



**Afghan Midwives Association
Profile
Established in 2005**



USTAD PASHTOON AZFAR

THE MIDWIFE, THE LEADER AND THE FOUNDER OF AMA



Pashtoon Azfar a women known by most Afghans, she has graduated from a Nursing and Midwifery School and preferred to work as a 'Midwife'. She served in various positions with different organization such as the International Medial Corps-reproductive health trainer, midwifery education manager- Management Science for Health, Midwifery Technical Advisor - Jhpiego and Director - Kabul Institute of Health Sciences.

A woman from war torn country is now working with International confederation of Midwives as a 'Technical Midwifery Advisor'.

She believes and says, devastations of war provide only more reason to move forward with urgency, "We must be united in our efforts, remembering that mother is the most important member of our Afghan family".

Pashtoon knew that by working together, Midwives can bring change to the health system, contribute to the reduction of maternal mortality and morbidity, and ensure highest quality services for Afghan families even in the most remote corners of the country.

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She made hundreds of voices one voice and united hundreds of hands as one hand to create fundamental change in the lives of Afghan mothers and families. Today the AMA is proud to have membership of more than 3000 midwives that walk together to tackle maternal mortality and defend their women rights.

She standardized the modern midwifery education and struggled hard for its effective implementation, she took initiative to establish the Midwifery and Nursing Accreditation Board through AMA.

AMA member said: "Since I met Ustad Pashtoon, I learned that integrity and unity can be only way to change the status of women, no one can help women except women, there is a long way to go so we should work hard like Pashtoon, 12 hours a day in seven days of week."

AMA Background

Afghan Midwives Association (AMA) is one of Strong professional association in Afghanistan.

AMA as a membership-based association established in May 2005 with support of USAID-funded Health Services Support Project (HSSP) and soon after become the member of International Confederation of Midwives (ICM). AMA is advocating for a strong midwifery profession, well-trained and empowered midwives and is working to strengthen the role of midwives so that quality midwifery care is provided to women, newborns and their families in Afghanistan. The AMA is a midwifery-led, national non- governmental organization Whose primary purpose is to build the capacity of midwives and increase access to quality midwifery services through various approaches including advocacy, partnership and implementing appropriate programs

Increased membership and partnership support have steadily expanded AMA activities and its role as a professional body to raise awareness for safe motherhood and improve the quality of midwifery education and health service provision. AMA started with only 80 members in 2005 and now, it is known as one of the strongest and biggest professional associations in Afghanistan with more than 3500 members from 34 provinces.

Accomplishments

In addition to its primary purpose, the AMA has strongly advocated for the establishment of a four-year direct entry midwifery education degree program under the Ministry of Higher Education in Kabul Medical University and technically supported the establishment of a two-year bridging Bachelor degree program for the graduated midwives who have completed at least two-year midwifery education. Meanwhile, AMA has strengthened midwifery education through extending its support to the Afghanistan Midwifery and Nursing Education Accreditation Board (AMNEAB). AMA has also played vital role in the establishment of Afghanistan Nurses and Midwives Council to regulate the professions and to protect the health and safety of the public by ensuring that midwives and nurses are competent and qualified to practice. However, a prolonged delay in establishment of the ANMC has resulted in unregulated midwifery practice, and moreover, shrinking donors funding and fragile capacity assessment processes have made it difficult for the midwives to attend in-service trainings or other updates for provision of improved quality of services for women, children and families in Afghanistan. To address the above-mentioned challenges and fill the gap, AMA has widened its support for midwives throughout the country in order to update their knowledge and provide them time to time in-services training and other effective continuous education opportunities e.g. mentorship project and AMA annual congress.



NMC first Assembly



first bachelor degree midwives graduated Kabul medical university

Strategic Partnership

AMA has played an important role in development of midwifery profession, advocating for the recognition of midwifery as a distinct profession. The Association is leading the whole midwives related issues in the country; main focus is on midwifery education, regulation, accreditation and career development. AMA is widely recognized association both nationally and internationally, it has strong network with key actors including donors, UN family, line ministries and other professional associations.

