



**International  
Confederation  
of Midwives**

Strengthening Midwifery Globally

Release date: 07/09/2020

## **ICM Anti-Racism Statement**

As a global organisation representing 143 Midwifery Associations and advocating on behalf of over one million midwives worldwide, the International Confederation of Midwives proudly recognises the cultural and ethnic diversity of midwives and women that is integral to the midwifery profession globally and is a core component of our organisational DNA.

We passionately embrace the differences between individual midwives in relation to race, gender, culture, ethnicity and religion - worldwide, and believe this diversity contributes to the repeated strengthening of our global and collective identity as a midwifery profession.

Despite this, we see that the lived experiences of black, Asian and ethnically diverse midwives and the women they care for differs significantly from that of their white counterparts.

We know that even in higher-income countries, irrespective of class and education, women of colour experience considerably poorer maternal health outcomes than white women. We know that 94% of all maternal deaths occur in low and lower middle-income countries — regions predominantly occupied by members of the black and brown ethnic classification within society. We recognise that as midwives we also contribute to perpetual and institutional racism and must consider the responsibility and role we play in promoting cultural safety and the elimination of racial disparities and inequalities.

At ICM we recognize our responsibility as leaders of a global professional association. Through our projects, partnerships, and advocacy, ICM will continue to support and represent all midwives and all pregnant women and new mothers globally. The Black Lives Matter movement compels us to remember the pivotal and critical work that has been done by us all, as well as the work and journey that lies ahead.

We are driven by this work and commit to holding our staff, partners and Midwives' Associations accountable for our integral role in strategically developing, disseminating and advocating for inclusive policies and overcoming the systemic biases that underpin so many of our institutions and countries worldwide. ICM will develop a position statement on anti-racism for approval by, and guidance of, our members. Further, we will ensure that our stance on anti-racism is incorporated within our organisational policies to reflect the responsibilities that we hold as a global membership body representing midwives worldwide. We will continue addressing these explicit and implicit biases and in turn play our part in making the world a safer, more inclusive and equitable place to give birth and maintain life.