrics/gynecology, safe surgery, midwifery, and family planning, as well as a range of cross-cutting areas, such as learning and performance, digital health, health systems development, and gender and equity, Jhpiego implements an expanding range of critical technical interventions to pursue a number of overarching strategies. These strategies include:

- Contributing to and shaping global-, regional-, and country-level policies, guidelines, and strategies to advance MNH priorities for greatest impact
- Applying evidence-based best practices, including high-impact interventions, to improve MNH outcomes

- Improving service delivery and strengthening health systems in low-resource settings to deliver respectful, safe MNH care
- Strengthening the performance of health workers to provide high-quality, respectful MNH care for all women and families
- Maximizing MNH care contacts for clients through integration and linkages with care for other health issues, such as family planning, HIV, and noncommunicable and infectious diseases

Through our work in MNH, as with all of our efforts, Jhpiego's ultimate goal is sustainability—leaving behind a well-prepared health system and a strong foundation that countries can build upon.

Getting Together for ANC

Jhpiego has developed an empowerment-based alternative service delivery model for ANC in low-resource settings that provides care to women in groups over the course of their pregnancy. Group ANC begins after the first ANC visit, when women are offered the option of receiving subsequent ANC within a group of women of similar gestational age. Meetings are held at the health facility and include self-assessments, facilitated group discussion, and brief individual assessments by a provider. Group ANC promotes a sense of community among women with similar issues, problems, and fears. Jhpiego's group ANC model targets low literate/illiterate participants, reorganizing existing resources to improve the quality and content of ANC.



A facilitator at General Hospital Akwanaga, Nigeria, teaches expectant mothers to take each other's blood pressure as part of group ANC. Photo by Paul Joseph Brown, Jhpiego

1. World Health Organization (WHO). 2018. Fact Sheet: Maternal mortality. <http://www.who.int/en/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/maternal-mortality>
 2. WHO. 2018. Fact Sheet. Newborns: reducing mortality. <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/newborns-reducing-mortality>