SUCCESS STORY SPOTLIGHT

Improving Supply Chain Pathways to Ensure Quality and Respectful Maternal Health in Ghana

Through USAID support, hundreds of health facilities and five regional medical store centers in Ghana have improved supply chain monitoring systems to support health workers by providing the supplies and equipment they need to provide quality, respectful care for mothers and their newborns.

While the rate of maternal deaths in Ghana has decreased by over 50 percent in the last few decades, the number of women who suffer from childbirth complications like postpartum hemorrhage remains high. Additionally, birth asphyxia, or lack of breathing at birth, is the second leading cause of deaths for newborns in Ghana.

For many health care providers, lack of access to supplies and medicine is a barrier to providing optimal care, especially when supporting women with childbirth. Even when the supplies are available, protocols and infrastructure that support proper maintenance in appropriate conditions, improving their efficacy, may be lacking. Providers like Dr. Grace Kagya in Koforidua, Ghana rely on up-to-date, evidence-based training and efficient supply chains to have access to necessary equipment and medicines for safe deliveries and to provide the best possible care for their patients.

At the hospital where Dr. Kagya works, USAID and the national government supply commodities that support the health of mothers and newborns, including oxytocin, which is used to manage postpartum bleeding, and newborn resuscitation equipment, to provide ventilation for newborns struggling to breathe at birth.

With USAID support, medical supply trucks, storage facilities, and delivery wards across the country use temperature monitoring systems to keep oxytocin sufficiently cold and stock tracking systems to ensure it’s available. Through its Global Health Supply Chain Program, USAID recently procured 190 fridges to keep oxytocin cold in Ghanaian health facilities.
Through USAID-supported programs, Dr. Kagya and her staff also received training on how to properly use the systems and store the supplies, so they can save the lives of more women and children that suffer from childbirth complications.

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of women seeking care for pregnancy and childbirth related complications decreased due to fear of contracting the virus while traveling or at the facility itself. To reach women beyond the clinic walls, USAID collaborated with the local nonprofit Health Keepers Network and trained community-based volunteers to provide information on maternal health care to women in the community who were not visiting the health facility.

Through USAID’s support to the Ghana Health Service to increase local capacity and train medical professionals to use and manage quality maternal and child health medicines and equipment, mothers and babies can return home to their communities—healthy, happy, and thriving.

“Healthy, moving all limbs, it’s very delightful. To see a baby being born is delightful. Especially when it comes out with a cry.”

— DR. KAGYA, OBSTETRICIAN/GYNECOLOGIST