



**Every two minutes one woman dies** from pregnancy or childbirth-related complications.



At the heart of good maternal health care is a set of basic, low-cost, but essential supplies, including medicines that prevent the leading causes of maternal death.

**This does not have to be the reality**

The two greatest causes of maternal deaths—which total 287,000 annually—are preventable.



**Postpartum hemorrhage**, or excessive bleeding after childbirth, causes 25% of all maternal deaths.



**Pre-eclampsia and eclampsia**, which is caused by high blood pressure during pregnancy, is attributed to 22% of all maternal deaths.

The solution is within reach



**Oxytocin** is the recommended medicine to prevent and treat excessive bleeding after childbirth.



**Misoprostol** is used to prevent and treat excessive bleeding after childbirth when oxytocin is unavailable.



**Magnesium Sulfate** is the most effective medicine to prevent and treat pre-eclampsia and eclampsia.



These lifesaving medicines cost less than **US\$1** per dose

Maternal health medicines save mothers' lives

If oxytocin and misoprostol were available to all women giving birth

over **10** years



**41 million**  
**1.4 million**

cases of postpartum hemorrhage could be prevented, and

lives could be saved.

# Global agenda for action

Where a woman gives birth should not decide her fate, especially when affordable, effective medicines to treat and prevent the leading causes of maternal deaths—excessive bleeding after childbirth and deadly seizures during pregnancy—exist.

Developed with maternal health experts working across the globe, this targeted agenda for action will help global and national advocates, policymakers, and program implementers lead efforts to increase the quality, availability, and appropriate use of oxytocin, misoprostol, and magnesium sulfate—and, ultimately, save lives.

## DATA

### Generate data for decision-making

- Strengthen local and national data collection systems in order to improve forecasting of supply, demand, and use of maternal health medicines.

## SAFETY & EFFICACY

### Ensure safety & efficacy

- Certify a select number of manufacturers able to produce quality maternal health medicines on a global scale.
- Enhance capacity for quality assurance by smaller manufacturers to enable national and local procurement organizations to purchase quality maternal health medicines within countries.
- Integrate oxytocin into existing public- and private-sector cold chains to ensure potency from the manufacturer to pharmacies and facilities.
- Create innovative heat-stable formulations for oxytocin and moisture-proof packaging for misoprostol tablets to protect them from temperature and humidity.

## USE

### Address inappropriate use

- Enhance national policies as well as the knowledge and skills of health workers to support proper medicine administration at all levels of the health system.
- Conduct consumer research to understand and address issues related to client demand for and appropriate use of maternal health medicines.
- Invest in the development of acceptable, user-friendly medicines, such as simplified magnesium sulfate dosing and packaging, to expand access to quality services throughout the health system.

## SYSTEMS

### Strengthen national and local systems

- Invest in strengthening supply chain systems to ensure consistent supply and delivery of maternal health medicines to all women who need them.
- Improve education about, conditions of, and transportation to health facilities to increase the number of women giving birth with skilled attendants and access to maternal health medicines.
- Improve access to maternal health medicines for women who give birth at home by enabling distribution of misoprostol for prevention and treatment of postpartum hemorrhage in communities and expanding innovative drug delivery technologies to allow less-skilled health workers to administer medicines.