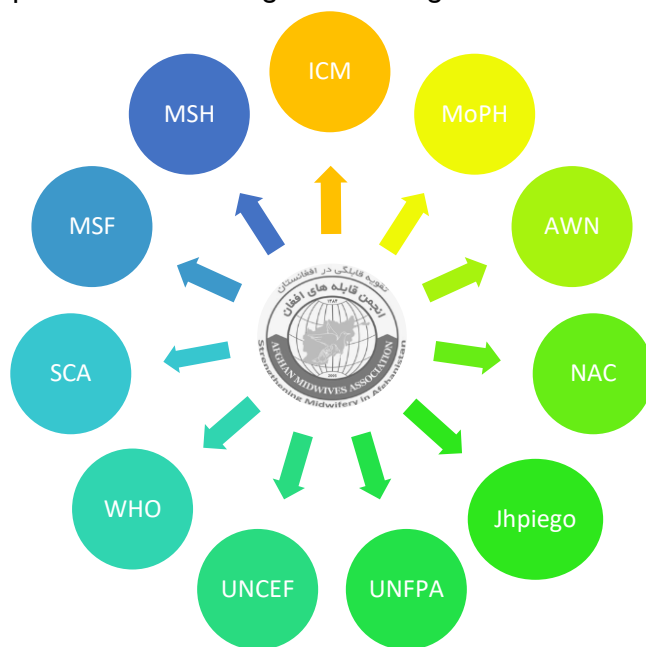
AMA Vision Statement

The Afghan Midwives Association (AMA) is recognized as model association nationally, regionally and internationally for midwifery profession and women empowerment. AMA becomes a partner of choice within national, regional and international movements dedicated to women, pregnant mothers, newborns and families.

AMA Mission Statement

Midwifery profession shall be recognized as an autonomous and distinct profession in the country.

Strengthen the capacity of midwives and advocate for work and policy conducive environment so that midwives can provide high quality midwifery services according to International Confederation of Midwives code of ethics and core competencies to women, newborns and families in Afghanistan.



Afghan Midwives Association Core Values:

To achieve our vision of every Afghan woman and newborn having access to quality midwifery services that are provided by a qualified, regulated, skilled and empowered midwife, every member of the association shall abide by professional principles of respect for all persons, integrity& honesty, accountability and life-long learning.

Respect:

Members of the association understand the needs and expectations of women and newborns and will do our best to meet their individual needs and provide support across the reproductive health continuum. AMA members are committed to respect women, newborns, their families and work to ensure they receive Respectful Dignified Maternity Care. This care is underpinned by the Code of Ethics of the ICM¹ which acknowledges women as persons with human rights, seeks justice for all people and equity in access to health care, and is based on mutual relationships of respect, trust, and the dignity of all members of society.

Every member of the association honors member-midwives and nonmember midwives irrespective of age, type of midwifery education, ethnicity, religion and socio economic status. AMA also values and holds in high regard all other professions and health professional associations working for the betterment of Afghanistan

Accountability:

As noted in the revised International Definition of a Midwife²: the midwife is recognized as a responsible and accountable professional who works in partnership with women to give the necessary support, care and advice during pregnancy, labour and the postpartum period, to conduct births on the midwife's own responsibility and to provide care for the newborn and the infant. The AMA endorses this focus on 'accountability' and will assist Afghan midwives to demonstrate their accountability and uphold professional standards of care

Integrity and Honesty:

As noted in the Code of Ethics, we insist on truthfulness and accountable with each other, with our clients (women and

children), with Afghanistan government, donors and key partners and in all business and financial dealings. At AMA, we instill confidence in our members, clients and other stakeholders. We are clear, honest, truthful and having strong moral principles and communication at all times so that we generate assurance.

