maternity FOUNDATION

Photo: Mulugeta Wolde

HALF-YEAR REPORT

2024

maternity FOUNDATION

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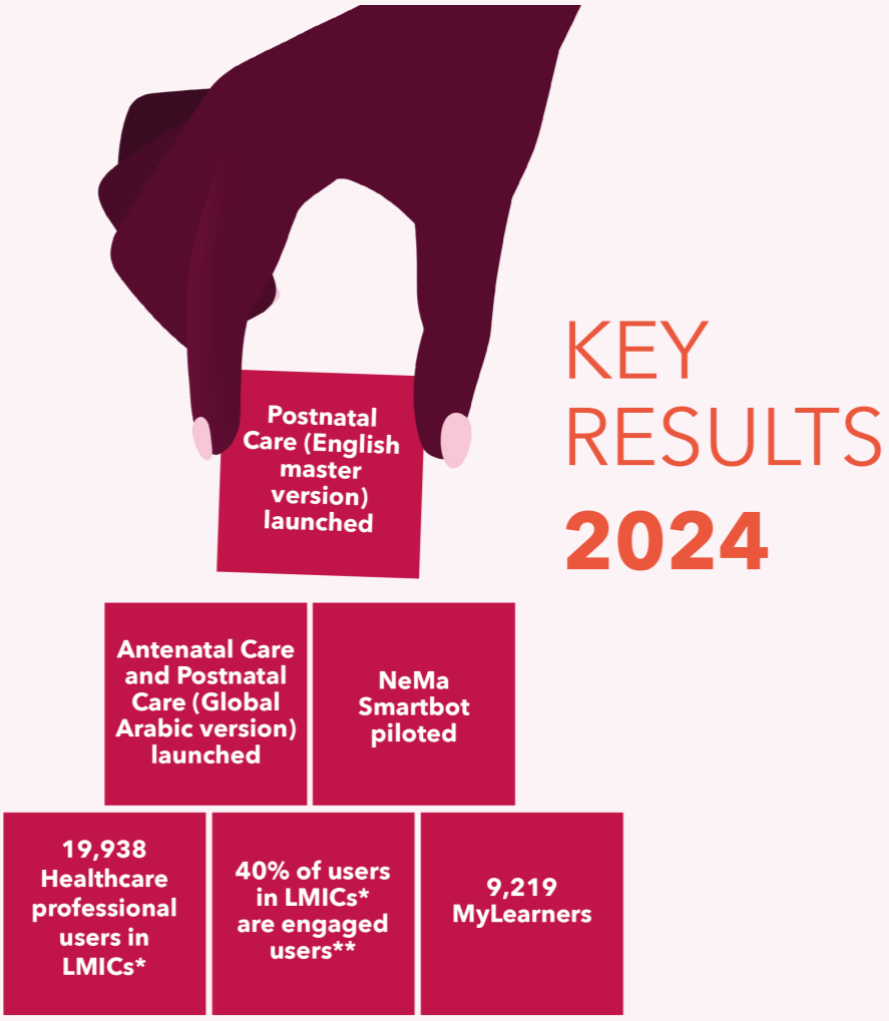
Achievements



**Low and middle-income countries*

***An "engaged user' is someone who has had at least 5 content sessions in the Safe Delivery App in the defined period of time. The content session could consist of any of the following uses of the App: drug list review, watching a video, accessing an action card, reading a practical procedure, completing a MyLearning session*

Introduction

In the first half of 2024, Maternity Foundation continued to work to expand our reach and deepen our presence in low- and middle-income countries, including in areas impacted by humanitarian crises, and to strengthen the learning and the training of midwives and other healthcare professionals. The core component of this work has been the Safe Delivery+ programme, which aims to improve the quality of care, ultimately ensuring a reduction in global maternal and newborn deaths, - a goal which continues to be critical

considering the new maternal mortality figures which show that progress on reducing maternal deaths has stalled in recent years.

