



Lifebox Named Action for Women's Health Awardee to Strengthen Surgical Safety for Women

November 12, 2025 – [Lifebox](#), the global non-profit making surgery and anesthesia safer worldwide, has been announced as one of 80+ organizations that were awarded funding through Action for Women's Health, a \$250 million global open call, launched in 2024 to support organizations working to improve women's mental and physical health around the world. Action for Women's Health is funded by Pivotal, a group of impact organizations founded by Melinda French Gates, and managed by Lever for Change.

The award recognizes the work of Lifebox in addressing one of the most critical yet under-resourced areas of women's health - safe surgery. This catalytic grant will allow Lifebox and our partners to expand our work to improve the safety and quality of surgery and anesthesia for women and families across Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, and the Asia-Pacific region.

"Support from Action for Women's Health will enable Lifebox and our partners to strengthen safer surgical systems for women by empowering maternity and gynecological surgical teams with practical, evidence-based tools to prevent surgical infection and improve outcomes," stated Kris Torgeson, Lifebox Global CEO. *"The grant will allow Lifebox to dramatically scale our work with partners to strengthen the safety and quality of surgical systems for women's health worldwide."*

Over 4,000 organizations from 119 countries applied to the Action for Women's Health Open Call, offering solutions across the lifespan for women. After a rigorous peer and expert review process, 80+ organizations have been identified, many of whom have historically lacked access to major funding streams. This funding will have a real impact on women across geographies, life stages, and identities.

"Every year, more than four million people die following surgery. Unsafe surgery is one of the most urgent and solvable challenges in global health, especially for women," stated Dr. Tihitena Negussie Mammo, Lifebox Global Clinical Director and pediatric surgeon. *"At Lifebox, we've reduced postoperative complications and deaths, including those following cesarean section, by up to 40%. Strengthening surgical safety for women saves lives today and builds the foundation for healthier families and societies."*

Cesarean delivery is the most common surgery in the world, accounting for nearly a third of all operations in low- and middle-income countries. In many health systems cesarean deliveries and other lifesaving operations for women make up nearly half of all surgeries. Despite advances in obstetric care, it still carries significant risks, particularly surgical site infections, the second leading cause of maternal death after postpartum hemorrhage. Lifebox's [Clean Cut for Cesarean Section \(CS\) program](#) addresses these risks through an evidence-based approach that strengthens compliance with six critical infection prevention standards and reduces complications for mothers and newborns.

Professor Salome Maswime, Vice Chair of the Lifebox Global Governance Council, added: *“As an obstetrician and gynecologist, I know that too many women’s lives depend on access to safe and timely surgery. No woman should die while giving life. By strengthening surgical systems, we are transforming maternal health from survival to high-quality care, improving safety and dignity for every woman, everywhere.”*

More information about the initiative and awardees is available at: <https://leverforchange.org/open-calls/action-for-womens-health>.

About Lifebox

Lifebox is a global nonprofit that saves lives through safer surgery and anesthesia. Through tools, training, and partnerships, Lifebox addresses critical gaps in surgical systems to make surgery and anesthesia safer worldwide. The organization focuses on three core areas: anesthesia safety, surgical teamwork, and reducing surgical infections. Co-founded in 2011 by Dr. Atul Gawande, Lifebox has worked in 116 countries, trained over 14,400 healthcare providers, and helped make more than 248 million surgeries safer. Learn more at www.lifebox.org

Media Contact:

Lourdes Walusala
Media Relations Manager lourdes.walusala@lifebox.org +254 720 972 893
www.lifebox.org