Lifelong Learning:

AMA provides learning opportunities to foster the continuous development and improvement of knowledge and skills needed for provision of quality midwifery services and for individual development. AMA believes that learning does not stop at the final exam. It insists on lifelong learning so that its members remain competent in evidence based practice are more fulfilled, contribute as active citizens of Afghanistan, are included in social processes and have higher employability in a changing job market. All members of AMA must devote time to reflect on their practice; recognize when they need updating and seek opportunities for the same; share their knowledge and skills with member and nonmember midwives and create a supportive learning environment within their team.

Recognize and address conflicts of interest:

AMA is committed to have a code of conduct and communication strategy that addresses conflicts of interest along with other ethical situations a member might come across.

Fight corruption in both the public and private health sectors: Corruption is a worldwide problem and nature and impact of corrupt practices in the healthcare sector are equally widespread. Therefore, AMA is committed to fight against corruption, common corrupt practices in health include worker absenteeism; theft of medical supplies; bribery in medical service delivery; fraud and embezzlement of medicines, medical devices, and health care funds; improper marketing relations; weak regulatory procedures; opaque and improperly designed procurement procedures; and diversion of supplies in the distribution system for private gains.

Innovative:

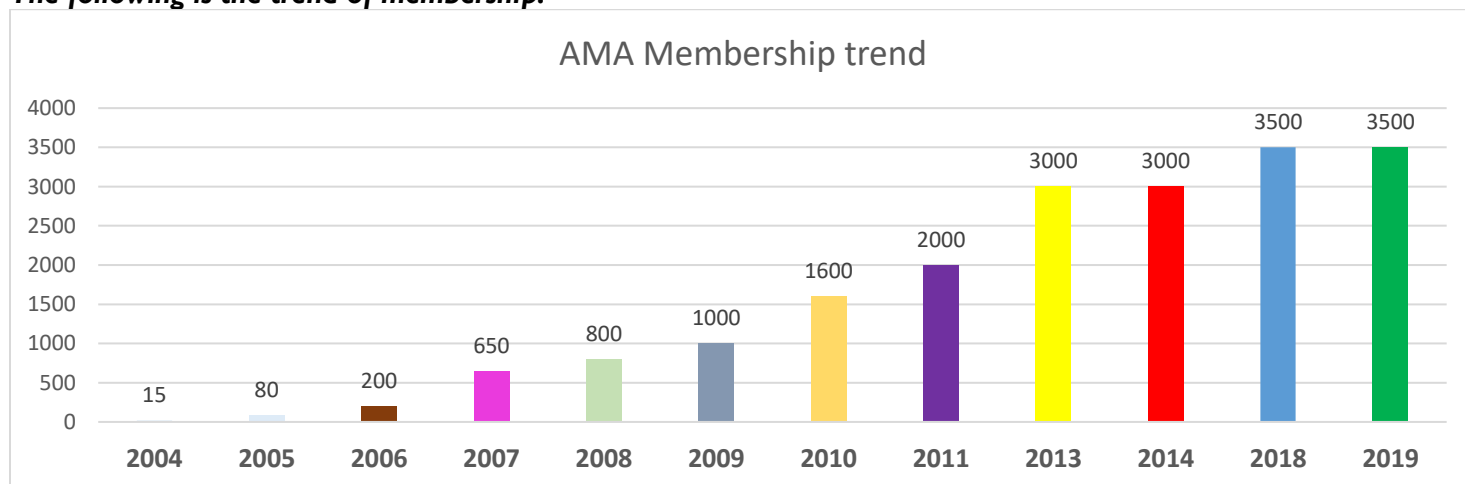
AMA open to new ideas from all our stakeholder, especially our members, service beneficiaries.

Membership at AMA

It is always stipulated through membership policy, there is certain criteria for midwives who are willing to be member of AMA, soon after registration they receive membership card and pay their membership fees. Some benefit of membership with AMA.