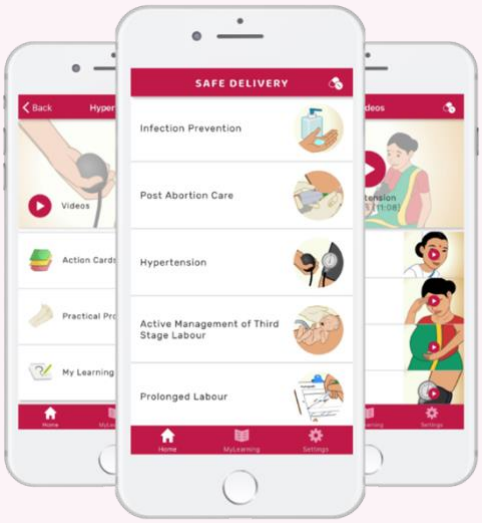
The Safe Delivery+ programme

The Safe Delivery+ programme is a digital training and learning universe, offering predominantly midwives in remote, low-resource and fragile settings opportunities for continued growth and lifelong learning. Its primary objective is to enhance the quality of care provided during pregnancy and childbirth, focusing on providing instant access to evidence-based clinical guidelines, descriptions of practices for routine and emergency care, and competency-based learning and training for midwives, everywhere.

Safe Delivery App

Central to the programme is the Safe Delivery App (SDA); an evidence-based job aid, learning and training tool designed to support midwives, and other healthcare professionals in supporting before, during and after birth, and managing the most common complications. Among other features, it contains simple, animated instruction videos, descriptions of practical procedures, and action cards in addition to having a MyLearning platform that allows for competency-based learning and training. At the same time, the user can achieve a formal certification and become Safe Delivery Champion through the App. (Watch the YouTube video "A guide to the Safe Delivery App" here.)

The App is free and, once downloaded, works offline, making it possible to use it in remote areas with little connection. Through the Safe Delivery+ programme, we can reach even the most remote healthcare professionals, continuously enhancing their knowledge and skills and ultimately the quality of care they provide for their communities.



Since the App was launched in 2015, it has been scaled up globally with key partners, and now it comes in 5 global versions (English, French, Arabic, Spanish and Portuguese) based on WHO guidelines, and more than 30 language versions, adapted to national contexts and needs. Over the past years Maternity Foundation, in collaboration with key partners, has started to broaden the clinical scope of the App from focusing on basic emergency obstetric and newborn care, to also include preventive care.

In the first half of 2024, we have continued to develop, broaden and strengthen the content of the Safe Delivery+ programme, including the App, and through a multi-faceted approach, focused on the following:

- Developing and releasing new App content and versions based on requests from Ministries of Health, midwives and partners.
- Conducting multiple training sessions worldwide and further developing the training approach.
- Investing in partner engagement at both country and regional levels to strengthen, contextualise, and diversify content and scope.
- Exploring AI options to create more user-friendly and adaptive learning mechanisms, enhancing the Safe Delivery App.

Overview of Safe Delivery App modules

Trainings

Currently, training packages exist for 19 modules, with more underway. The training packages developed by the Clinical Team are available for in-service midwives and midwifery students (pre-service), mainly through Training of Trainer (ToT) programmes. All training packages come complete with accompanying training exercises. In 2024, interest and demand for Maternity Foundation's skills-based training grounded in the clinical content of the Safe Delivery+ programme has continued. In the first half of this year, Maternity Foundation conducted 33 training sessions, capacitating over 1,405 healthcare professional trainers across seven countries to further roll out the programme.

To further strengthen our training approach, a Maternity Foundation trainer development pathway has been established for all clinical staff members (in Denmark, India, and Ethiopia). So far, a total of eight Maternity Foundation staff members and two consultants have enrolled in the training programme and will be named SDA Master Trainers upon completion. These Master Trainers can then go on to train other trainers.

