



## Afghan Midwives Association (AMA)

### 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Congress Report

29<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> October, 2014



*“Midwives: Improving Mothers’ and Newborns’ Health”*

#### **Acknowledgements:**

AMA would like to acknowledge UNFPA, for their generous financial support for the 10<sup>th</sup> annual congress. At the same time, AMA would also like to extend its gratitude to MoPH and other supporters who ensured the presence of midwives across 34 provinces of Afghanistan.



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## 1. Executive Summary:

Over 750 people participated across the country in the 10th Annual congress with many expressing huge thanks for the opportunity and all the help they received.

The Afghan Midwives Association (AMA) 10<sup>th</sup> annual congress was conducted on 29-30 October 2014, (7-8 Aqrab 1393) at Paiwand-i-Qalbha Hall, Kabul, Afghanistan. The congress was organized with the generous financial support of United Nation Fund Population Agency (UNFPA), in collaboration with Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and other AMA partners.

Almost 700 Midwives out of 750 participants' attended this annual congress. BPHS implementers and AMA partners sponsored these 700 midwives from 34 provinces of Afghanistan.

The AMA theme for this year was "Improving Mothers` and Newborn`s Health"

This congress was designed to provide midwives as health care professionals with important concepts and methods and to improve quality of services by updating their clinical knowledge and skills according to evidence-based practices. Beside, Midwives from whole the Afghanistan attended this unique forum to share excellence in practice and knowledge, learn about the challenges facing midwifery across the continents, and enjoy mutual support amongst colleagues.

Many have described it as their best experience of learning and updating their knowledge. Topics included to train midwives on the recent evidence based clinical practices, based on national needs, plenary sessions with a special focus on the Core Characteristics of the Practice of Midwifery, Strategic Plan for Breast & Cervical Cancers 2014-2016, maternity care including patient safety, Afghanistan Midwifery and Nursing Council. The congress also offered some clinicians topics in Family planning, Helping Babies Breathe...

Midwives from very remote area of Afghanistan enjoyed two days not just learning but also networking and interacting with other to share their lesson learned and experiences.

### 1.1 Congress main objectives:

The aim of AMA 2014 annual congress is to strengthening the role of midwives in policy development; building bridges in health systems for high quality midwifery services, regulating and supporting an autonomous midwifery profession and strengthening the alliance between midwives, policy makers and society.

#### By conducting this event, AMA expected:

- Building bridges in health systems for high quality midwifery services
- Regulating and supporting an autonomous midwifery profession with safe practices
- Providing orientation on respectful maternity care
- Promoting evidence based practices
- Strengthening role of midwives in policy development
- Building partnerships in Afghanistan and beyond to achieve AMA's targets
- Finding huge opportunities for advocacy and organizational development



## 2. Highlights of main proceeding of the congress

### 2.1 First Day of Congress - 29<sup>th</sup> October 2014

#### 2.1.1 Opening session

Congress was formally inaugurated by recitation of verses from Holy Quran. The Afghanistan National Anthem was played and Midwifery National Song sung by Ghazanfar Institute of Health Science's (GIHS) Midwifery students. Ms. Helay Gharshin, AMA acting president welcomed the guests and delivered her opening speech; she said that "the 10<sup>th</sup> annual congress is an opportunity for Afghan midwives to gather new scientific programs and the challenges faced by both midwives and stemming the partner."



*Participants are enjoying national anthem*

The Deputy Minister of MoPH Najia Tariq said: "In collaboration with Afghan Midwives Association and other key partners, Ministry of Public Health is committed to educate, support and value Afghan midwives because they are the backbone of the health system of Afghanistan. I am certain that Afghanistan is moving ahead in the region for midwifery education and I feel proud to announce that Afghanistan has been starting two midwifery higher education programs since April 2014. One is direct entry 4 year midwifery education at Kabul Medical University whereas the other one for the existing midwives where the diploma holder midwives will be bridge to bachelors program. The bridging program is one of the unique education programs in the country which is started through private higher education institute.

During his opening remarks, the Minister of Higher Education Dr. Obaid-ullah Obaid said; "Based on the need of Afghan midwives and international norms for the first time in the country the building bridges system was organized. Afghan Midwives Association in collaboration with private institute of higher education was conducted 3 days' workshop to share the concept and curriculum of the program with representatives of Ministry of Higher Education, Ministry of Public Health, Kabul Medical University, Donors and NGOs including



UNFPA ,USAID/HPP,JICA ,ACNM,AKU and BRAC. At the end of workshop participants emphasized on role of higher education on improving the midwifery profession.”

The Minister of Woman Affairs Husin Banoo Ghazanfar recognized midwifery activities as one of the most important strategy for strengthening women status in the country and recognized AMA's contribution towards women in general and women health in particular in Afghanistan. I am pleased to personally acknowledge your contributions today, by thanking you for your strength, work and your commitment to ensure women and families feel safe, loved and cared for. She also appreciate the midwives who came from remote areas and appreciate their services.

Dr. Faizullah Kakar Health adviser of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan said: This event celebration is a way to honor Afghan midwives who make exceptional contributions to healthcare and for their dedication to the profession and healthy Afghanistan. Despite the challenges that come with risks related to pregnancy and childbirth, I am reassured to know that you continue to tackle them professionally and with the true spirit of excellence. He insure that the message of this event will share with the President of Afghanistan.

### **2.1.2 AMA's Annual Report**

Ms. Helay Gharshin, AMA acting president delivered AMA's annual report to participants of the congress.

### **2.1.3 Award Distribution:**

Each year, AMA distributes its outstanding award for AMA partners whom contributes the most to its success during the year.

