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WHO PROGRESS REPORT ON NURSING AND MIDWIFERY, 2013–2015

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Introduction

The WHO nursing and midwifery programme works with a broad range of partners at the global, regional and country levels, all of whom are engaged in health policy development, nursing and midwifery services and developing standards and/or research. These partners are crucial for strengthening nursing and midwifery services, to help nurses and midwives cope with advancing technology and deliver high-quality, evidence-informed care. This publication updates the *WHO nursing and midwifery progress report 2008–2012 (1)*. The operational framework for this work has been the Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2011–2015. The report outlines key activities undertaken during 2013–2015 at WHO headquarters and WHO regional offices as well as those by key partners, including the International Council of Nurses, International Confederation of Midwives and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The first section focuses on major activities and progress in the Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery key result areas globally; the next section addresses activities and progress in the six WHO regions during the period 2013–2015.

WHO headquarters

Strengthening health systems and services

Noncommunicable diseases

As a follow-up to the 2012 Global Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers that focused on noncommunicable diseases, a publication was produced highlighting the contribution of nurses and midwives to combating noncommunicable diseases *(2)*. The publication outlines interventions in policy, advocacy, research and education and practice and the roles nurses and midwives play. In addition, the evidence and intervention options outlined in the publication provide an important reference point on noncommunicable diseases for policy-makers, researchers, educationists, nurses and midwives and other health-care workers. Evidence shows that the involvement of nursing and midwifery in noncommunicable diseases can go beyond prevention, screening and early detection and treatment to include promoting health.

Interprofessional education and collaborative practice

Meeting the challenges facing the nursing and midwifery professions requires taking steps to:

- develop and implement effective strategies to recruit and retain nurses and midwives;
- standardize entry requirements for pre- and postgraduate education and qualifications to ensure professional mobility;
- build a critical mass of competent educators to train the researchers and global leaders of the future;
- promote greater multidisciplinary integration into health-care delivery teams at all levels of the care continuum;
- develop new and advanced practice roles with established career pathways from the outset; and
- make effective use of available education and training resources.

Two related documents were developed in support of health systems and service strengthening on interprofessional collaborative education and practice. In collaboration with Kamuzu College of Nursing in Malawi, a case study on the master of science programme in reproductive health was developed to address the human resource needs for reproductive health care and the need for a local training programme that could be accessed by more health workers. This case study from Malawi showed that such an approach is possible when carried out through a consultative process and with commitment from all stakeholders, including the government *(3)*.
The second evidence-informed document presented six case studies on interprofessional education and collaborative practice from Brazil, Canada, India, South Africa and the United States of America and highlighted some barriers and enablers to take into account for implementing collaborative practice in service delivery areas *(4)*.

Practice and policy in nursing and midwifery

Government chief nursing and midwifery officers

In May 2014, more than 80 government chief nursing and midwifery officers participated in the Global Forum and addressed several factors to be considered in delivering universal health coverage: leadership and management, education and training and collaborative partnerships. The nursing and midwifery leaders acknowledged that within the context of primary health care and universal health coverage, nursing and midwifery services contribute to reducing the morbidity and mortality resulting from emerging and re-emerging health problems. Nurses and midwives use an integrated and comprehensive approach including health promotion, disease prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and palliative care. The Global Forum ended with a statement of commitment for governments to work towards universal access to affordable and high-quality health-care services and to lead in developing a competent nursing and midwifery workforce at all levels of the health-care delivery system *(5)* and a report *(6)*. It responds to the recognition that insufficient investment in pre-service, in-service and post-basic education and training results in understaffed educational institutions and inadequate skills among leaders, managers and practitioners, leading to poor planning and lower-quality health services. Nursing and midwifery leaders can do much more to move health agendas in their respective countries.

Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery

The Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery has existed for more than two decades and was designed to serve as a strategic, action-oriented body providing policy advice to the WHO Director-General to strategically enhance the contributions of nursing and midwifery within the context of all WHO priorities and programmes. Its establishment is enshrined in World Health Assembly resolution WHA45.5, which urged WHO to establish a global multidisciplinary advisory group on nursing and midwifery. This is further supported by resolutions WHA54.12 and WHA59.27. In 2013, an important step was taken to review, examine and provide suggestions on how to strengthen the Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery: in particular, determining optimal ways to improve its utility and effectiveness. The conclusions from the review were that, if the Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery is properly supported and utilized, it can be of enormous value to WHO both regionally and globally. The review led to ways of improving it *(7)*.

