



Saving Women's Lives with Misoprostol: Ethiopia Program

In Ethiopia women have a 1 in 40 lifetime risk of dying from maternal causes¹; an estimated 5,300 mothers die each year due to excessive bleeding after childbirth, or postpartum hemorrhage (PPH), and the vast majority (94%) deliver at home.² Complications of abortion also contribute significantly to the high rate of maternal death.



VSI aims to facilitate a reduction in Ethiopia's maternal deaths by setting up systems to ensure widespread access to misoprostol and information on its effective use in women's health, focusing on **policy** development, **training** and **distribution** through the public and private sectors.

Highlighted Activities

- Technical assistance in registration of misoprostol for postpartum hemorrhage; achieved June 2010
- Operations research on misoprostol for comprehensive abortion care, including the first ever training of health extension workers (HEWs) on this indication
- Support in design and implementation of the initial rollout and subsequent scale-up of Active Management of Third Stage of Labor (AMTSL) and misoprostol training of HEWs and trainers in Tigray, Amhara, Oromiya and SNNP regions
- Operations research in Tigray testing misoprostol administration by trained traditional birth attendants (TBAs) for prevention of PPH after home births
- Training of tutors and students at mid-level health professional training institutions on AMTSL and misoprostol
- Curriculum development assistance for TBA trainings on misoprostol for PPH management
- Sponsorship and support of Women's Association meetings to convey information, education and communication about misoprostol in official "Misoprostol Days" in Tigray, Amhara, Harar and Dire Dawa regions

VSI works in collaboration with many partners in Ethiopia.

Federal Ministry of Health, DKT-Ethiopia, Ethiopian Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, Ethiopian Midwives Association, UC Berkeley Bixby Center for Population, Health and Sustainability, Tigray Regional Health Bureau and Jhpiego.

¹ World Health Organization. Trends in Maternal Mortality: 1990-2008, Geneva: WHO, 2010.

² Central Statistical Agency [Ethiopia] and ORC Macro. Ethiopia Demographic and Health Survey 2005. Addis Ababa, Ethiopia and Calverton, Maryland, USA: Central Statistical Agency and ORC Macro, 2006.

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