

# BTO Meeting MSD for Mothers - CAB Gabriel

## 04.09.2018

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## BTO notes meeting with Third-i BVBA / MSD for Mothers - Maternal Health and Digital

**Date:** 04-09-2018

**List of participants:**

- EC representatives: [Manuel MATEO GOYET](#)
- Visitors: <http://www.third-i.eu/>, (MSD Europe Inc.)

**Context :**

Introduction to MSD for Mothers (<http://www.msdfornmothers.com>), a 10-year initiative focused on improving the health and well-being of mothers during pregnancy and childbirth.

Recently [launched Women Political Leaders Forum \(WPL\) survey on improving Maternal Healthcare for vulnerable women in EU28](#),

The research, funded by MSD for Mothers, is another step towards ensuring that equitable access to maternal healthcare in Europe becomes a reality. Previous efforts include significant political commitment at EU level, as well as from Member States, such as through the [WPL Outcome Declaration in Malta](#), developed under the patronage of Her Excellency President Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca.

What does this research show us in terms of the importance of digital?

- The study demonstrated numerous discrepancies across Europe, especially when it comes to vulnerable groups and access to maternal healthcare
- In the survey, nearly 40% of respondents (strongly) disagreed that the maternal mortality of vulnerable women is an important political topic in their country. The response was strongest in Eastern Europe, where 50% (strongly) disagreed.
- Based on interviews conducted as part of the survey, vulnerable women seem to be neither aware of nor knowledgeable on the use maternal health services, showing that both provider and receiver are often not sure about entitlements to health services. In addition to that, Europe demonstrates differences when it comes to urban and rural divide, therefore placing many women from rural territories in need of accessing proper healthcare services.

**Main topics discussed**

- Introduction of the topic and presentation of some results and pilot projects (e.g. in Kenya on family planning and quality of care monitoring, India) of the MSD for mothers health programme. (see attached factsheets)
- MSD is not yet active in Europe on this topic and is looking for opportunities to share this expertise, scale-up and transfer successful (digital) innovations to (eastern) Europe and show impact on reducing mortality and increasing access to high quality care.
- Digital policies (regional, national, European) are horizontal and not always easy to grasp. MSD is investing more and more in digital and is interested in how can digital innovation can improve access to care (to overcome inequalities).
- MSD also is interested in vaccination coverage, access to vaccines data throughout Europe
- MSD has a global grant programme with initiatives in Romania (avoid teenager pregnancies in rural areas), in Greece.
- Communication on enabling the digital transformation of health and care in the Digital Single Market; empowering citizens and building a healthier society (COM(2018) 233 final) was discussed with particular focus on the three priorities:
  1. **Citizens' secure access to their health data, also across borders** - enabling citizens to access their health data across the EU;
  2. **Personalised medicine through shared European data infrastructure** - allowing researchers and other professionals to pool resources (data, expertise, computing processing and storage capacities) across the EU;
  3. **Citizen empowerment with digital tools for user feedback and person-centred care** - using digital tools to empower people to look after their health, stimulate prevention and enable feedback and interaction between users and healthcare providers.
- maternal health and inequalities in access to healthcare services are important issues in the empowerment context of our policy proposals, i.e. Pillar 3.
- Horizon2020 project: mHealth Hub in EU is of interest to collect and share best practices. Objective of the project is: Foundation and maintenance of a centralised 'Knowledge and Innovations Hub for mHealth' to monitor and enable mHealth adoption and innovation. The project is currently finalising the selection process of the host for the mHealth hub.
- MSD recently set-up the "Digital Therapeutics Partnership" to help create the healthcare of tomorrow through the transformational power of digital technologies with the view to improving people's lives, enhancing health outcomes, and increasing efficiencies in healthcare systems. <http://ec.europa.eu/transparencyregister/public/consultation/displaylobbyist.do?id=727761731277-71>

#### **Operational conclusions/actions:**

- MSD and Third-i noted down the ideas and suggestions given by EC and will keep in touch as they further explore these opportunities of presenting their digital experience to address maternal health as a use case to inform policy-making on digital health, in particular in the Eastern European region.
- [REDACTED] will inform MSD and Third-i on the appointment of the mHealth hub host once this information is published.