- AMA members get discounts on events such as the Annual Congress
- Complimentary copy of the latest edition of AMA Quarterly Newsletter
- Eligibility to vote in AMA's General Meeting
- Eligibility to be elected to Executive Committee and/or Board of directors
- Free membership card
- Customized membership card and special ribbon to wear during Annual Conference
- Complimentary calendar with dates of main events (chapter meetings, annual congress, International Midwives' Day, Mother's night, Board meetings, etc.)
- Access to member's directory

The following is the trend of membership.



Members of the Association are midwives who have a midwifery qualification recognized by the government of Afghanistan. As per constitution there are 5 types of membership with AMA.

Full membership:

Midwives who have paid membership fees, hold a membership card, may vote.

Student membership:

Students of midwifery may have membership of the Association but may not vote or be eligible for election. Student members shall pay fees as set by the Association.

International Members:

International midwives may apply for membership. These individuals may not vote or be eligible for election and are required to pay fees as established by the Association.

Honorary Members:

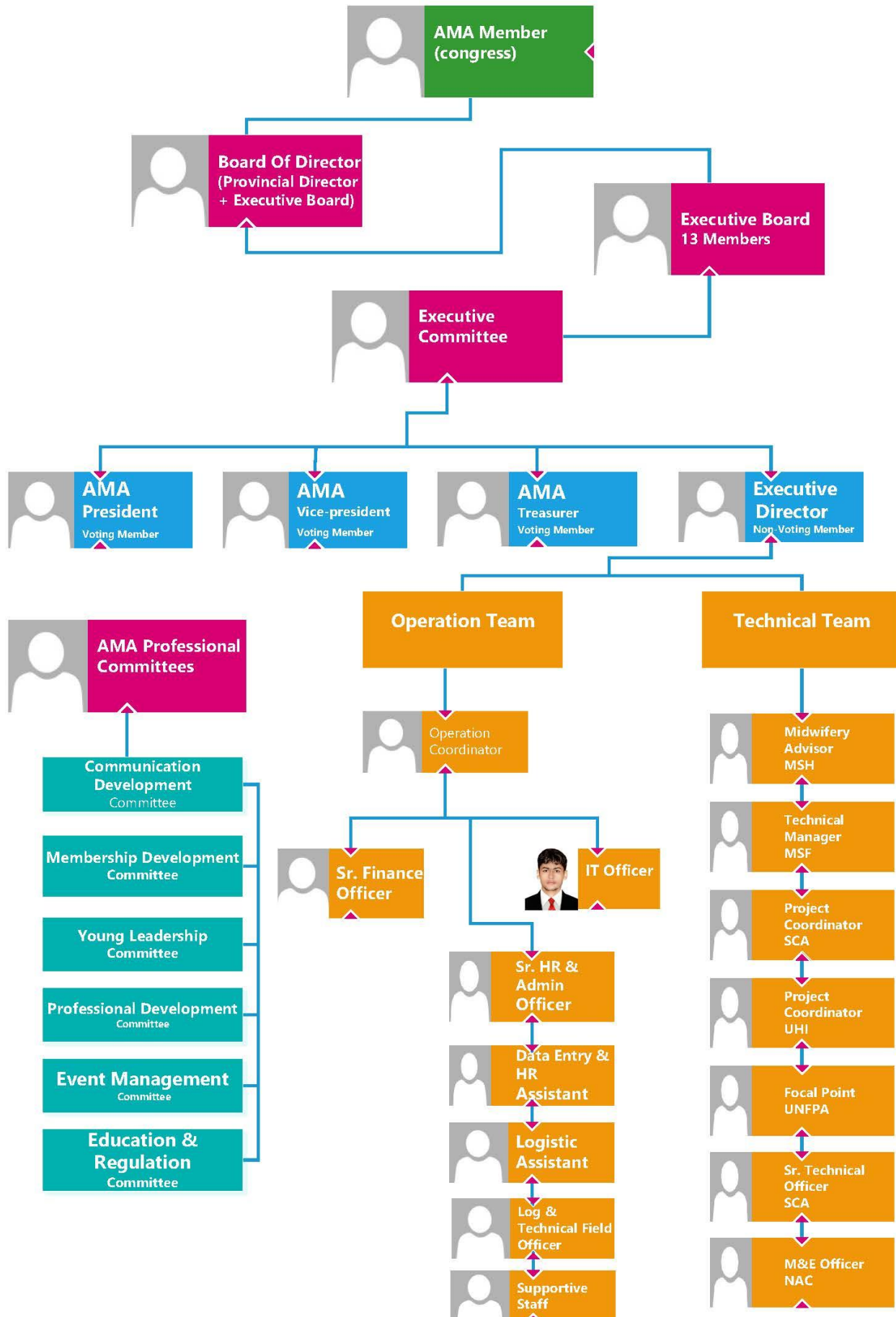
Individuals who have assisted the Association in an outstanding capacity can be awarded an honorary membership. These individuals shall be awarded this honor, for life, after due consideration by the Board. These individuals may not vote, are not eligible for election and are not required to pay fees.

