

## Midwives save lives

### ***New ICM President Frances Day-Stirk outlines the vision for the next Triennium***

**A**S one year ends and a New Year beckons it hardly seems possible that June has turned to December and that the first six months of the new triennium has been completed.

It is also six months since my election as president and I wish to thank all the Council delegates in Durban who put their confidence in me and elected me to lead the ICM over the next triennium that will take the ICM from Durban in 2011 to Prague in 2014.

Post Durban has been a busy and exciting time with invitations and meetings beginning on the day immediately after Congress closed!



*President Frances Day-Stirk (right) with Vice President Debrah Lewis (left) and Sarah Brown (centre)*

Month on month this has increased and provided opportunities to present and profile the ICM, its work and the essential role of midwives.

#### **A time to build**

It has also been a time to build on the achievements of the previous triennium, most notably the ICM Global Standards, conceived and developed under the previous President Bridget Lynch whose vision and leadership I acknowledge with appreciation.

#### **Global standards**

Dissemination of the ICM global standards has begun in earnest in a number of ways. There have been two very successful gap analysis workshops under the ICM/UNFPA programme Investing in Midwives staff.

The first took place in Ghana, with 12 countries from Anglophone and Francophone Africa. The second, 'Orientation and Harmonisation of Midwifery Education' took place during the Regional Meeting in New Delhi.

In addition I gave a keynote presentation in Abu Dhabi at the Midwifery Conference organised by the UAE Midwifery Society, and presented to several divisions of the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta as well as to faculty and students at Emory University in the USA.,

#### **ICM at the UN**

ICM's visibility and collaboration continued with our participation in a number of sessions at the UN General Assembly, in New York in September.

ICM was represented at a number of events by Vice-President Debrah Lewis, Regional Midwife Advisor, Pashtoon Azfar and Dorothea Lang, ICM representative to the UN.

These included the White Ribbon Alliance Wake Up Breakfast, the WRA symposium hosted by Sarah Brown, Arianna Huffington and Donna Karan; the Maternal health in Crisis: Health Workers on the Frontline organised by Family



### **Forward into the next triennium with the new ICM Board**

Back row L-R: Radka Wilhelmová (Representing the 2014 Triennial Conference host association); Frances Ganges (North America/The Caribbean); Laurence Monteiro (Africa West); Mary Kirk (Asia/Pacific); Sue Bree (Asia/Pacific); Maria Papadopoulou (Southern Europe); Mary Higgins (Central Europe); Mirian Teresa Solís Rojas (Central/South America); Ingela Wiklund (Northern Europe) Front row L-R: Agneta Bridges (Secretary General); Debrah Lewis (Vice President); Frances Day-Stirk (President); Marian van Huis (Treasurer) Inset: Deliwe Nyathikazi (Africa East)



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## ICM President outlines the ICM vision

Care International (FCI) and co-hosted by the ICM.

At a highlevel meeting hosted by the H4+ (UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO, UN-AIDS & World Bank) and the International Women's Health Coalition on Global Strategy for Women's & Children's Health: Expanding community-level access to midwifery services ICM was delighted to have RMA Pashtoon Azfar present on the Afghanistan midwifery programme development and progress of the ICM/UNFPA programme .

### Commitments

A key event was a high-level one-year implementation review hosted by the UN Secretary-General, of *Every Woman Every Child*—the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health. Several commitments were made by the Heads of Governments present.

In October your new Board met to review the outputs of the strategic directions from Council and to initiate working relationships with ICM Secretariat staff.

The outcomes will feed into development of the strategic plan for the triennium and complete unfinished work from the previous triennium.

### Midwives Save Lives

We all know that the world needs midwives more than ever because midwives save lives. That is the message of the next three years and the State of the World's Midwifery Report 2011 provides the evidence to support it.

The MDG goals 4 & 5 are still far from being achieved 350,000 women die while pregnant or giving birth and 2 million newborn deaths/ 2.6 million stillbirths. Most of this is preventable with proper midwifery care.

### Making a difference

Your ICM is committed to strengthening the voice of midwives throughout the world to address the issues and make a difference.

On behalf of the Board I wish you the best for the new year counting on your goodwill in making this a reality.

*ICM is actively represented at the United Nations throughout the year by volunteer representatives, Dorothea Lang and Ginette Lange. Together they bring over 80 years of midwifery experience to UN committee rooms and corridors, making sure that the contribution and issues of midwives are heard in discussions of health, gender and development.*

## The joys and challenges of representing midwives at the UN

Dorothea Lang CNM, MPH, FACNM Ginette Lange PhD, CNM, FNP

EVERY year, thousands of women leaders from around the world gather for important meetings at the UN, such as the annual Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and NGO sponsored side events.

