

Brazil

Merck is known as MSD outside the United States and Canada.

MSD for Mothers is a 10-year, \$500 million initiative to create a world where no woman dies from complications of pregnancy and childbirth. Drawing on our history of discovering innovative, life-saving medicines and vaccines, we are applying our scientific and business expertise — as well as our financial and human resources — to reduce maternal mortality around the world. We are focused on access to quality, affordable care, product innovation, and awareness and advocacy.

Maternal Mortality in Brazil

Since 1990, the number of women who have died from complications of pregnancy and childbirth in Brazil has decreased by more than 50 percent - from 4,400 deaths to 2,100 in 2013.ⁱ Despite achievements to date, progress has plateaued and MDG 5 is likely the only goal Brazil will not meet by the 2015 deadline.

Maternal deaths are concentrated in poorer regions of the country, such as rural populations in the Amazon rainforest and the northeast, but data are lacking to provide a clear picture of the scope of the problem. The main causes of maternal mortality in Brazil are hypertension (23%), sepsis (10%), and excessive bleeding (8%), which are often linked to limited access to quality healthcare services, especially among low-income women.ⁱⁱ Additionally, 4 percent of women who give birth in Brazil suffer severe complications from which they nearly die.ⁱⁱⁱ

In an effort to address these challenges, the Ministry of Health launched an \$5.42 billion initiative, the Stork Network (in Portuguese, "Rede Cegonha"), to ensure quality care for all Brazilian women and children, from the confirmation of pregnancy through the first two years of a child's life. Under this initiative, women are guaranteed the right to family planning and humanized care during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum, and children are assured the right to a safe birth and healthy growth and development.

Programs and Partners

MSD for Mothers, in partnership with the Brazilian government and the Fundação Getulio Vargas, a leading university and think-tank, is conducting a survey of health providers in districts with the highest rates of maternal mortality to understand the gaps in maternity care.



ⁱ Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990 to 2013
apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/112682/2/9789241507226_eng.pdf?ua=1

ⁱⁱ Victora, Cesar et al. Maternal and child health in Brazil: progress and challenges. The Lancet: May 2011 (Vol. 377, Issue 9780, Pages 1863-1876)
DOI: 10.1016/S0140-6736(11)60138-4. Available at: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/21561656>

ⁱⁱⁱ iii Government of Brazil: Stork Network. Available at: http://portal.saude.gov.br/PORTAL/SAUDE/GESTOR/AREA.CFM?ID_AREA=1816.