

Toolkit/Tool

ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation – Self- assessment Tool

2026



© 2026 by the International Confederation of Midwives.

Some rights reserved. This work is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 license (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0): <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/deed.en>. Under the terms of this license, you may copy, redistribute and adapt the work for non-commercial purposes, provided the work is appropriately cited as indicated below.

Suggested Citation: ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation – Self-assessment Tool. The Hague: International Confederation of Midwives; 2026. License: CC BY-NC-SA 4.0.

General disclaimer

All reasonable precautions have been taken by ICM to verify the information contained in this publication. However, the published material is distributed without warranty of any kind, either expressed or implied. The responsibility for the interpretation and use of the material lies with the reader. In no event shall ICM be liable for damages arising from its use.

Gender Inclusivity Statement

At ICM we centre the experiences of women and girls in our work, while also recognising that gender diverse people, including trans and non-binary people, also need access to a midwife for sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn and adolescent health care.



How to use this tool

Undertaking periodic assessments of regulatory authorities ensures they meet the [ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation \(2025\)](#) and align with the latest global evidence for midwifery practice and regulation. This self-assessment tool will provide an overview of your regulatory model, governance mechanisms, and regulatory function; highlighting areas that meet ICM Global Standards and areas that may need strengthening. ICM has additional resources to support with midwifery regulation [on their website](#).

Prior to undertaking the self-assessment, we recommend establishing a core group of stakeholders who can support with your assessment. These stakeholders will help you gather the evidence required, and provide a platform to help identify the required changes. A workshop approach could be used to apply this tool, with categories or standards divided between smaller working groups.

The Tool is designed to be repeated, providing opportunities for benchmarking, demonstrating trends, and tracking improvements. This Tool could form part of an annual review process, where you can review previous assessments, consider if aspects have been strengthened, and support continual development and quality improvement of the regulatory authority.

To complete the self-assessment, first review each standard and the supporting guidance provided in the [ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation – Companion Guide](#). Then use the tables provided below for each standard, to record your self-assessment using the red, amber, green (RAG) rating for each of the evidence statements. Space is provided to add notes, which should include how the standard is met, and identifies actions plans in cases where a standard is not met. There are additional rows to add additional evidence that is contextually relevant to that standard. As a Word file, you can adapt and add information to the tables to meet your needs.



The final section of the Tool aggregates all the ratings, providing a visual representation to support the identification of priority areas and an action plan tracker.

Self-Assessment Review Team

Title	Name
Lead for Midwifery Regulation	
Midwifery Regulator(s)	
Midwifery Education Representative	
Midwifery Practice Representation	
Midwives' Association Representative	
Service User Representative	
Government Representative (<i>if regulator is not within the government</i>)	
Others	



RAG Rating

RED	Standard is not implemented or planned. Significant progress is needed, including funding, resources, policy, and a timeline to make implementation successful.
AMBER	Some progress has been made to achieve this standard. Changes have been made but not yet well embedded or inconsistently applied.
GREEN	Fully compliant, well embedded process. No aspects require improvement.



Category 1: Models of Regulation

Standard 1.1: Regulation is midwifery specific.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented and enacted legislation empowers a regulatory authority to enact midwifery legislation.		
Midwifery legislation documents align to ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation, and the guidance provided in the ICM Position Statement Legislation to Regulate Midwifery Practice.		
Where midwives are regulated alongside other professions, midwifery-specific legislation exists. Examples include a midwifery-specific scope of practice, midwifery committee, policies and processes.		



Standard 1.2: Regulation should be at a national level.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
When national level regulation is not possible, there is a documented mechanism for collaboration between sub-national midwifery regulatory authorities.		
When interim transition regulation is utilised, member associations (MA) document regulation activities (according to the ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Regulation) and peer-review processes.		



Category 2: Protection of Title

Standard 2.1: Only those authorised under relevant legislation may use the title ‘midwife’ endowed by that legislation.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented legislation detail that the title “midwife” is protected by law.		
Where the ICM International Definition and Scope of Practice of the Midwife is not in use, a national scope of practice of the midwife is enacted.		
Criteria for midwifery registration, and therefore use of the title midwife, aligns with the ICM International Definition and Scope of Practice of the Midwife or national definition of a midwife.		