- Professor Obaidullah Obaid Minister of Higher Education
- Zia Yaftaly (Zawul Institute of Higher Education)
- Dr.Shreen Aaqa Zarif (Kabul Medical University)
- Mr. Masood Trashval (Ministry of Higher Education)

Life time achievement award and Best midwife of the year award also demonstrated among AMA members.

- Midwife Amina from Samangan province received the best midwife award, Midwives who lost her sight due to Magnetite during her duty.
- Ghor province received the award on behalf of Midwife Latifa who was killed by Talban in 2014.



*Distribution of Awards to the Minister of Higher Education*

#### **2.1.4 Strategic Plan for Breast & Cervical Cancers 2014-2016.**

The first plenary session was conducted on medical ethics. This plenary session was chaired by Dr. Reshad from Reproductive Health Directorate.

The plenary session was based on Reproductive Health theme which was Strategic Plan for Breast & Cervical Cancers 2014-2016. The outlines of the presentation was Brief introduction, Strategic approaches, Strategic Plan for Breast & Cervical Cancers (priority areas), Budgeting & Potential partners.



*The presentations were followed questions and answer session which was facilitated by the chair.*

#### **2.1.5 Respectful Maternity Care:**

The second plenary session was presented by Dr. Nasrat Ansari Chief of Party Jhpiego. He ensured compliance with code of ethics of any profession, country needs a functional regulatory system. Afghanistan is missing the third pillar of midwifery profession i.e. existence of regulatory system; as a result, it's difficult to ensure the compliance with the code of midwifery ethics.

Therefore, the second plenary session was allocated to this important issue of Respectful Maternity Care. Dr Ansari talked about the having good behavior with the pregnant woman



especially during labor, to take care and give them respect either she is poor or rich, or from high society or low the midwives treated her as a patient.

### 2.1.6 The Midwifery Model of Care & the Practice of Midwifery:

The third plenary session was conducted by Anne Richeter from American Collage of Nurses and Midwives. She said: The Practice of Midwifery is the “Skilled, knowledgeable, and compassionate care for childbearing women, newborn infants, and families across the continuum throughout pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, birth, postpartum and the early weeks of life.



*Anne Richter ACNM, presenting regulations and participants are asking questions*

## 2.2 Second Day of Congress – 30<sup>th</sup> October 2014

In the beginning of the second day Mrs. Pashtoon Amiri welcomed all participants and reviewed the agenda of the day.

### 2.2.1. Plenary session – Family Planning

Family Planning-a strategy to decrease maternal mortality and bring stability in Afghanistan by Akmal Samsor, Technical Director, JS Consultancy Services and Dr. Rashida (MoPH).

Facts about Family Planning (Fact 1, 2 & 3), what can we do to improve contraceptive prevalence rate i.e. the use of birth spacing methods among couples. He talked about the most effective strategy to avert maternal deaths is Family Planning. Afghanistan has one of the highest Fertility Rate in the Region. Take Home Message Focus on proper birth spacing counseling to decrease maternal mortality and bring stability in Afghanistan. Dr. Rashida give a presentation and Introduced Implant method.



### 2.2.2. Plenary session - Nursing and Midwifery Council:

The plenary session was presented by Dr. Parvez Nayani Head, AKU Programs in Afghanistan, and Dr. Zeenat Khanu Kanji Former Director External Programs at Aga Khan University of Nursing and Midwifery.

They talked about the Characteristics of Professions, Purpose of Councils, Functions of Council, and Guidance to the Profession, Funding for the Profession, Nurses and Midwifery Councils globally, Assistance from MoPH and MoHE, Principles, Objectives, Governance Structure, Assistance Required from MoPH & MoHE and References of these issues.



### 2.2.3 Skill Practices Sessions,

- Mama Natalie by Ms.Shakila Abdaly
- Helping Babies Breathe (HBB) by Hosai Rezai



*Participants are busy with skill demonstrations*

#### **2.2.4 AMA, 2014 Revised Constitution:**

Revised Constitution of Afghan Midwives Association presented by Mursal Musawi OAM Executive Director. She present the Previous Constitution – Number of Articles, Article 10 – Governance, Article 11 - Annual General Assembly, Article 12 and 13 - The Board of Directors and Composition of the Board, Article 20 and 21- Executive Board and it's Composition, Article 22 - Election of the Executive Board, Article 27 and 28 - Provincial



Chapters and Composition, Article 31 - Executive Director, and she also said that the Dari and Pashto Translated Version of revised constitution will be shared soon.



*During the Presentation of revised Constitution 2014*

## 5. Outcome of the congress:

- Updated knowledge of midwives through variety of presentations and sessions
- Distribution of Family planning from Islam's point of view" among the participants
- Updated skills of midwives through skills practice
- Recognized midwives were for their extraordinary efforts
- Encouraged midwives by exhibiting of their successes via postcard and photos.

## 6. Conclusion:

Overall, this was a very successful event as it provided an opportunity for midwives to share and learn not only from national or international experts, but also from each other. The event was another step towards national level advocacy for strengthening midwifery and safe motherhood situations in Afghanistan.



## 7. Sponsors List:

S/N	Sponsor	NO# of Provinces
01	HPP	33
02	MoPH	4
03	SCA	3
04	BDN	3
05	AADA	4
06	MRCA	1
07	MSI	1
08	AKHS	2
09	SHDP	1
10	Caf	2
11	CHA	1
12	CHI	1
13	STD	1
14	Safe	1
15	AMA	13
16	Save the Children	1
17	Cure	2
18	EPHS/	2
19	DWCC	1
20	CTDF	1
21	JVC	1