



International
Confederation
of Midwives

Strategy
2017 - 2020





**International
Confederation
of Midwives**

Strengthening Midwifery Globally



Letter from the Board

Dear Midwives, Partners & Friends,

As we enter a new triennium in which our Member Associations have prioritised the key strategic directions of **Quality, Equity and Leadership**, we are pleased to present ICM's Strategy for 2017 – 2020. Building on the work of the previous triennium (2014 – 2017) ICM will harness the energy, enthusiasm and insights of midwives and our stakeholders around the world so that we can lead the call of midwives and women at global, regional and local levels for strengthened midwifery services. Women and their families have a fundamental human right of access to midwives

as the health professionals most equipped to support them with respectful, individualised and high quality care throughout the childbirth continuum. Midwives, too, have the right to be recognised, respected and supported as well-educated, regulated and autonomous health professionals to provide this essential care. It is our aspiration to work more

closely with governments to ensure these rights are fulfilled. Investment in midwives is essential to ensure high-quality midwifery care is available to all women and their newborns – not only to reduce unnecessary interventions and preventable maternal and neonatal deaths, but to improve and protect their health outcomes on a global scale and achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

We recognise the necessity of ICM to not only demand better access for women to competent midwives and women-centred childbirth services, but to also deliver expertise, resources, leadership and support to our Member Associations, partners and stakeholders that underpin the development of these midwife-led and women-centred childbirth services in all settings. This duality of both rights and responsibilities is the nexus of our strategic goals for this triennium. We must lead in advocating for our unique midwifery expertise to our partners and other stakeholders at global, regional and local levels. We must ensure equity of representation in all spaces and all conversations that pertain to women, midwives, and their unique partnership during the childbirth continuum. We must demand regulation, education



and support of midwives to ensure quality of care for women, their newborns and families and their communities.

ICM's strategy reflects the priorities and aspirations of our Member Associations, articulated by the ICM Council and further developed by the ICM Board. As a member organisation, non-government organisation and development partner, ICM must balance the needs of its members with those of its partners and stakeholders in how we implement our strategy. We have

purposefully used the terms 'demand' and 'deliver' to frame our advocacy activity and our service activities.

We look forward to your continued collaboration across this next triennium as we work together to support women and babies in every corner of the world by ensuring midwives are more visible, valued and accessible than ever before.

Franka Cadée, ICM President, on behalf of the ICM Board



The new ICM Board 2017-2020 elected during the 31st Triennial Congress in Toronto, Canada

L-R front row: Emi Nurjismi Indomo (South East Asia), Rafat Jan (Eastern Mediterranean), Trude Thommesen (Europe), Franka Cadee (President), Dicko Fatoumata S Maiga (Africa), Jemima Dennis-Antwi (Africa), Rita Borg-Xuereb (Europe), Sandra Oyarzo Torres (Americas)

L-R back row: Hatsumi Taniguchi (Western Pacific), Ingela Wiklund (Treasurer), Serena Debonnet (Europe), Sally Pairman (Chief Executive), Mary Kirk (Vice President), Emmanuelle Hébert (Americas)