Category 3: Governance

Standard 3.1: The legislation sets a transparent process for nomination, selection and appointment of members to the regulatory authority and identifies roles and terms of appointment.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
The process for nomination, selection and appointment is in the public domain. This includes:		
A documented selection criteria for appointment of members to the regulatory authority		
Code of Conduct for regulatory authority member		
A documented process to verify the professional qualifications and credibility of a member		
Position description for members including term of appointment		
Demographic data on members		



Standard 3.2: Midwives should be proportionally represented in the regulatory authority.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Records such as an organogram demonstrate the number and proportion (%) of midwives on the regulatory authority.		



Standard 3.3: There must be provision for representation by service users and members of the public.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
The process for selection and appointment of members of the public to the regulatory authority is documented and available in the public domain.		
For service user appointments, individuals have experience of using the services of midwives.		
Position descriptions for members are available.		



Standard 3.4: The governance structures of the regulatory authority should be set out by the legislation.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented legislation details the governance structure of the regulatory authority.		
Terms of reference for the board or committee exist.		
The processes for enacting legislated function (see Category 4 for detailed breakdown) are in the public domain.		
Annual reports and other public disclosures of key decisions and activities.		



Standard 3.5: Where midwives are regulated alongside other professions, a separate board or committee should be established that is responsible for midwifery standards and guidance.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented legislation details the governance structure of the regulatory authority, including a midwifery board or committee.		
Records such as an organogram and terms of reference demonstrate the midwifery board or committee, their reporting lines and decision-making authority.		



Standard 3.6: The chairperson of a midwifery regulatory authority must be a midwife.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
The process for nomination, selection and appointment of a chairperson is available in the public domain. This includes:		
Documented selection criteria, where appropriate		
A documented process to verify the professional qualifications and credibility of a chairperson		
Position description for chairperson		



Standard 3.7: The regulatory authority is funded by members of the profession.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
All categories of fees should be in the public domain (e.g., on the website).		
Annual financial reports published.		
Documented legislation explains that financial support from a government does not provide the government with regulatory decision-making power.		
Document (e.g., funding agreement or Memorandum of Understanding) details that the regulatory authority will report on use of public funds but retains full control over regulatory activities.		



Standard 3.8: The regulatory authority collaborates with the midwifery professional association(s).

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented process, created in partnership with MA, about mechanisms for formal collaboration between regulator and MA. These may include joint committees, formal consultations, shared policy development, and regular communication.		
Annual reports and other public disclosures (e.g. meeting notes, minutes) of key decisions and activities disclosing and crediting the partnership.		



Standard 3.9: The regulatory authority works in collaboration with key stakeholders such as ministries and departments of health.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Process for nomination, selection, and appointment of an organisational collaboration should be transparent and documented.		
Expressions of Interest requests to collaborate with other stakeholders should be in the public domain.		
Documented process, created in partnership with government ministries or NGOs, about mechanisms for formal collaboration between stakeholders. These may include joint committees, formal consultations, shared policy development, and regular communication.		
Annual reports and other public disclosures of key decisions and activities disclosing and crediting partnerships.		



Standard 3.10: The regulatory authority works in collaboration with other regulatory authorities both nationally and internationally.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented process, created in partnership with other regulatory authorities, about mechanisms for formal collaboration between parties. These may include: joint committees, formal consultations, shared policy development, and regular communication.		
Annual reports and other public disclosures of key decisions and activities disclosing and crediting the partnership.		



Category 4: Functions

Standard 4.1: Scope of Practice

4.1.1 The regulatory authority defines the scope of practice of the midwife that is consistent with ICM's International Definition and Scope of Practice of the Midwife (2)

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
A scope of practice of the midwife and national essential competencies are published and publically available and are consistent with and reference the ICM International Definition and Scope of Practice of the Midwife and ICM Essential Competencies for Midwifery Practice.		
Documented process, including collaboration with stakeholders, for how the scope of practice of the midwife can be updated.		



Standard 4.2: Pre-Service Midwifery Education

4.2.1 The regulatory authority sets the minimum standards for pre-service midwifery education and accreditation of midwifery education institutions that are consistent with the ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Education.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Standards for pre-service midwifery education and accreditation of midwifery education institutions are published and publicly available, and are consistent with, and reference the ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Education.		
Documented process, including collaboration with stakeholders, for how the standards can be updated.		



