Venture Strategies Innovations (VSI) is a nonprofit organization committed to improving women’s health in developing countries by creating access to effective and affordable technologies on a large scale. With headquarters in the United States and field offices in Africa, VSI’s team combines backgrounds in clinical medicine, demography, program design, epidemiology, monitoring and evaluation, social marketing, finance, international relations and public policy.

VSI focuses on bringing practical and sustainable health solutions to women and health care providers where they live – in their homes and communities – to save lives. This is a critical and complementary strategy to accelerate progress toward the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goal 5 of reducing maternal mortality by 75% by 2015, and to achieve equitable access to life-saving medicines and services.

WHO WE ARE

VSI CONNECTS WOMEN WITH LIFE-SAVING MEDICINES AND SERVICES

I. REGISTRATION
Engaging governments and partners to achieve regulatory approval of quality, essential medicines and supplies

II. INTRODUCTION
Strengthening national policies and practices to enable access to products and services

III. AVAILABILITY
Applying practical solutions to ensure everyday availability for communities in need

www.vsiinnovations.org
VSI’s efforts to register, introduce and ensure availability of misoprostol have enabled several countries to expand product access on a wide scale, including:

**NIGERIA** 2011
With a revision to national guidelines, Nigeria became the first country to allow community agents to distribute misoprostol for prevention of PPH at home births.

**BANGLADESH** 2011
Community-level use of misoprostol for PPH was included as a priority intervention in the 2011-2016 National Development Plan.

**RWANDA** 2013
The Ministry of Health developed a comprehensive postabortion care protocol and training tools for use in health centers and hospitals nationwide.

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**WHAT WE DO**

VSI’s safe motherhood programs address three of the leading causes of maternal mortality globally: postpartum hemorrhage (PPH), pre-eclampsia/eclampsia and unsafe abortion. In collaboration with partners and governments in developing countries, VSI works to assess, introduce and integrate medicines and services, such as misoprostol and magnesium sulfate, into the health system to address these conditions. VSI seeks to apply our access model to ensure other essential but underutilized products for maternal and neonatal health reach communities in need.

VSI’s leading program connects women and health care providers with misoprostol, a World Health Organization-approved essential medicine and one of 13 commodities in focus by the United Nations Commission on Life-Saving Commodities for Women and Children. A dose of misoprostol costs less than a dollar, yet this effective and practical medicine is not widely available to women and health care providers. VSI has made significant gains in expanding access to misoprostol since it was first registered for obstetric use in 2006.

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As men, we are the gravediggers in our communities. Since this [misoprostol] project came to our community, we have not dug any graves for our women.

Richard, Safe Motherhood Volunteer
ZAMBIA

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VSI’s efforts to register, introduce and ensure availability of misoprostol have enabled several countries to expand product access on a wide scale, including:

**17 COUNTRIES**
registered misoprostol tablets for use in women’s health

**7 MILLION TABLETS**
of misoprostol imported for obstetric use

**10 COUNTRIES**
 included misoprostol on national essential medicines lists and/or standard treatment guidelines

**18,000 PROVIDERS**
trained to provide misoprostol to women in need

**60,000 WOMEN**
used misoprostol for protection against two leading causes of maternal mortality

**11 STUDIES**
demonstrated innovative models for reaching women with misoprostol

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50%
Where we work, 50% of women deliver without skilled birth attendants, hours away from health facilities...

We’re reaching women where they are.

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