These gatherings are ideal opportunity to network and to profile ICM's mission and the work of midwives. Often, just chatting with international women leaders in the hallways, or at lunch, helps to bring midwifery and ICM's international mission into focus. This is often also when we learn that the person's mother, or sister is a midwife in their country of residence.

Whenever possible, we attend the meetings that specifically address the health needs of women and girls. We sign the attendance rosters to show that ICM representatives were present. We also participate in the NGO parallel events.

We are both members of the NGO Health Committee at the UN and Dorothea functions on their board of directors having previously served as vice-President.

### Opening doors

Here at the UN in New York, there are hundreds of other credentialed volunteers representing over 3,000 NGO groups. Some years back, Dorothea and ICM's leadership identified actions to achieve distinguished ECOSOC roster status in the UN. In the end, we were successful and this has opened new doors for ICM representatives to gain access to UN-ECOSOC functions in New York and Geneva.

As credentialed midwifery representatives of ICM, we have spent endless hours participating and contributing to meetings, lectures and committees. We

hear again and again about the worldwide health, social, and educational needs of women and girls.

### Doubling midwives

We know that in relation to MDG 5 if the total number of the world's active midwives were doubled, improvements would be visible much faster.

We also know that the status of women is a fundamental issue to be addressed in achieving improvements in health, education and employment for women— especially midwives who are mostly women and provide women-centred care.

In the 30-50 years we've worked as midwives, we have seen the profession of midwifery become steadily better understood, respected and more visible. We know much of that is down to the hard work of ICM.

### High profile

Now that the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women and Children's Health has given maternal healthcare such a high profile we've got a great opportunity to promote women's health and midwifery values.

We will continue to disseminate information about midwives and the ICM global standards, hoping to inform the international and national communities of the value of midwifery. These are our joys and our challenges.





## From Durban with love

*ICM Congress petition travels to the UN in New York*

**M**IDWIVES were joined by a galaxy of stars and political leaders at the UN this September, as they took the lead in a global advocacy campaign for increased investment in health-workers.

A focal point of the campaign was the UN Secretary General's Every Woman Every Child event where midwifery educator - and President of the Sierra Leone Midwifery Association- Joan Shepherd was the first to sign a giant petition calling for increased investment in health workers.

Joan was quickly followed by Canadian Minister for International Development Beverly Oda, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Dr. Raj Shah, of USAID and Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Ethiopian Minister of Health.

This global Health Workers Count petition incorporated signatures from the

midwifery petition that was launched at the ICM Congress in Durban, in partnership with White Ribbon Alliance and Save the Children. Nearly five and a half thousand midwives from 79 countries signed the petition.

Midwifery associations in Japan, Kenya, New Zealand, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Uganda, the United Kingdom and the United States also organised petition handovers to their government leaders, helping to draw attention to the issue of missing midwives and urging governments to commit to increasing investment in midwifery education and employment.

By the time the Assembly closed on the 20th September, over 100 commitments to the UN Secretary General's Global Strategy for Women and Children's Health - Every Woman, Every

### HEALTH WORKERS COUNT

I PLEDGE TO DO ALL I CAN TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE, NO MATTER WHERE THEY LIVE, IS WITHIN REACH OF A HEALTH WORKER



Child, had been registered. From governments committing to salary increases for their health workers, to companies funding research on neglected medicines and diagnostics, a range of new partners have answered ...the call for increased commitment to tackling the 'biggest challenge' faced by our world in the 21st Century.

ICM will continue to work with members and campaigning partners to ensure that governments make specific commitments to midwifery education and regulation.

To find out more about the *Every Woman Every Child* strategy and your government's commitments go to [www.everywomaneverychild.org](http://www.everywomaneverychild.org)

## Heartbreak behind the statistics

*WHO and Save the Children highlight slow progress reducing newborn deaths in developing countries*

**F**EWER newborns are dying worldwide, but progress is still too slow and Africa in particular is being left behind, according to a recent report from WHO and Save the Children.

**The developing world accounts for 99% of all neonatal deaths.** India alone accounts for nearly 28% of the global total and, with a current annual progress rate of just 1%, it is estimated that it will take Africa more than 150 years to achieve the same child survival rates as the United States of America or the United Kingdom.

Across the world three causes account for three quarters of neonatal deaths; preterm delivery, asphyxia and severe

infection such as sepsis or pneumonia. Existing interventions can prevent two thirds or more of these deaths if they reach those who need them.

'This study shows in stark terms that where babies are born dramatically influences their chances of survival and that, especially in Africa, far too many mothers experience the heartbreak of losing their baby,' said Dr Joy Lawn, Save the Children.

'Millions of babies should not be dying when there are proven cost effective interventions to prevent their deaths.'