Associate Members:

Associate Members of the Association are individuals who are not midwives, but support the Mission of the Association. These individuals may not vote, are not eligible for election and are required to pay fees as established by the Board.

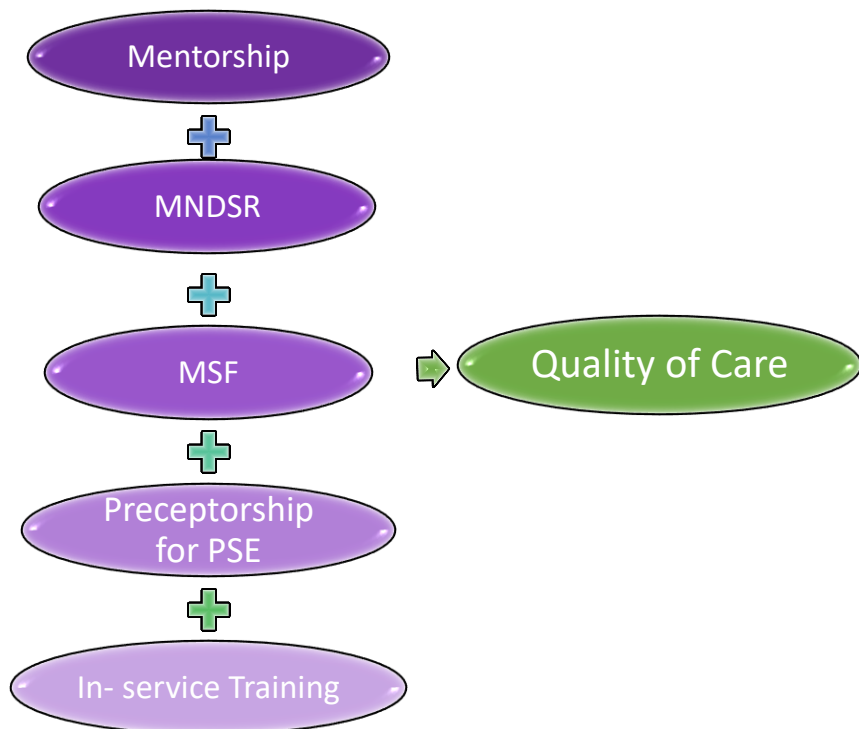
AMA Flow chart

AMA Governing Organogram



AMA Projects in Afghanistan

AMA has implemented several projects with support of different donors. A summary of the projects is shown below:

