Merck for Mothers is Merck’s $500 million global initiative to help create a world where no woman dies giving life. We deploy the company’s business and science expertise to infuse private sector approaches that could help solve the longstanding challenge of maternal mortality. We do not accept business as usual and push ourselves and our partners to invest in new and creative ideas that disrupt the status quo and that can sustain gains in women’s health for years to come. Over the past several years, Merck for Mothers has helped improve access to quality maternity care and modern contraception for more than nine million women in over 45 countries around the world.

**MERCK FOR MOTHERS IN EUROPE**

**Responding to Local Maternal Health Needs**

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**ESTIMATED MATERNAL MORTALITY IN THE REGION**

More than 5 million women give birth each year, however 1 in 10 do not have access to maternal health services during the first months of pregnancy

1,900 maternal deaths in 2013

Of 21,000 women surveyed, 54% of pregnant women seen at Doctors of the World clinics in 9 European countries lacked access to antenatal care and over half were living in poverty

Women from ethnic minority groups in Europe tend to have higher incidences of maternal mortality and worse health outcomes overall: low birth weight (43%), pre-term delivery (24%), perinatal mortality (50%), and congenital malformations (61%)

**PROGRAMS AND PARTNERS**

In Europe, our goal is to partner with stakeholders and support programs to promote equal access to quality maternal healthcare for all women across Europe. In collaboration with local Merck offices, we are providing more than €7.4 million to support maternal health organizations that link pregnant women to care and raise awareness of safe motherhood practices both in Europe and in developing countries.

**Alliance for Maternal Health Equality | Merck for Mothers** is a founding partner in the Alliance for Maternal Health Equality. The Alliance is a unique coalition of European stakeholders with an interest in ensuring all women in Europe have equal access to quality maternal healthcare. The Alliance aims to increase awareness and prompt discussion on this critical issue amongst policy makers and the public to help ensure maternal health receives adequate focus in policy and legislative development.

**Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Serbia |** The three-year “My Body, My Rights” program, implemented by the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) networks in Albania, Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia, will focus on underserved women and girls living in large Roma settlements in these three countries. The program will work with political leaders, primary health care providers, Roma communities, and young Roma people to improve maternal health outcomes and empower women to make their own healthcare decisions.

**Finland |** Väestöliitto is working with foster care organizations to promote sexual and reproductive health among young girls living within these institutions through educational events.

**Germany |** Ethno-Medical Center is implementing the Mimi-Initiative for Maternal Health to reduce barriers to maternal healthcare among female migrant workers. The project is raising awareness of services and improving health professionals’ cultural and linguistic competence. To date, the initiative has reached 7,200 women and their families in Germany.

These programs are funded by Merck for Mothers, Merck’s $500 million initiative to help create a world where no woman dies giving life. Merck for Mothers, is an initiative of Merck & Co., Inc., Kenilworth, NJ, USA.
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**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 healthcare professionals to serve these women; and ensuring that antenatal and postnatal care is available to uninsured women.

**Romania**

World Vision’s “Mothers for Life. Life for Mothers” 30-month program has worked to develop and implement an integrated model aimed at facilitating access to family planning and maternal healthcare services, training healthcare professionals, and empowering local authorities to reduce the unmet need for family planning services in rural areas.

**Ukraine**

John Snow International is improving the quality of obstetric care through the development of standardized clinical guidelines to help providers improve the management of severe bleeding after childbirth.

**United Kingdom**

The British Pregnancy Advisory Service is leading a public awareness campaign in London, “As Soon as You’re Pregnant,” that encourages pregnant women to see a healthcare professional before the end of their first trimester. The campaign is helping women receive education on lifestyle factors such as diet, alcohol and smoking to promote healthy pregnancies and improve newborn health. To date, 327 pharmacies and general practitioners, 113 retailers, and 125 children’s health centers in London are supporting the campaign.

Additionally, we are working with eight European NGOs in Belgium, Denmark, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland to advance maternal health in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Ethiopia, Malawi, Mozambique, and Tanzania. For example, **Concern Worldwide (Ireland)** is implementing community-based interventions to highlight the importance of seeking antenatal care that will reach up to 67,000 women in Malawi. **Maternity Worldwide (Denmark)** is rolling out the Safe Delivery App, an mHealth tool to enhance antenatal care and emergency obstetric care in Ethiopia. The app has been developed in collaboration with researchers from the University of Copenhagen and the University of Southern Denmark. New research results show the ability of health workers to handle postpartum haemorrhage and newborn resuscitation more than doubled after 12 months of using the app. **Medics without Vacation (Belgium)** conducted 12 medical training missions to build the capacity of local health workers and increase access to second line maternal healthcare services among hospitals in South Kivu (DRC).