



Afghan Midwives Association celebrated International Day of the Midwife in five zones of the country

The world's midwives mark International Day of the Midwife on 5 May every year, to raise awareness of and advocate for midwives in countries worldwide. Each year the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) announces a specific theme for the IDM and this year's theme is "Midwives: for a Better Tomorrow".

IDM revives the critical role of midwives in creating a safer future for mothers, babies, and families and provides an opportunity to demonstrate to the MOPH and other stakeholders, USAIDs ongoing commitment to strengthening midwifery and the key role for midwives in achieving FPMNCH's goals.

The Afghan Midwives Association (AMA) has celebrated IDM since 2005 and this year it was its 11th anniversary. Every year the midwives cherish this unique event; that provides a platform for advocacy for the midwifery profession and its services. This year's IDM was very important for the AMA as midwives are at the top of every agenda for maternal and newborn health worldwide. The Lancet Midwifery Series 2014 provided sound evidence for midwifery care and the State of the World's Midwifery Report 2014 highlighted issues in accessibility, acceptability, availability and quality of MNCH services in 73 countries including Afghanistan.

This year IDM was unique, since it was celebrated at zone level in 5 zones including central zone with a large group of midwives from neighbor provinces.

Overall Goal:

The main purpose of celebrating IDM was to raise awareness about the importance of investing in midwives in accelerating progress towards current and future MNH goals.

Target audience:

Policy makers from ministries including Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Women Affairs ; and Parliamentarians, representatives from USAID, United Nation agencies and other stakeholders.

Proposed Activities:

- Highlight the key messages of IDM through midwives' contributions in practice, advocacy and education level both at individual and group level
- Messages for media
- National level advocacy and awareness raising
- Provide an environment where midwives can draw on the importance of their contribution in reducing maternal and newborn mortality and improving maternal and newborn health in the country.
- Consumer involvement /women's voices

The main objective of the meeting was to update provincial chapters on the AMA activities of the last quarter and similarly have provincial chapters report of the last quarter.

This IDM was unique in its kind, since AMA took the initiative of celebrating it at zone level in five zones including central zone- Kabul.

In central zone- Kabul, it held in Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) with participation of Dr. Najia Tariq- deputy minister for health service provision, Muzhgan Mustafawi- deputy minister of women affairs, Dr. Habiba Surabi- advisor for youth and women affairs from chief executive office, Khujesta Fana Ebrahimkhail- human rights& women affairs director MoFA, Dr. Enayatullah- parliament health committee, representatives from USAID, United Nation agencies and other stakeholders and midwives from 10 provinces including Kabul and midwives from private institutes of health sciences- Zawul university of higher education.

Highlights of the IDM celebration in all five zones

MoPH- deputy minister for service provision: here we get together to address the needs for midwives and highlight the evidence that shows investment in midwifery and provide them with necessary supplies result in 60% reduction in maternal and newborn mortality in the world.

Habiba Surabi, advisor for youth and women affairs from executive office: midwives provide the most honest and effective services in the most difficult situations.

Muzhgan Mustafawi, Deputy Minister of women's affairs: we honored you midwives, for your day& night services to improve mothers and newborns health in Afghanistan.

USAID: midwives are essential to provide quality maternity care.

Midwives! Your work is a direct response to the need of maternal and newborn health. You are the one who assures mothers to have a safe birth.

Thank you Afghan midwives for their great contribution to reducing maternal and newborn mortality.

We celebrate IDM to continue our commitment to improve maternal and newborn health by supporting midwifery in Afghanistan.

Parliament Health Committee: I want highlight the critical role of the midwives in improving maternal and newborn health in Afghanistan and want emphasize on improving their job security and retention.

WHO: we need midwives, we need midwives, we need midwives. And it is not so true than here in Afghanistan. Midwives play an important role. We recognize midwives contribution and make sure they have enabling working environment. We also call on others to invest on midwifery in Afghanistan, because it's the only effective way to reduce maternal and newborn mortality. We need midwives for al and we need midwives for a better tomorrow.

UNFPA: midwives! You deserve more than a celebration and that is why the May whole month was reserved around midwifery. We call for great investment on midwifery and allocation of more resources is required to make sure that thousands of lives of women and newborn are saved. We are committed to support midwifery in Afghanistan.

Public Health Director- Herat:

Midwifery is the key element in maternal, child health and we need to support and strengthen this element in order to have a healthy mothers& healthy babies.

Public Health Director- Balkh:

This is the time to believe that midwives can bring change, reduction in maternal, newborn mortality in Afghanistan is prove of it.

Public Health Director- Kandahar:

We need midwives- because we need healthy mothers to give birth to healthy babies, so to be hopeful for a healthy society in the future. And only midwives bring this hope.

Public Health Director- Nangarhar:

Midwives are essential in improving maternal& newborn health in the country. We owe to midwives, they gave us the chance to healthy mothers and healthy babies. Mothers owe to midwives, they support them to have safe motherhood.