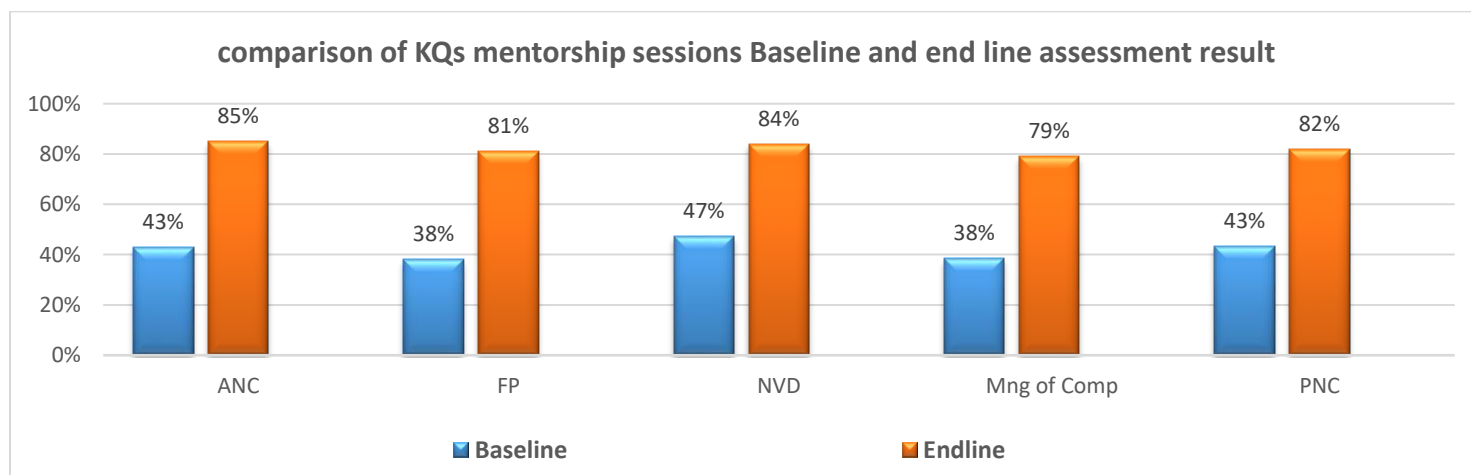


AMA has been implementing mentorship program since 2010 with the support of SCA. It started with 9 AMA mentors in 2011 and in 2012. the program expanded from three to six provinces (Laghman, Parwan, Kapisa, Wardak, Sar-i-pul and Samangan) and implemented by 27 AMA mentors. In 2014 Cordaid supported AMA to implement mentorship project in Zabul, Oruzgan and Balkh. In 2017 It expanded in 5 provinces (Balkh, Badakhshan, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Herat) provinces with financial support of Jhpiego HEMAYAT project. Henceforth, AMA provided mentoring support to Family Health houses in Daikundi and Bamyan provinces with financial support of UNFPA. And in 2019 again HEMAYAT project supported AMA to provide mentorship support to 25 private midwife-Led maternity unite (Khan-e Qabila-KQ) in Herat, Kandahar, Nangarhar and Balkh provinces.

The program was initiated in 11 health facilities in three provinces of Afghanistan in 2011 and

AMA succeed cover 301 HFs and built capacity of 410 midwives in 14 provinces of Afghanistan. The mentors were identified and received training in communication, advocacy, MCH services with focus on high impact interventions (HIs) and coaching skills. The Mentorship program primarily focuses to strength health care system & improve quality of care through providing continuing education to health care providers (midwives) and working towards creating a more efficient clinical setting. The mentorship project is a competency based project using AMA developed tools which introduce expert midwives as role model to newly graduate/ less experienced midwives. The project evaluated internally and externally many times and the data shows effectiveness and efficiency of mentoring method for midwives' behavior changes, capacity building and quality services. The AMA conducted baseline and end line assessments from KQs mentorship sessions result has been compared and the findings are shown in following chart:

The average scores for ANC, FP, NVD, management of complication (Mng of Comp) and PNC increased from 43%, 38%, 47% and 38%, 38% and 43% to 85%, 81%, 84%, 79% and 82% respectively.