Clinical content

As a part of the Safe Delivery Programme, the Safe Delivery App currently consists **of 19 modules, providing guidance on basic emergency obstetric and newborn care**, in addition to preventive care, including newly released modules on perinatal mental health, modern contraception, and safe abortion care, developed in collaboration with United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). In the first half of 2024, we have continued to produce new content, as well as revise and update several existing modules. New modules have been published this year for various versions of the App, following extensive collaborations with partners worldwide. These are:

The Global English Master version of the Postnatal Care Module was released. This module is based on WHO guidelines and covers the first six weeks after birth. It includes, among other content, guidance for midwives and other healthcare professionals on how to provide breastfeeding counselling, recognise danger signs for complications, and support the parents in providing newborn care. The module also links to the Perinatal Mental Health module in the Safe Delivery App to support midwives and other healthcare

professionals in screening for postnatal depression and anxiety and to overall help support the emotional well-being of women.

Maternity Foundation continually strives to update all five global versions of the App, ensuring that each version contains the same modules and aligns with the English master version. Therefore, following the newly released modules last year, the **Global Spanish and French versions of the App were updated**. For the Global Spanish version, Perinatal Mental Health and Safe Abortion were published, while Postnatal Care and Antenatal Care were published in the Global French version. In addition, we strive to update the national versions based on need and demand from country partners.

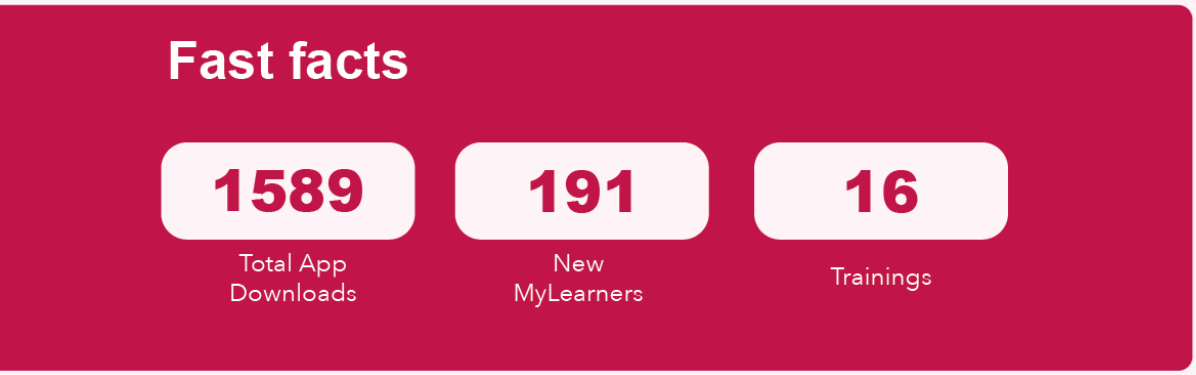
In Ethiopia, five modules (Modern Contraception, Normal Labour and Birth, Postnatal Care, Antenatal Care, and Perinatal Mental Health) **have been adapted** to the Ethiopian context and are currently awaiting accreditation.

For the Indian version of the Safe Delivery App, **two new modules were launched** with support from the World Diabetes Foundation: Antenatal Care (ANC) and Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM), both now available in English and Hindi. The new modules are based on Indian national clinical guidelines and include guidance on screening, diagnosis, and management of GDM, alongside an antenatal care schedule, guidance on respectful maternity care, and counselling. The modules integrate GDM screening into antenatal care visits, ensuring timely detection and treatment for affected women.

Regional and country engagements

Maternity Foundation continues to expand the reach of our programme, disseminating the Safe Delivery App, training midwives and improving the quality of care to the benefit of women and newborns worldwide. This is done from our two hubs in Ethiopia and India, as well as the projects in the regional portfolios: Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Pacific, MENA and Latin America.

Activities from the Ethiopia Hub



The first half of this year has been important to advance Maternity Foundation's impact in Ethiopia, including not only the delivery of skill-based training and dissemination of clinical content, but also in terms of assessing the local needs, capturing lessons learned, and documenting the work to continue strengthening our efforts.