4.2.2 The regulatory authority approves pre-service midwifery education programmes leading to the qualification prescribed for midwifery registration.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Approval processes are documented and available to midwifery education institutions.		
Documented selection process, training and governance of approvers.		
Midwifery education institutions publicly publish that their programme is approved by the regulatory authority.		
Regulatory authority holds a database of the approval status of all midwifery education institutions in the country.		
Approval reports are held by the regulatory authority of all pre-service midwifery education programmes.		



4.2.3 The regulatory authority accredits midwifery education institutions providing approved pre-service midwifery education programmes.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Accreditation standards and processes are documented and available to midwifery education institutions.		
Documented selection process, training and governance of accreditors.		
Midwifery education institutions publicly publish their accreditation status.		
Regulatory authority holds a database of the accreditation status of all midwifery education institutions in the country.		
Accreditation reports are held by the regulatory authority of all midwifery education institutions.		





4.2.4 The regulatory authority audits pre-service midwifery education programmes and midwifery education institutions.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented selection process, training and governance of auditors.		
Audit processes and are documented and available to midwifery education institutions.		
Audit reports are held by the regulatory authority of all pre-service midwifery education programmes.		



4.2.5 Midwife teachers and midwifery clinical preceptor/clinical teachers must have completed a programme of study in teaching.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Published pre-service midwifery education standards and accreditation of midwifery education institutions standards include standards about midwife faculty.		
Regulatory authority holds a register of midwife faculty, including details of their programme of study.		
Accreditation and audit reports are held by the regulatory authority of all pre-service midwifery education programmes and detail faculty qualification and competence.		



Standard 4.3: Registration

4.3.1 The legislation sets the criteria for midwifery registration and/or licensure.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented and enacted legislation sets criteria for midwifery registration.		
Criteria to be on the register of midwives in the country published and available in the public domain.		
Audit of the register of midwives in the country demonstrates that all midwives meet the criteria.		

*4.3.2 The regulatory authority develops standards and processes for registration and/or licensure.*

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Standards and process to join the register of midwives in the country are published and available in the public domain.		
Audit of the register of midwives in the country, demonstrates all midwives were entered through the published process.		



4.3.3 The regulatory authority develops processes for assessing the equivalence of applicants who have completed their pre-service education in other countries for entry to the midwifery register/or licensure.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
The process to assess equivalency of an applicant and then move from one regulatory authority to another is published and available in the public domain.		
Audit of the register of midwives in the country, demonstrates all midwives who moved from another country, entered through the published process.		



4.3.4 The regulatory authority establishes criteria, pathways and processes leading to registration/licensure for midwives from other countries who do not meet registration requirements.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
The process to assess equivalency of an applicant is published and available in the public domain.		
Regulatory authority holds a database of the approval and accreditation status of all midwifery education institutions in the country providing bridging or adaptation programmes.		
Approval and accreditation reports are held by the regulatory authority of all bridging and adaptation midwifery education programmes.		
Audit of register of midwives in the country, demonstrates all midwives who moved from another country but did not meet registration requirements, entered through the published process.		



4.3.5 Mechanisms exist for a range of registration and/or licensure status.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Categories of registration are defined in legislation.		
Categories of registration are defined, alongside associated fees, and available to the public.		
Audit of register of midwives demonstrates the registration status of every midwife in the country.		



4.3.6 The regulatory authority maintains a live register of midwives and makes it publicly available.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Electronic live register detailing all midwives and their registration category.		
Process for maintaining register.		



4.3.7 The regulatory authority collects information about midwives and their practice to contribute to workforce planning and research.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Process for data collection.		
Statement on data collection included in terms and conditions of registration provided to all midwives at the point of registration.		
Data analysis reports authored by regulatory authority, government, or research bodies on midwifery workforce.		



Standard 4.4: Continuing Competence

4.4.1 The regulatory authority implements a mechanism through which midwives regularly demonstrate their continuing competence to practise.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Criteria and process for demonstrating continuing competence published and available in the public domain.		
Education of continuing competence included in pre-service midwifery education programmes.		
Details of continuing competence requirements included in terms and conditions of registration provided to all midwives at the point of registration.		
Audit of the register of midwives demonstrates that all full registrants have up to date continuing competency records.		
Audit of the register of midwives demonstrates that midwives without up-to-date continuing competency records are categorised according to national legislation (e.g. lapsed) and not able to practice.		