AMA Projects in Afghanistan (2005 to 2021)

S/N	Name of province	Start	End	Donor	Project type	Project status
1	Kabul-Herat	Apr-2021	Oct-2021	Nouran Sabai Fund via Jhpiego	Mother and sister Hygiene	Completed
2	Kabul-Dasht-e Barchi	July-2021	2025	MSF	MLMCC	Ongoing
3	Kabul	15-Dec-2021	31-July-2021	City University London	IMaGINE	Completed
4	Kabul	July-2021	July-2022	USAID/MSH	AFIAT	Ongoing
5	Kabul-PD#12	March 2021	August 2019	UHI/USAID	Midwife led maternity care center	Ongoing
6	Kabul, Balkh, Kandahar, Nangarhar and Herat	Jan 2019	Aug 2019	HEMAYAT/USAID	Preceptorship	Completed
7	Daikundi and Bamyan	Jan 2019	Dec 2021	UNFPA	Mentorship	Ongoing
8	Herat, Kandahar, Balkh and Nangarhar	Jan 2019	Sep 2019	HEMAYAT/USAID	Mentorship	Completed
9	Kabul	Jan 2019	Dec 2019	UNFPA	Support NMC	Completed
10	Kabul, IDP comp	Nov , 2019	Jan, 2020	Afghan German Association	Mothers and Sister hygiene	Completed
11	Balkh, Kandahar, Nangarhar and Herat	Sept 2016	Sep 2018	HEMAYAT/USAID	Mentorship	Completed
12	Balkh, Zabul and Urozgan	May 2014	April 2015	Cordaid	Mentorship	Completed
13	Parwan, Kapisa, Wardak, Jalalabad, Logar and Panjsir	Jan - 2021	Dec- 2022	SCA	Mentorship	Ongoing
14	Samanagan, Sar-e- Pul, Wardak, Laghamn, Pawarn and Kabpisa	Jan - 2010	Dec- 2020	SCA	Mentorship	Completed
15	Kabul	2012	2013	Cordaid	SMI	Completed
16	Kabul - AMA	2013	2014	NAC	Leadership development	Completed
17	Kabul-AMA	2012	2014	USAID	HPP (Health policy project)	Completed

18	Kabul -AMA	2010	2010	UNFPA	In-service training	Completed
19	Kabul- AMA	Jan 2013	Dec 2014	NAC	Women political participation	Completed
20	Kabul- AMA	2008	2008	Compare-A	Community Health Meetings	Completed
21	Kabul and provinces	2009	2009	UNFPA	Quality assurance	Completed

AMA Annual events and meeting

Events	Detail of event	Years From - To
Annual Congress	This is the biggest national gathering of a professional group of women. AMA Congress has offered an excellent opportunity for learning because it is all about sharing excellence in maternal and newborn health, midwifery education, the event will provide an opportunity to highlight the challenges midwives facing and the bridges we must build to ensure high quality midwifery care in Afghanistan.	Every year since 2005
International day of Midwives (IDM)	The world's midwives mark International Day of the Midwife on 5 May, IDM was established to raise awareness of the role of midwives in countries worldwide. Every year International Confederation of Midwives announces specific theme for the IDM.	5th of May every year
Safe Motherhood Initiative (SMI) Campaign	The safe motherhood advocacy for the first time in 2006 initiated by AMA with direct support of MOPH, and financial support of USAID. AMA with technical assistance from the White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) held a workshop to define SMI advocacy in the context of Afghanistan.	Since 2006 every year
Mother's Nights Event	Mothers 'Night event has supported by Cordaid in 2010, now AMA celebrated every year. The purpose is to bring all policy makers and health care providers and mothers as recipient of services together to talk about their challenges and ways for solution.	Since 2010 every year
Board of Director meeting	This event is happening every quarter in which all provincial directors from AMA come together and discuss the issue of midwifery program and sharing knowledge and experience	4 times a year
Executive Board meeting	This is happening on ad hock bases, in which 13 executive board member attend and make strategic decisions.	Ad hock bases

AMA future planning and key focused areas:

Annual congress 2019 made a clear direction for AMA toward strategic interventions, 3 areas have been highlighted as focused areas for upcoming years (2019 to 2022).

1. Work with the Government of Afghanistan in their commitments to ending preventable maternal and child deaths in efforts to meet the SDGs.