Vision

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



Mission

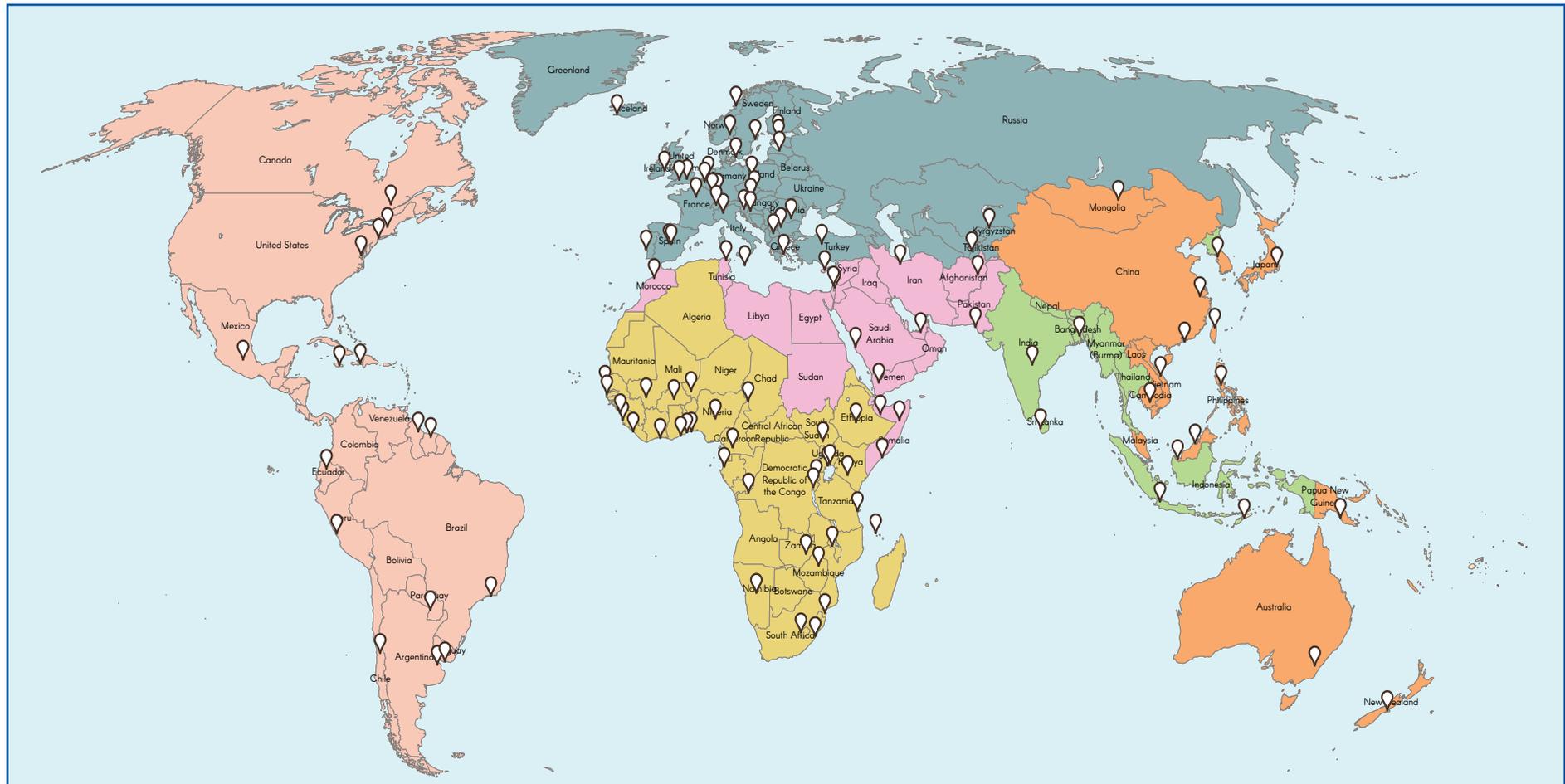
To strengthen Midwives Associations and to advance the profession of midwifery globally by promoting autonomous midwives as the most appropriate caregivers for childbearing women and in keeping birth normal, in order to enhance the reproductive health of women¹, and the health of their newborn and their families.

¹ The word 'women' also denotes girls. Midwives work directly with women and girls but also provide care to newborns and to families through their relationships with women.

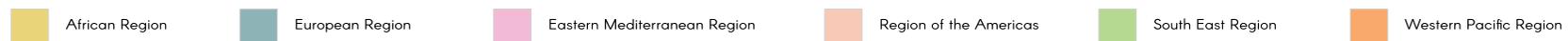
In recognising, advocating for, and respecting the human rights of all people, ICM supports the right of all people to receive humanised and inclusive midwifery care regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. ICM welcomes all those who need midwifery services and encourages midwives to provide them with compassionate, culturally safe care.

ICM – the voice for midwives globally

Representing over 500,000 midwives, 132 Member Associations in 113 countries across 6 regions of the world.



ICM Regions Key:





The context

GLOBALLY

As the global representative body for midwives, ICM supports the capacity building of midwives and health systems around sexual, reproductive, maternal and newborn health (SRMNH) to ensure that all women have access to competent and professional midwives who are appropriately educated, skilled, regulated and supported to provide quality midwifery care across all settings.

At a global level, ICM is a key stakeholder and partner towards the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. ICM's work impacts on all 17 goals but in particular we focus on SDG 3 – Good Health and Wellbeing and SDG 5 – Gender Equality. ICM recognises the strategic importance of advocating for midwives to work close to where women live if women and their families are to equitably access quality midwifery services as a key component of achieving Universal Health Coverage.



IN PARTNERSHIP

ICM is also a core partner in sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health (SRMNCAH) partnerships that seek to break down silos across governmental and civil society movements to improve health outcomes for women, girls, newborns, and their families within the childbirth continuum. ICM advocates and consults within a number of movements, including the former United Nations (UN) Secretary General Ban ki-Moon's Every Woman Every Child (EWEC) initiative, the UN Partnership for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (PMNCH), SheDecides, the White Ribbon Alliance (WRA) Respectful Maternity Care partnership, and the Quality, Equity, Dignity (QED) Network. ICM provides professional expertise and consultation to key policy documents and strategic partnership initiatives that set the policy framework at global level.





