The world loses 300,000 women and nearly 5 million children to preventable causes each year. Millions of women in low-resource settings lack proper antenatal care, give birth without a skilled attendant, and don’t receive postpartum care. Their children often become malnourished or are not properly diagnosed with and treated for common childhood illnesses.

Providing quality health care to a woman, child, or adolescent requires a complex web of organizations, individuals, processes, and actions that, together, make up a health system. Management Sciences for Health (MSH) recognizes that when a country’s health system is dysfunctional, women, children, and adolescents often suffer the most. When the health system doesn’t work well, women and their families have nowhere to turn. When it does work well, more women and children survive and thrive.

For almost 50 years in 150 countries, MSH has worked closely with our partners to strengthen health systems, improve quality of care, and ensure that all people—even the poorest and most vulnerable—have the opportunity for a healthy life. MSH collaborates with countries and communities to develop resilient, sustainable health systems that support universal health coverage: equitable, affordable access to high-quality health services for every woman and child who needs them. Building sustainable systems to safeguard women’s, children’s, and adolescents’ health—ensuring care for women before conception, in pregnancy and childbirth, and postpartum; for newborns, children, and young people; and in response to sexual and gender-based violence—is core to our work at MSH.
**Enhanced access to essential services**

MSH brings a unique systems perspective to sustainably improve the health of women and children. Working at every level of the health system and across the public and private sectors, we support national and local partners in developing integrated, equitable, people-centered health systems that work.

Expanding access to comprehensive care packages that address factors influencing health

Achieving universal health coverage requires increasing effective coverage of evidence-based, quality, and culturally acceptable high-impact services through contextualized interventions that respond to the specific needs of different populations, with special attention paid to marginalized groups (e.g., hard-to-reach people, youth, displaced persons, disabled persons). MSH provides technical assistance to ensure the equitable delivery of evidence-based, high-impact, quality interventions in reproductive, maternal, newborn, child, and adolescent health and family planning through essential packages of care that span the continuum of care from communities to facilities and that ensure good health throughout the life course.

**Quality standards in child health**

MSH helped systematize and institutionalize continuous quality improvement at 52 health facilities in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, and Panama under the Salud Mesoamérica Initiative. Documented quality improvements included increases of 17% to 61% in management of obstetric complications in Belize, Honduras, and Nicaragua and a 24% increase in antenatal care quality in El Salvador.

**Lifesaving innovations brought to scale**

MSH helped health ministries in Honduras, Panama, and Mexico (Chiapas State) update and scale national guidelines for improved maternal and newborn care. MSH scaled Helping Babies Breathe techniques using hands-on methods to teach birth attendants to resuscitate newborns who are not breathing. In just one three-month period, birth attendants trained in Helping Babies Breathe resuscitated 632 babies born with neonatal asphyxia.

**Peer support during pregnancy**

Our new person-centered model of group antenatal care implemented in Guatemala, Kenya, and Uganda invites pregnant women to join pregnancy clubs that offer peer support, accurate health information, and close patient-midwife bonds that can carry through to safer childbirth and essential newborn care. The group care model is designed to make women active participants in their own prenatal care.