In collaboration with UNICEF, Maternity Foundation carried out clinical catchment-based mentorship and end-line assessments at twenty health centres in the Afar (5) and Somali (15) regions of Ethiopia. Through this initiative, a total of eighty-two healthcare professionals received mentoring. Additionally, the Regional Health Bureaus, along with the Bureaus of Education and Finance in the Afar and Somali regions, conducted supportive supervision to evaluate the implementation of Clinical Catchment-Based Mentorship (CBCM) programmes. They reviewed service delivery standards and provided technical support as needed. Interviews with mentees and mothers were also conducted to gather insights and lessons learned related to maternal and newborn healthcare practices, contributing to Maternity Foundation's evidence base of best practices. Read the article on CBCM from World Economic Forum here.

New midwives often lack practical experience. As a midwife mentor, I help identify and fill the gaps in my mentees' skills and knowledge and together, we help ensure safer births for more women and their babies"

- Kemal Hassan, midwife,
Referral Hospital, Asayita

In partnership with UNFPA and the Afar Regional Health Bureau, Maternity Foundation organised training sessions for 76 healthcare professionals across multiple facilities in the Afar region. These sessions, conducted based on recommendations from the regional health bureau, focused on improving skills in clinical management of rape, comprehensive abortion care, minimum initial service package implementation, and ultrasound.

A key component in institutionalising Maternity Foundation's training and content is the accreditation of the Safe Delivery App (SDA) at universities and educational institutions. This year, knowledge and skill assessments were carried out for 27 third-year midwifery students at Semera University. Orientations on the SDA were provided for both them and graduating students. Additionally, fifteen modules of the Ethiopian version of the App are currently under revision, with three already reviewed by the Ministry of Health's Continuing Professional Development (CPD) accrediting team for accreditation so that midwives may obtain CPD points through completing modules and corresponding module certificates in the App.

Afar visit: In February, Anna Frellsen, Maternity Foundation's CEO, Hilde Cortier, Programme Director, Helle Degn, Head of Communication, Hiwot Wubshet Ethiopia Country Director, and Heaven Workneh, Clinical and Programme manager, visited the Afar region of Ethiopia to document, learn, and further develop our work in the region. During the visit, the team held meetings with partners including the Belgian and Danish Embassies, held discussions with regional and Woreda health bureau officials, health center CEOs, trainers/mentors, midwives/mentees and mothers, and oversaw Maternity Foundation's work at different facilities, including the catchment-based mentorship activities at Humodoyita Health Center under the UNICEF project.

Rest of Sub-Saharan Africa

Benin: Maternity Foundation launched a project with PlanBørnefonden aimed at improving the capacity of midwives and other healthcare professionals in Benin to deliver safe abortion services within the newly updated legal framework. An expert team in Benin reviewed and adapted the global French Safe Abortion Care (SAC) module to align with national guidelines and clinical standards. The revised module received approval from the Ministry of Health and was recently published in the Safe Delivery App (SDA). In addition, the Clinical Team is working closely with PlanBørnefonden to plan the upcoming Training of Trainers (ToT) on SAC. This training will be cascaded to 60 midwives and other healthcare professionals in Benin. In parallel, we are also developing M&E tools to ensure effective implementation and capture the outcome of the training workshop.

Activities from the India Hub

Fast facts

10,248	2212	13
Total App Downloads	New MyLearners	Trainings

In India, there has been a continued increase in interest and demand for the Safe Delivery+ programme, including the SDA. The focus in this first half-year has therefore been on delivering training sessions and increasing the content available through the app.

In the first quarter of this year, we launched two new modules in the Indian version of the SDA, namely Antenatal Care (ANC) and Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM). These modules, developed with support from the World Diabetes Foundation (WDF), are available in both English and Hindi. The launch event to introduce the modules took place in Madhya Pradesh on 21st March 2024 (as part of the same project).

In conjunction with the launch of the two new modules, the India hub conducted a series of training sessions and orientations for in-service healthcare professionals, collaborating with national authorities to enhance the skills of practising midwives. Notably, in Sholapur and Manipur, 60 healthcare professionals were trained on the Safe Delivery App in partnership with Jhpiego under the Manyata Programme. In Uttarakhand, 110 healthcare professionals received training in collaboration with the National Health Mission of Uttarakhand. Additionally, through partnerships with national educational institutions, Maternity Foundation has supported approximately 400 students at Metro Groups of College, SGT University, National Reference Simulation Centre, and Government ANM Training Centre, providing them with crucial knowledge and skills for their future careers.