A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

At the core of all ICM does and all that it advocates for, two key beliefs underpin everything: Women's rights and midwives' rights are human rights. A woman's right to access a midwife throughout the childbirth continuum, is a human right; a midwife's right to the respect, recognition, education, regulation and support needed to practise professionally to work to her potential is also a human right. We believe that if these core messages are reflected in policies, partnerships and calls to action, we can synergise all efforts to improve the health and wellbeing of all and create high quality and equitable health outcomes for women, girls and newborns and a strong midwifery profession that leads with integrity.



How we will *work* to achieve our *goals*

- ▶ **LOCALLY** with our Midwives Associations in countries
- ▶ **REGIONALLY** within the six ICM regions, through collaboration with all of our Member Associations
- ▶ **GLOBALLY** on behalf of the more than 500,000 midwives represented by our Member Associations
- ▶ **COLLABORATIVELY** with our partners at local, regional and global levels
- ▶ **EQUITABLY** by harnessing the diverse representation of our Board, midwife experts and our Member Associations
- ▶ **RESPONSIBLY** and **ACCOUNTABLY** and with **INTEGRITY**



Image: United Nations Photo

Strategic Directions:

Quality, Equity and Leadership



Quality

ICM will maintain its high-quality work and continue to build a reputation of expertise and excellence. Quality midwifery care is respectful, focused on the needs of women and their newborns, with safe care provided by skilled, knowledgeable and compassionate midwives. ICM will guide all midwives to provide quality and respectful care and to uphold the human rights of childbearing women. A disabling work environment creates barriers to quality midwifery care. Midwives have the right to work within an enabling environment to provide quality care for women, newborns and their families. This means that midwives are recognised, valued, educated and regulated to global standards, working in supportive health services in which they have equal access to safe and respectful working environments with sufficient resources for them to do their work effectively and to practise to their full scope. ICM will work with its Member Associations to build greater advocacy capacity in-country to extend the influence of midwives within national policy discussions and development, with the ultimate outcome of achieving quality midwife-led and women-centred maternity services.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

ICM will:

1. **Demand** an enabling environment through which midwives can provide quality midwifery services.
2. **Deliver** global standards, resources and tools for education, regulation and association to build the capacity, competence and professionalism of midwives.
3. **Deliver** as the experts on midwives and midwifery, quality advice to stakeholders .



Equity

ICM operates with equity at its core. Through its members, ICM draws on a geographically, culturally and socially diverse set of perspectives to fulfill our mission to *Strengthen Midwifery Globally*. This rich diversity is fundamental to the work and output of ICM. A commitment to equity will embody our work and guide us in identifying creative solutions to issues.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

ICM will:

1. **Demand** equitable access for midwives to midwifery education, regulation and continuing professional development.
2. **Demand** equitable access to midwife-led midwifery services for women.
3. **Deliver** equitable access to services and facilitate equitable opportunities for participation in ICM for Member Associations.



Leadership

ICM is bold and brave in promoting the best outcomes for women and their newborns and in advocating for midwives and midwife-led services. As an organisation we demonstrate a strong and stable direction that is flexible in the dynamic SRMNCAH environment. We are proactive and engaged on behalf of our members, and ensure Member Associations are supported to advocate for women and midwives in their own countries.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

ICM will:

1. **Demand** participation of midwives at the highest level of policy and decision making at global, regional and local levels.
2. **Deliver** effective midwifery leadership and expertise.



What we will *achieve*

In this 2017 – 2020 triennium ICM will:

QUALITY

- ▶ **Maintain** our high-quality work as the global representative organisation for midwives and their associations, and continue to build a reputation of excellence.
- ▶ **Ensure** unity in our messaging and programming in alignment with the Strategic Directions and Objectives.
- ▶ **Review, update** and **expand** our resource materials and programmes to support midwives to practise in alignment with global standards of best practice.
- ▶ **Strengthen** midwifery education and accreditation, continuing education programmes and the role of the midwife as an educator.
- ▶ **Encourage** governments and support Midwives Associations to utilise ICM's global standards, resources and tools for education, regulation and association strengthening

EQUITY

- ▶ **Advocate** for all midwives globally in alignment with priorities established by the diverse perspectives of Member Associations, the Board, staff and stakeholders.
- ▶ **Strive** to make all our services and materials available and accessible to all our associations in the three ICM languages.
- ▶ **Engage** with partners at national, regional and international levels to achieve common goals
- ▶ **Develop** and implement a youth-focused narrative, promoting midwifery as a valuable career for young people
- ▶ **Manage** and **deliver** regional meetings and events within each of the six ICM regions each triennium and promote communication and collaboration between associations.

LEADERSHIP

- ▶ **Lead** the way in a global advocacy efforts to raise demand for midwives.
- ▶ **Reinforce** a leadership position as the expert on midwives and midwifery by engaging in strategic alliances and relationships, including with other professional associations.
- ▶ **Generate** leadership, training and mentoring opportunities for ICM Board members, Standing Committees, Member Associations, Head Office staff and other ICM representatives.







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Strengthening Midwifery Globally

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