Education and training in nursing and midwifery

Core competencies for midwifery educators

WHO and partners are putting in place a variety of mechanisms to improve the quality, relevance and availability of nursing and midwifery education and training. Initiatives are directed at making a contribution to an appropriately educated, regulated and motivated nursing and midwifery workforce. Extensive consultation and generation of relevant evidence has resulted in the development of three critical documents.

Midwifery educator core competencies (8) presents eight identified domains: ethical and legal principles of midwifery, midwifery practice, theoretical learning, learning in the clinical area, assessment and evaluation of students and programmes, organization, management and leadership, communication, leadership and advocacy and research. These core competencies can be used to develop innovative curriculum contents and teaching approaches, with strong effective links between theory and midwifery practice.

WHO midwifery educator core competencies: building capacities of midwifery educators (9) is designed to help countries to put together short-term programmes to update the current competencies and/or maintain the competencies of midwife teachers. It provides some examples, including assessment tools.

WHO midwifery educator core competencies: adaptation tool (10) was developed primarily to assist those responsible for midwifery education in countries to adopt, adapt and use the global core competencies to strengthen the preparation of midwifery teachers.

These tools are now being used as key reference documents for the collaborative project of WHO and the Seventh-day Adventist Church's Department of Health Ministries on scaling up midwifery education. The project is being conducted in four Seventh-day Adventist nursing and midwifery institutions in Botswana, Cameroon, Lesotho and Malawi. This project is in accordance with the recent conceptual framework of universal health coverage and, if the framework is applied appropriately to the health workforce, it could contribute to universal health coverage by contributing to the availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality of midwifery educators and their students. The OPEC Fund for International Development is funding this five-year project.

Currently, core competencies for nurse educators are being developed, and the global standards for initial education of professional nurses and midwives are being revised.

Workforce and management in nursing and midwifery

To determine the way forward, as the implementation cycle of the 2011–2015 Strategic Directions for Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery ends in December 2015, a survey was conducted between December 2014 and March 2015 to determine the need for another Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery in light of the upcoming Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030. Of the 140 invited key informants, 84 (60%) responded to the questionnaire. More than 90% of the respondents suggested that WHO should have a stand-alone framework on nursing and midwifery to support the implementation of the WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health 2030. The draft of the Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2016–2020 has been prepared through a consultative process. The initial meeting took place on 17–18 September 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland, involving experts and key partners. The third version of the draft is going through web-based consultation in November 2015. In addition, WHO is also embarking on a comprehensive documentation of the history of nursing and midwifery in WHO. The call for universal health coverage puts nursing and midwifery at the centre of action. The document on the history of nursing and midwifery in WHO will help all key stakeholders to critically look on how to shape the future of nursing and midwifery, in particular, from the WHO perspectives. It will be an important reference point for implementing the Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2016–2020 aligned to the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 for effective management of the nursing and midwifery workforce, including education and services.

Partnerships for nursing and midwifery services

WHO has continued to forge partners and work with them in many ways. Key highlights include the International Council of Nurses Congress in Seoul, Republic of Korea, which provided a forum for discussing the draft WHO Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 and the Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2016–2020. This was an opportunity to further strengthen the capacity of nursing and midwifery professionals to engage in national policy, research and implementation.

The WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery Development continue to support regional and headquarters' work. Specifically, the four WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery Development in the WHO African Region are fully engaged in supporting the implementation of a five-year project on scaling up midwifery education in four African countries: Botswana, Cameroon, Lesotho and Malawi. The OPEC Fund for International Development is funding this project.

In 2014, under the Muskoka Initiative (an initiative financially supported by France towards achieving Millennium Development Goals 4 and 5 in the French-speaking African countries), midwifery schools were assessed in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Mauritania to determine the extent of the implementation of the competencies approach recommended by WHO and the International Confederation of Midwives to improve the quality of education.

The assessments were conducted by using the guidelines of the WHO Regional Office for Africa for evaluating basic nursing and midwifery education *(11)*.

The first collaborative workshop organized by UNFPA, WHO and the World Bank was held in Benin in 2013 and the second, in February 2015, in Côte d'Ivoire involving Benin, Chad, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Senegal. The results of these assessments were used to revise countries' action plans for midwifery training in francophone countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The results of the assessment showed that teachers need appropriate competencies to facilitate student learning. The transfer of skills in clinical practice settings was also not effective in most cases because of high student–teacher ratios.

In collaboration with the WHO Department of Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health, the Health Workforce Department has contributed to training 12 health professionals on the integrated maternal, neonatal and child quality of care assessment and improvement tool developed by the Department of Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health.