Finally, earlier this year we welcomed a new Country Director for India, Dr. Arunabh Ray. Dr. Ray is a distinguished medical doctor and public health expert with over 15 years of experience in healthcare strategy, policy, and financing across some of the most challenging environments in Southeast Asia and Africa. Dr. Ray's expertise spans health policy, system strengthening, and financing, with a specialized focus on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health (RMNCH). We are thrilled to welcome him onboard. At the same time, we said goodbye to Dr. Narender, who had served Maternity Foundation as the Country Director of the India hub for the past two years. We wish Dr. Narender all the best for the future.

Rest of Asia and the Pacific

Bangladesh: In Bangladesh, in collaboration with the Bangladesh Midwifery Society, Maternity Foundation completed an online introduction training with 20 midwives, according to the blended training approach. The session focused on introducing the midwives to the App, the modules, MyLearning Platform, and different use case scenarios, as well as setting the stage for future potential collaboration.

Papua New Guinea (PNG): In June, a new collaboration with Burnet Institute was signed and will result in four new clinical modules for the Papua New Guinea version of the SDA, namely, Perinatal mental health, Antenatal care, Postnatal care, and Modern contraception.

Central Asia: Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan & Tajikistan: In June, Maternity Foundation launched a new project in Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. The objective is to improve the quality of women-centred health services at primary care level for pregnant women, mothers and their newborns. Under this project, MF and GIZ will jointly work to launch 14 clinical modules in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan in local languages and add three new modules in the Kyrgyzstan version of the SDA.

Afghanistan: Maternity Foundation collaborated with UNFPA Afghanistan and the Afghan Midwifery Association to provide introduction training to midwives from different institutes including the Afghan Midwifery Association, Midwifery Helpline, Afghan Nursing and Midwifery Association, Cure Hospital and French Medical Institute of Children (FMIC). This training will be followed by an online Training of Trainer session focusing on infection prevention, postpartum haemorrhage, and newborn resuscitation, to enable the midwives to cascade their knowledge and upskilling to other midwives and healthcare professionals at their facilities.

Activities in the MENA Region

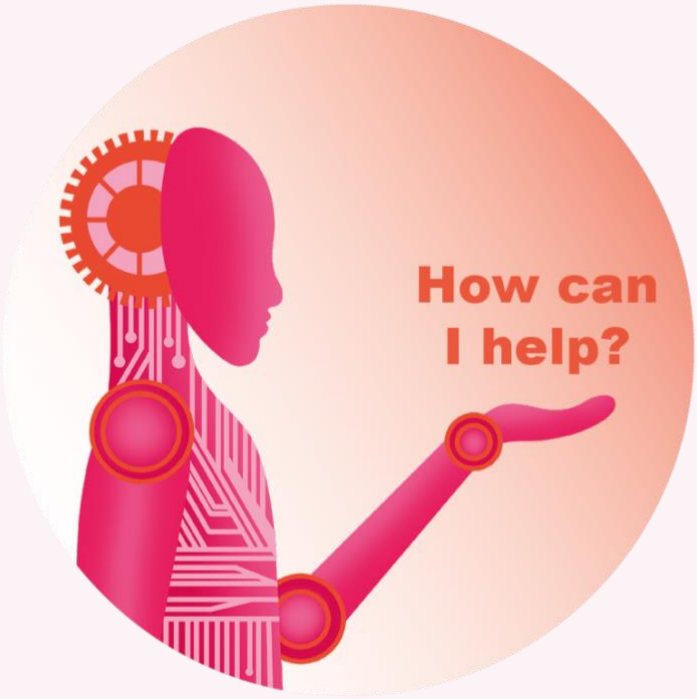
Palestine: To enhance the quality of education and practical training for midwifery students in Palestine, a two-hour orientation session about Maternity Foundation and the SDA was conducted on April 25th. The session was attended by 22 senior midwifery lecturers and clinical instructors from five universities in Palestine. Participants discussed integrating SDA into Midwifery education, focusing on its use in theoretical lessons, simulations labs, and clinical training for courses such as Antenatal Care, Postnatal Care, Labour and Delivery, Family Planning, High-Risk Pregnancy, Obstetric Emergency, and Newborn Care. We received follow-up emails from two universities seeking further collaboration with Maternity Foundation and noted an increase in SDA deployments among Palestinian students.