4.4.2 The legislation sets out separate requirements for entry to the midwifery register and/or first license and ongoing regular relicensing.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Difference between registration / licensing and ongoing re-registration / re-licensing are defined in legislation.		
Standards and process to join the register of midwives in the country are published and available in the public domain.		
Criteria and process for demonstrating continuing competence published and available in the public domain.		



4.4.3 A mechanism exists for regular relicensing of the midwife's practice.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Criteria and process for demonstrating continuing competence published in public domain.		
Frequency of re-registration / re-licensing included in all documents about re-registration.		
Audit of the register of midwives demonstrates that all full registrants have up to date registrations / licenses and the date for re-registration / re-licensing listed.		
Midwives without a current registration / license are categorised according to national legislation (e.g. lapsed) and not able to practice.		



4.4.4 Mechanisms exist for return to practice programmes for midwives who have been out of practice for a defined period.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Standards and process for Return to Practice (RtP) of a midwife in the country are published in the public domain.		
Criteria and process for demonstrating continuing competence link to details of RtP process in the event continuing competence is not demonstrated.		
Audit of the register of midwives in the country details that midwives who have undertaken RtP are entered through the published process.		



Standard 4.5: Complaints and Discipline

4.5.1 The legislation authorises the regulatory authority to define expected standards of conduct and to define what constitutes unprofessional conduct or professional misconduct.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented legislation authorises the regulatory authority to define professional standards, unprofessional conduct, and professional misconduct.		
Code of Conduct published and available in the public domain.		
Disciplinary processes based upon agreed definitions and standards.		



4.5.2 The legislation authorises the regulatory authority to impose, review and remove penalties, sanctions and conditions on practice as related to competence, conduct or health.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented legislation authorises the regulatory authority to impose, review and remove sanctions on practice related to competence, conduct, or health.		
Audit of disciplinary cases demonstrates that sanctions were proportionate.		



4.5.3 The legislation sets out the powers and processes for receipt, investigation, determination and resolution of complaints.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented legislation authorises the regulatory authority to receipt, investigate, determine, and resolve complaints about the competence, conduct and health of a midwife.		
Audit of disciplinary cases demonstrates that processes were followed.		
Audit of disciplinary cases demonstrates that all panels had midwife member(s).		
Position descriptions for committee membership.		
Audit of committee members' qualifications.		



4.5.4 The regulatory authority has policies and processes to manage complaints in relation to competence, conduct or health impairment in a timely manner.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented policies and processes with timelines.		
Triaging process documented and audit of complaints demonstrate all have been triaged according to timelines set.		
Templates of letters / information provided to midwives who are undergoing a disciplinary hearing, stating processes and timelines.		
Audit of complaints demonstrate all have been resolved according to processes set including timelines.		



4.5.5 The legislation should provide for the separation of powers between the investigation of complaints and the hearing and determining of charges of professional misconduct.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented and enacted legislation details that investigation and disciplinary hearing and determining of charges is separated, either within the regulatory authority or in collaboration with an external body.		
Organogram of regulatory authority demonstrates that investigation and disciplinary hearing functions are not undertaken by the same personnel.		
Position descriptions for committee membership.		

*4.5.6 Complaints management processes are transparent and afford natural justice to all parties.*

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Documented processes align with principles of natural justice.		
Templates of letters / information provided to midwives who are undergoing a disciplinary hearing, stating their rights.		
Audit of complaints demonstrate all have been resolved according to process.		



Standard 4.6: Code of Conduct and Ethics

4.6.1 The regulatory authority sets the standards of conduct and ethics.

Evidence Statement	RAG Rating	Comments (including action plan)
Code of ethics published and available in the public domain with review date.		
Code of conduct published and available in the public domain with review date.		
Stakeholder consultation records (e.g., meeting minutes) are kept.		
Application of code of conduct across all regulatory authority activity, e.g., complaints process refers to the code of conduct.		



Final Scores

For each category note how many red (R), amber (A) and green (G) statements were reported for each category. If a category is mainly green, with some ambers, these may be easier to achieve short term action plans. If a category is mainly red, anticipate that these may be longer-term action plans.

Category	R	A	G	Total
1. Model of Regulation				
2. Protection of title				
3. Governance				
4.1. Scope of Practice				
4.2. Pre-Service Midwifery Education				
4.3 Registration				
4.4 Continuing Competence				
4.5 Complaints and Discipline				
4.6 Code of Conduct and Ethics				



Action Plan Tracker

Action Plan (SMART Objective)	Responsible person	Date of completion