

# NIGERIA – 10-year Collaboration between MSF and Jigawa State MoH to reduce maternal and neonatal mortality

*Doctors and experts from the field of maternal health and officials from the Ministry of Health take stock at the Maternal Health Forum in Jigawa State*

JAHUN, JIGAWA , NIGERIA, November 11, 2018 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Paris/Jahun, 11 November 2018. Over the past ten years, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF), known in English as Doctors Without Borders, has assisted more than 54,000 deliveries, most of them complicated, in Jahun General Hospital, Jigawa state. To reduce maternal and neonatal mortality, the international medical organisation provides [emergency obstetrics and neonatal care](#) in collaboration with the Jigawa State Ministry of Health.



People should know how important it is to seek professional medical care in case of complications during pregnancy and labour.”

*Katja Lorenz- MSF  
Representative in Nigeria.*

To commemorate the 10-year anniversary of this collaboration, a [Forum on Maternal Health](#) is taking place

on the 13th and 14th of November 2018 in Dutse and Jahun. Doctors and experts from the field of maternal health and officials from the Ministry of Health are expected at the Forum to discuss successes and challenges related to maternal and neonatal mortality particularly in Jigawa State and in Nigeria in general.

“Over the last years, the number of women admitted at the maternity of Jahun General Hospital has increased to reach an average of 1000 per month, says Katja Lorenz, MSF Head of Mission in Nigeria. [Complicated pregnancies and deliveries](#) account for over 70% of these cases. However, a lot of women arrive at the hospital only very late, when medical care would be of limited benefit.”

Hypertensive disorders, anaemia and haemorrhages are the main causes for complicated pregnancies and deliveries seen in Jahun General Hospital. MSF and the Jigawa State Ministry of Health treat complications in pregnancies by providing free obstetric care for mothers and children.

To prevent complications, it is crucial to raise awareness about the importance of consulting a health facility in the early stages of pregnancy, of attending regular antenatal consultations and seeking medical attention as soon as there are warning signs.

“People should know how important it is to seek professional medical care in case of complications during pregnancy and labour, notes Katja Lorenz. It must be emphasized that most complications can be prevented and maternal mortality can be decreased by avoiding delays in getting medical care.”

According to the World Health Organization, more than 800 women have died in every 100,000 live births in Nigeria in 2015. And more than 12,000 new cases of fistula are recorded every year, according to the Survive Fistula Foundation. In Jahun, MSF provides surgery to repair obstetric fistula - a consequence of prolonged, obstructed labour - and offers physiotherapy and

psychosocial support. On average, 22 such surgeries are performed each month. This comprehensive package of services alleviates suffering from a debilitating and stigmatising condition and also allows women to resume a normal life.

More generally, maternal health care needs commitment at each level: from the community level by involving traditional birth attendants and in primary healthcare centres to the hospital level for complications in pregnancies. This joint and coordinated effort is the necessary way forward to reducing the number of deaths of mothers and newborn babies.

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MSF is present in nine states in Nigeria. The organization responds to humanitarian needs due to the conflict in various locations across Borno and Yobe states. In Sokoto state, MSF provides reconstructive surgery and comprehensive treatment to children suffering from Noma. In Port Harcourt, survivors of sexual violence are offered healthcare and psychological support. In Zamfara and Niger states, MSF treats children affected by lead poisoning. While in Onitsha (Anambra state), MSF provides medical support to health facilities to ensure free malaria treatment for children under the age of five, for pregnant and lactating women. In Cross River state, MSF provides primary health care to Cameroon refugees.

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