IT Development

NeMa Smartbot

In a partnership with Neuvo Inc., we are working on integrating an AI-enabled chatbot in Maternity Foundation's Safe Delivery App, the NeMa Smartbot.

During the 2nd half of 2023 we developed and pilot tested the first NeMa Smartbot supporting four modules of the Safe Delivery App, to test and verify the technical feasibility of integrating an AI-enabled chatbot in the Safe Delivery App in order to enhance the knowledge, skills, and confidence of healthcare professionals in low and middle-income settings; in addition, we aim to demonstrate how data analytics will enhance the understanding of user needs and possible gaps in knowledge or material.



In early 2024, UNFPA innovation granted Maternity Foundation an extension of our NeMa Smartbot pilot project to expand the NeMa Smartbot, to include all 14 modules of the Indian version of the Safe Delivery App in English, and pilot test the full version with participants in Midwifery training institutions. The objectives of the full-scale pilot are to:

1. Evaluate whether the NeMa Smartbot creates additional value to the SDA for the end-user
2. Assess the value of the offline version of the NeMa Smartbot to the end-user compared to the online version, and
3. Validate the feasibility of the offline version with a large amount of data.

Read the article "How AI can aid safer births in resource-limited environments" from World Economic Forum here.

External Relations

Maternity Foundation is committed to advocating for the importance of maternal health, sharing experiences from how to scale a digital learning tool, and positioning ourselves in key fora within women's health, global development, and philanthropy. In 2024, we invested in connecting with leading networks and forums on these topics and continued to renew and strengthen our platforms.

Global engagements

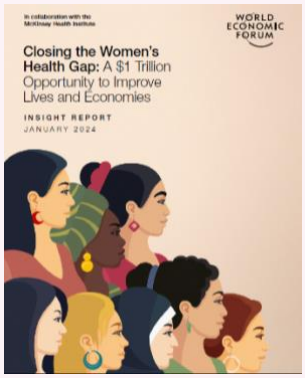
World Economic Forum

In January our CEO, Anna Frellsen, attended the 54th World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos to speak on several panel discussions to advocate for the urgency of advancements in maternal health. From panels to presentations and 1-on-1 meetings, she engaged with agenda-leading organisations on topics ranging from women's health, AI, global developmental and humanitarian response, health equity, social impact and geopolitics.

Above: a selection of photos from Anna's participation at the 2024 WEF in Davos.

Maternity Foundation has for the past couple of years been invited to contribute to prominent streams of work under the World Economic Forum's Women's Health Initiative alongside key private and public stakeholders to demonstrate innovative and economic levers to improve the lives of women.

Closing the Women's Health Gap Report: In January of 2024, McKinsey Health Institute and World Economic Forum published a report, to which Maternity Foundation contributed. The report assessed the women's health gap and the drivers of the global disease burden between men and women. Critically, closing the gap can boost the global economy by 1 trillion dollars by 2030. Maternal and reproductive health is one important aspect hereof.



EDISON Alliance Impact Report: Maternity Foundation is also a dedicated member of the Edison Alliance hosted by World Economic Forum, focusing on innovative and sustainable solutions for maternal health and UNFPA's Equalizer Accelerator Fund. In January of 2024, The Edison Alliance released their impact report, stating that the Alliance – of which Maternity Foundation is a part – has now benefitted 784 million people across 127 countries.