Full report available from [www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1001080](http://www.plosmedicine.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pmed.1001080)



Taking great strides for midwifery and mothers in Zambia MAZ march on IDM 2011

## Viva midwives in Zambia

... welcoming a new Member Association to the Midwives global family

**T**HE Midwives Association of Zambia (MAZ) has a big job on its hands. The newly formed association has committed to contributing to a 75% reduction in maternal mortality in time for the 2015 MDG 5 deadline.

For Zambia, that means reducing the maternal mortality ratio from 591 to 162 per 100,000 births in just four years; a challenging goal for any association, never mind one that has been constituted for a very short time.

A recent UNFPA MDG report has called for significant increases in investment to achieve the MDG5 goal. MAZ is therefore likely to play a crucial role in helping to make the case for investing in midwives and maternal health in Zambia. With support from the ICM-UNFPA maternal health programme, which has assisted the formation of the Association and Membership of ICM, great strides are already being taken.

### Strengthening Midwifery Associations Worldwide

Midwives in Zambia, as in many other countries, are in short supply. Previously midwives have entered the profession following a basic nursing programme. However a new program aimed at tackling the human resources crisis will now enable direct entry into a midwifery program, without first undergoing the basic three year nursing course. The aim of the initiative is to increase the number of available midwives at facility level and to contribute to the reduction in maternal morbidity

and mortality.

Other investments are also taking place to support and develop the three pillars of midwifery : education, regulation and association.

The landmark achievement of establishing a Midwives Association in Zambia was celebrated on IDM 2011 with a march that drew together nurses and midwives from the public and private sector and also from the defence forces in a show of solidarity.

The event also provided a great opportunity for the fledgling association to raise the profile of midwifery with the Zambian government. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Health Dr Peter Mwaba formally officiated at the event.

For midwives in Zambia, the march was just the first step on the beginning of a long and exciting journey. Their real task now and one that ICM and our partners share with them, is to ensure that midwives contribute to the policies and programmes that governments have put in place keep Zambia on course to attaining the MDG.

Viva midwives in Zambia!

## Comings and goings

Standing down from the ICM Board after years of valuable service: Marieme Fall, Eva Selin, Vitor Varela, and Sylvia Fung

Moving on to pastures new from the ICM HQ team: Patricia van Ham, and Catherine Smith, Technical Midwife Advisers Anita Wiseman, Media and Communications Officer.

Joining the ICM HQ team: Emily Kibbler, Personal Assistant Jed Stone, Media and Communications

## Midwife heads European Forum of National Nurses and Midwifery Associations



The first ever midwife Chair has been appointed to the European Forum of National Nurses and Midwifery Associations (EFNMA).

**Lilian Bondo**, is currently President of the Danish Midwifery Association.

EFNMA, the European Forum of the WHO, represents 26 national nursing and midwifery associations that signed a WHO declaration of intent to promote dialogue and joint action.

The forum provides a link between international and national policy-makers and the 6 million nurses and midwives in the European region.



## Think big, Aim high, Start Small

*Standards workshop develops a new vision for Asia*

Midwives and other stakeholders from India, Timor Leste, Vietnam, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Nepal came together in New Delhi, India recently for a workshop on ICM Global Standards, Competencies and tools and work towards harmonisation of midwifery education in the region.

The workshop introduced ICM global standards for midwifery education, regulation and essential competencies for basic midwifery practice.

Participants developed a regional vision for midwifery education based on

### The vision

*'to provide optimal midwifery services to women and their families through a qualified and competent midwifery workforce, educated through regionally harmonized and standardized midwifery education programmes, based on ICM global standards, competencies and tools'.*

the standards and competencies. This was followed by development of regional strategic objectives.

Country teams developed national action plans based on the strategic objectives, for the adoption and adaptation of the standards and competencies. Regional achievements and challenges were identified and discussed during the workshop.

The workshop enhanced ties between midwives, stakeholders and development partners across the region. The UN agencies issued a joint statement reaffirming their support for the development of midwifery in India.

Participants felt committed and inspired by the interactions and returned home with country specific action plans, enthusiasm and revived energy to contribute to improving maternal and child health outcomes.

### Regional Strategic objectives

- Establish inter-agency supported regional resource centre
- Develop mechanism to advocate and coordinate with all stakeholders at regional and country level for strengthening of midwifery services
- Develop harmonised and standardised curriculum and tools
- Strengthen and develop capacity of councils, associations and faculty
- Develop regional accreditation mechanism for midwifery education and services
- Develop and implement career path for midwives.

### 'Alternative Nobel' prize for visionary midwife

VISIONARY midwife, Ina May Gaskin, is one of the four individuals to be honoured with a 'Right Livelihood' Award in 2011.

Her work as a powerful advocate and inspirational activist, has helped provide women around the world with the chance to choose the way of giving birth that seems right for them.

