About the ICM

Vision
ICM envisions a world where every childbearing woman has access to a midwife’s care for herself and her newborn.

Mission
To strengthen Member Associations and to advance the profession of midwifery globally by promoting autonomous midwives as the most appropriate caregivers for childbearing women and in keeping birth normal, in order to enhance the reproductive health of women, and the health of their newborn and their families.
Who we are

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) is the world’s largest organisation of midwives associations. Its vision, mission and aims underpin its global work. With over 100 Member Associations led by midwives who determine their own governance and strategies, ICM is the voice of over 300,000 midwives around the globe.

Historical highlights

1919: International Midwives Union formed by a group of European midwives based in Belgium.

1940s: War disrupts the fledging initiative; documents and records of earlier meetings are destroyed.

1954: The initiative is re-launched in London, the name “International Confederation of Midwives” is agreed and the first Executive Secretary appointed. The Triennial Congress series is established and remains unbroken.

1959: ICM formally recognized as a non-governmental organization and accredited by the United Nations.

1969: First congress outside Europe held in Chile.

1992: International Day of the Midwife (IDM) launched and is celebrated on 5th May each year.

1999: ICM headquarters relocates to its current location in The Hague, the Netherlands.

2011: First congress in the Africa region held in Durban.
The Education Standing Committee promotes the international harmonization of midwifery education to support the development and expansion of high quality and effective undergraduate and postgraduate midwifery education programmes. It also oversees the production of the resources needed to support these standards to ensure effective implementation on a global level.

The Regulation Standing Committee focuses on the development and support of regulatory systems that ensure midwifery practice is defined; regulation is in place; practice and education standards are met; midwives are registered/licensed; and midwifery practice is accountable to the public/society. Professional regulation can be defined as the acceptance of responsibility for maintaining standards and practicing within the limits of one's competence.

The Research Standing Committee and its Research Advisory Network (RAN) provide ICM's Member Associations with up-to-date information on all aspects of midwifery practice, education and service. It plays a key role in the development of the ICM Triennial congresses. Research is the foundation of midwifery's three pillars and ongoing education and research are the lifeblood of any vibrant profession – midwifery being no exception.
What we do

ICM works primarily through Midwives Associations toward the attainment of improved health outcomes for women and their newborn. We strengthen these associations by ensuring they have the tools necessary to contribute to policy; midwifery education and regulation, and offer quality midwifery care.

Together with our Member Associations, we also work in partnership with many other international, regional and in-country organisations and stakeholders to strengthen midwifery globally and achieve the following objectives:

- To promote and strengthen the midwifery profession
- To promote the aims of the Confederation internationally
- To work to improve women’s health globally

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![Map of the world with regions highlighted: Africa, Americas, Asia-Pacific, Europe.](image-url)
How we do it

Strengthening the profession of midwives is ICM’s mission because we believe that well educated and autonomous midwives can make the difference between life and death for women and their newborn.

Striving to achieve its mission, ICM bases its work on three interconnected pillars:

- **Education** of competent providers;
- **Regulation** of those providers;
- A strong **Professional Association**.

For each of these pillars ICM has developed a set of core documents:

**Education**

- **ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Education** (ICM 2010, amended 2013) and Companion Guidelines
- **Essential Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice** (ICM 2010, amended 2013) form the basis of the curriculum for midwifery education
- **Model Curriculum Outlines for Professional Midwifery Education** (ICM 2012)
- **ICM Standard List for Competency-Based Skills Training**
- **ICM Curriculum Concordance Map Standard Equipment List for Competency-Based Skills Training** (ICM 2012).

These documents provide a universal framework for the development of midwifery education.

**Regulation**

- **Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation** (ICM 2011).
- They provide a framework to ensure that regulation of midwifery education and practice is globally effective. The goal of these standards is to promote regulatory mechanisms that protect the public by ensuring that safe and competent midwives provide high standards of midwifery care to every woman and baby they serve. The aim of regulation is to support midwives to work autonomously within their full scope of practice. By raising the status of midwives through regulation the standard of maternity care and the health of mothers and babies will be improved.

**Association**

- **The Member Association Capacity Assessment Tool (MACAT)** (ICM 2011) and Guidelines for Use.
- The MACAT aids Member Associations in identifying and prioritizing activities that will strengthen their capacity. The accompanying guidelines provide directions for carrying out internal assessments using the tool. Together they provide a framework for strengthening the association. Midwives associations provide a focal point for the profession. Strong associations are also able to advocate on behalf of the profession and the families they serve.
Our partners

ICM collaborates with partners around the world on a global, national, regional, and local level to promote midwifery and improve the health of women and babies. Much of our success depends on key relationships with governments, donors, business partners, professional associations, peers and colleagues. ICM highly values these relationships.

- Family Care International (FCI)
- Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA)
- International Council of Nurses (ICN)
- International Federation of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (FIGO)
- International Paediatric Association (IPA)
- Jhpiego
- Johnson & Johnson (J&J)
- Laerdal
- Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH)
- Save the Children (SCUK)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- White Ribbon Alliance (WRA)
- Women and Health Alliance International (WAHA)
- World Health Organization (WHO)