MoPH in line with commitment of Afghanistan government efforts to reduce maternal and child death and improve the health coverage around the country. AMA as technical body of midwifery profession, is going to increase its technical supports to MoPH relevant department with following objectives:

- Support midwifery and nursing department of MoPH and advocate for establishment of midwifery and nursing directorate
- Support RMNCAH technical working groups and advocate for having at least one midwife around all technical working group tables

2. Support activities for improving quality of midwifery services in public and private sectors including strengthening and standardizing midwifery pre-service education (PSE):

Access to quality and respectful midwifery services is the right of every mother and child. Quality of midwifery services can be improved by improving the quality of PSE in private and public midwifery institutions (institute of health sciences and higher education universities); implementing a system for regulating midwifery practice in Afghanistan; and by developing a competency based midwifery licensing examination. Therefore, AMA will follow these objectives for next four years;

- Advocate for accreditation of all midwifery education institutions including public and private, with no expectation.
- Support updating& revision of accreditation tools and processes in line with global standards
- Advocate for digitalization of the accreditation standards and promote the use of digital data collection
- Advocate with MoPH and relevant stakeholder to publish a list on a quarterly basis of all schools where midwives are being educated both accredited and not accredited and only accredited institutions to enroll students in their programs
- Advocate for introduction of a national midwifery licensing examination system at MoPH pending establishment of AMNC

3. Develop partnerships with women groups, associations and NGOs at national and international level to increase sustainability and visibility.

AMA can be strengthened by building long lasting partnerships with counterparts, other associations and like-minded groups at national and international level

- Strengthen collaboration with ICM, White Ribbon Alliance, First Lady Office, Afghan women network and other women organizations to keep the Maternal and Newborn health as priority of the government in next 4 years
- Establish links with related organizations for generating funding for the bridging program and in-service trainings
- Explore opportunities for covering AMA operational costs in next 4 years including it
- annual advocacy events

4. Support midwifery human resource development

Access to a cadre of skilled and well-equipped midwives is required and necessary to decrease maternal and newborn mortality and improve maternal and child health in Afghanistan. Therefore, over the period of next four years AMA will work closely with all relevant stakeholders to support the development of human resources in midwifery and will pursue the following objectives;

- Increase # competent midwives through quality Pre Service Education (PSE) and In-Service Training (IST)
- Build the capacity of midwives by conducting continuing professional development (CPD) programs; for working midwives and by conducting trainings for midwives graduating from private institutes. This will include competencies in for example LARC such as IUD Insertion, Implant Insertion, Counseling and Communication Skills.
- Assess CPD needs among midwives working in the public and private sectors
- Support development of leadership Skills of the midwives working in the public and private sector
- Advocate for the launch of graduate direct entry Midwifery Education Program in medical school in four regions (Balkh, Herat, Nangarhar, Kandahar)
- Advocate for expansion of the bridging degree program in Kabul and provinces
- Advocate for the introduction of an equitable shift system for midwives working in hospitals initially
- Ensure midwives job description is truly updated based on ICM documents and advocacy for translation of documents into practice.
- Advocate for having the midwives in leadership position within and outside MoPH
- Advocate for improving midwives' knowledge skills in data management and research
- Advocate for fair working terms, compensation and conditions for midwives to improve their retention in the health sector

5. Strengthen mechanisms within AMA for increase membership and to create a transparent and accountable environment within the association

AMA further strengthens through improving its internal processes, so that a transparent and accountable environment is created within the association. To strengthen the processes within AMA, the following objectives will pursue during the next four years;

- Establish an online membership registration system
- Establish an online CPD assessment system
- Establish online communication system for BOD, EC, among the provinces to foster accountability and transparency
- Develop a system of improved communication with its members so that members are informed about achievements on monthly basis
- Develop a system for sharing AMA's financial information with all relevant members on quarterly basis
- Conduct advocacy for increasing membership

Donation: AMA encourage and appreciate individual, organizational and private donation to Association: *Collected Donation will save life of Afghan women and children.* Please donate today and save lives of poor Afghan.