World Health Assembly

At the end of May, Maternity Foundation attended the 77th World Health Assembly where Director of Global Development, Franka Cadée, and Head of Clinical Team, Ann-Marie H. Christiansen, participated in many side events related to women's reproductive health including: the ***World Economic Forum*** (WEF): Accelerating progress and action to close the Women's health gap; ***DEVEX:*** Maternity Matters Unlocking private sector fiscal capacity for health system response and bridging the public and private sector to close the women's health gap; **Partnership for Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health** (*PMNCH*): Lives in the balance - maternal, newborn & child health; as well as a game changing event by ***WHO/UNFPA/ICM*** focussing on Transitioning to Midwifery Models of Care. Maternity Foundation also took part in a round table discussion organised by the ***International Red Cross*****:** Saving Mothers & Newborns in Crisis.

People's Meeting (Folkemøde)

Maternity Foundation was also invited to take part in prominent panels and open-to-public debates at this year's People's Meeting ('Folkemøde') at Bornholm. Here, CEO, Anna Frellsen discussed global women´s health, philanthropy, and the future of

development aid together with representatives from **Novo Nordisk Foundation, WHO, UNFPA, Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Gates Foundation** and more.

These fora are all important avenues through which we can create awareness about the importance of investing in maternal health among key stakeholders, an agenda which is becoming increasingly important considering the continued critical need to collectively prioritise maternal and newborn health.

Global partnerships

This first half of 2024, Maternity Foundation also invested in growing our platforms and collaborations with stakeholders who are pivotal to the continued acceleration of our work on a global scale. Some examples are:

Global Maternity Partners

Maternity Foundation officially launched our Global Maternity Partner programme earlier this year, with Grieg Foundation and Frececo entering the programme as the first two inaugural Global Maternity Partners. Global Maternity partners are a community of like-minded global change-makers, and they collaborate with Maternity Foundation as thought-partners and strategic advisers as we strive to accelerate our work and expand our reach.

Maternity Foundation plans to expand the group of Global Maternity Partners in the coming years with more smart and inspiring investors from around the world, providing financial support to help Maternity Foundation expand our reach and increase our impact through the Safe Delivery+ Programme, benefiting mothers, babies, and entire communities and societies globally.

Frececo and Grieg Foundation both joined Maternity Foundation as Global Maternity Partners in the first half of 2024.

World Health Organisation

Maternity Foundation is strengthening its ties with WHO and has become a member of the ***WHO Strategic and Technical Advisory Group of Experts*** (STAGE) as well as the ***Partnership for Maternal and Newborn Health*** (PMNCH). PMNCH, hosted by WHO, consists of 1300+ partners from various sectors in nearly 130 countries. Given the stalled progress of reducing maternal mortality, our engagement in the alliance is crucial and timely. As part of PMNCH's NGO constituency, we aim to elevate the maternal and newborn health agenda, ensuring safer births for women and newborns in poor and fragile settings – everywhere.

Mothers' Day campaign

This May, Maternity Foundation proudly topped last year's sales of the 'Moderkage' ('Mother Cake'), which was sold in all Emmerys bakeries throughout the greater Copenhagen area and in Aarhus, in celebration of Mother's Day. 2024 marks the 4th year of selling 'Moderkage' and each year the sale has increased. Half of the sales go directly to Maternity Foundation's work and the associated Mother's Day campaign raises awareness among the Danes about the fight against maternal mortality.

Her Majesty Queen Mary of Denmark continues her patronage of Maternity Foundation

This year, Her Majesty Queen Mary of Denmark officially declared that she will continue her patronage of Maternity Foundation for the next five years. Since 2010, Her Majesty has shown a deep commitment to address the challenges faced by women in developing countries and the imperative to end all preventable maternal deaths. Through her role as Patron of Maternity Foundation, she has helped shine a light on the urgent need to ensure access to quality maternal healthcare for all. Her Majesty Queen Mary's deep personal engagement in and attention to maternal health is as important as ever, and we extend our deepest gratitude to Her Majesty for her steadfast belief in our work and cause. We are truly thankful for the continued support, which inspires us to work even harder towards our mission.

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Thank you to all the midwives and healthcare professionals who work skillfully and tirelessly to ensure safer childbirths for women and newborns – every day, everywhere.

Finally, thank you to our incredible team, without whom none of this great work would have been possible.