Ina May Gaskin has been described as, 'A pioneer in a millennium-old profession on the brink of extinction in her country, she combines scientific evidence and analysis with her own broad experience in exercising natural medicine' and 'a role model for midwives who still dare to think in different ways.'

'A society that places a low value on its mothers and the process of birth will suffer an array of negative repercussions for doing so,' she said.

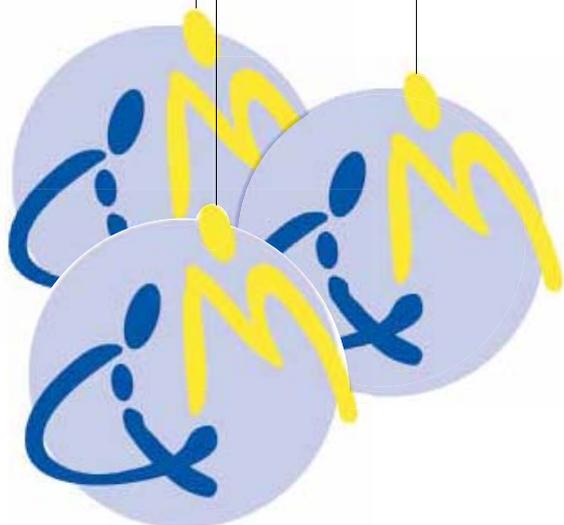
'Good beginnings make a positive difference in the world, so it is worth our while to provide the best possible care for mothers and babies



throughout this extraordinarily influential part of life.'

The awards, dubbed the alternative Nobel prize, honour individuals who have shown 'outstanding vision and work on behalf of the planet and its people.'

Established in 1980 to honour and support those 'offering practical and exemplary answers to the most urgent challenges facing us today', awards are given at an annual ceremony in the Swedish Parliament each year.



# Season's Greetings

*Dear colleagues*

*Wishing you all a wonderful Holiday Season and a new year filled with peace and happiness.*

*We look forward to working with you in 2012 and continuing to improve the lives of mothers and babies worldwide*

PLEASE NOTE

ICM Headquarters will close on Thursday, 22 December and reopen on Tuesday, 03 January 2012

*Estimados colegas*

*Les deseamos unas felices Fiestas y Un año nuevo repleto de paz y felicidad.*

*Es nuestro deseo continuar trabajando juntos el próximo año, haciendo nuestro aporte para mejorar la vida de las madres y los bebés alrededor del mundo.*

OBSERVE CON ATENCIÓN

La Sede central de la ICM permanecerá cerrada del 22 de diciembre de 2011 al 2 de enero de 2012. Reanudará actividades el 3 de enero.

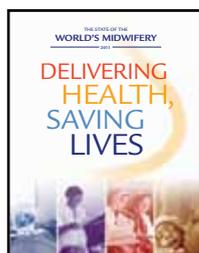
*Chers Collègues*

*Nous vous souhaitons une très bonne fin d'année et de la paix et joie en 2012.*

*Nous attendons avec plaisir à collaborer aux activités continues pour améliorer la vie des mères et des bébés de par le monde.*

VEUILLEZ NOTER !

Le Siège central de l'ICM sera fermé du 22 décembre 2011 au 03 janvier 2012

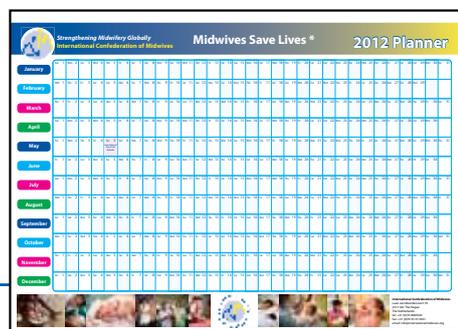


## Compelling evidence that Midwives Save Lives

The State of the World's Midwifery Report, launched at the ICM Triennial Congress in Durban in June 2011, provides compelling statistical evidence for the vital role midwives play in saving lives of mothers and babies.

Based on data gathered via UN and partner representatives (UNFPA, WHO, UNICEF, etc) from 58 countries all over the world, it highlights the importance of ICM's mission to strengthen midwifery around the world. And it demonstrates how increasing the number of trained midwives will substantially reduce mother and baby deaths globally.

It is essential reading for anyone concerned about the health of women and children. You can find out more information on the ICM website [www.internationalmidwives.org](http://www.internationalmidwives.org) or at the SOWMR website at: [www.unfpa.org/sowmy/report](http://www.unfpa.org/sowmy/report)



## Planning ahead

Have you downloaded your copy of the ICM 'Midwives save Lives' Wall Planner for 2012? It can be printed in A4 A3 or A2 sizes.

Put it on your wall and highlight the lifesaving work of midwives, and the **International Day of the Midwife** in May.

You'll find it at : [www.internationalmidwives.org](http://www.internationalmidwives.org)