Each year, nearly 300,000 women die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth. Approximately 7.6 million children do not live to see their fifth birthday. Most of the major direct causes of maternal and child mortality are preventable. MSH’s maternal and child health interventions begin before pregnancy, with integrated family planning and HIV services, and continue through the life of the child.

After a smooth pregnancy, Marie Miambokila Mumba of Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) gave birth in August 2014 with a skilled birth attendant, Judith Kambuyi. Moments after the baby was born, Kambuyi realized Mumba was delivering a second baby, who was struggling to breathe.

Kambuyi immediately identified the problem and resuscitated the infant. Mumba’s child was one of 22 babies saved in 2014 by Kambuyi and other birth attendants at the hospital after they completed a training in detection and treatment of newborn conditions. The training, designed and proven effective for resource-limited settings, was organized by the 2010–2015 DRC-Integrated Health Project (DRC-IHP), an MSH project funded by USAID.

"It is a source of pride to save lives," says Kambuyi, who went on to train local midwives in the same techniques.

New mothers are proud as well when they can help their babies. Through DRC-IHP, more mothers of premature infants are advised to hold their babies skin-to-skin to keep them warm—a technique called kangaroo care. DRC-IHP works to unite existing health service providers in DRC under a strategy to provide integrated management of maternal and child health.

In Ethiopia, MSH helped expand HIV and AIDS services by integrating them into maternal and child health and other services. The 2011–2015 Ethiopia Network for HIV/AIDS Treatment, Care and Support (ENHAT-CS) program, a USAID initiative funded by PEPFAR, built on Ethiopia’s nationwide continuum of care from communities to hospitals.

In 2014 at ENHAT-CS health centers in the Amhara and Tigray regions, 97 percent of women
receiving antenatal care were tested for HIV and received their results; of those who tested positive, 87 percent received antiretroviral therapy, up from 45 percent who received treatment in 2011. Standard antiretroviral therapy (ART) consists of the combination of at least three antiretroviral (ARV) drugs to suppress the HIV virus and stop the progression of HIV disease.


Links