WHO Regional Office for Africa

Since the last progress report, the WHO Regional Office for Africa has focused attention on improving the education and practice of professional nurses and midwives. The following publications have been produced in French through a multistakeholder consultative process:

three-year diploma prototype competency-based general nursing curriculum;

three-year diploma prototype competency-based midwifery curriculum;

four-year prototype integrated competency-based curriculum for nurse-midwife education programmes; and

the Regional Professional Regulatory Framework for Nursing and Midwifery – to promote a common approach to regulation and educational preparation of nurses and midwives in the region.

Technical support for Member States on regulation

Several countries have been supported to improve their regulatory mechanisms for nursing and midwifery. Seychelles has been supported to review its Nurses and Midwives Act, and Liberia was supported to develop a strategic plan to strengthen its regulatory mechanisms for its Nurses and Midwives Council. Further, Ghana and Liberia were supported to establish a twinning relationship to strengthen nursing and midwifery regulation.

Educating and training midwives and other service providers

Sierra Leone was supported to establish a framework for implementing the continuing education programme for service providers for maternal, newborn and child health to support the government's free health-care initiative for women. Swaziland and Malawi have been supported in developing standards for nursing and midwifery education, including capacity-building for tutors from the various nursing and midwifery institutions on the process of reviewing and developing the curriculum. Guinea evaluated midwifery practice.

Partnerships

To strengthen technical contribution to the work of WHO, the Kamuzu College of Nursing of the University of Malawi was designated as a WHO Collaborating Centre for Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice in 2012. In general, WHO collaborating centres in the African Region have been collaborating in many areas to support the strengthening of nursing and midwifery services in the Region. The WHO Regional Office for Africa has also collaborated with other key partners such as the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics, which has supported strengthening regulatory and professional bodies for service delivery as well as the Muskoka Initiative in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Togo on the creation of a community of practice on maternal and child health workers. In addition, the WHO Regional Office for Africa has collaborated with Jhpiego, UNFPA, the International Council of Nurses and the

International Confederation of Midwives in many areas of nursing and midwifery.

Strengthening nursing and midwifery leadership

Eritrea has been supported to develop a strategic plan to strengthen nursing and midwifery services in the country (2013) to guide the newly established nursing and midwifery division. A situation analysis report has been produced to serve as a baseline for future review and monitoring. The Office of the Directorate for Nursing and Midwifery in the Zimbabwe's Ministry of Health was supported to develop the strategic directions for strengthening nursing and midwifery services in Zimbabwe in 2012.

Advocacy for strengthening nursing and midwifery services

The WHO Regional Office for Africa continues to advocate for national, regional and international meetings on nursing and midwifery. Examples of such meetings have included the 2014 WHO Global Forum for Government Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers with the theme of universal health coverage, the 10th Conference of the Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery held under the theme of nursing, health and human development in Coimbra, Portugal in July 2014 and the African Health Profession Regulatory Collaborative Summative Congress in Windhoek, Namibia in February 2015.

WHO Regional Office for the Americas

Strengthening health policies

National and international network meetings on nursing take place annually in September to share progress and their role in training and strengthening nursing education. This meeting is attended by 26 established networks and convenes to discuss the strategies for sustainability of each network, determine the opportunities for international work, and to orient and help direct new national networks. The meeting also highlights the networks' plans for the coming years, provides an opportunity to update the coordination of the individual networks; and to disseminate the achievements of the various international nursing networks during the previous years. Recent meetings have been in Montevideo, Uruguay in 2013; Cartagena, Colombia in 2014, and in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in 2015.

More than 100 participants attended the meeting on strengthening the role of human resources in nursing and midwifery at the Third Global Forum on Human Resources for Health in Recife, Brazil in November 2013. Nurse leaders were briefed and engaged in discussions to ensure participation in and contribution to this agenda in their respective countries. Discussion included: key priorities for developing recruitment, deployment and retention; providing high-quality education; developing nursing and midwifery leadership skills; cost-effective models for delivering care; and responding to evolving dynamic health trends.

Forty-six nurse leaders from the Americas were brought together in Hamilton, Canada in April 2015 to discuss the role of advanced practice nursing role in achieving universal access to health and universal health coverage. The Advanced Practice Nursing Summit was the foundation for subsequent regional meetings to develop various work plans on advanced practice nursing in Latin America. Through the Summit, leaders defined the scope of nursing and advanced practice nursing roles in primary health care in the Americas and discussed countries' experience with nurses' changing responsibilities and access to primary health care. Strategies were also developed for implementing the advanced practice nursing roles in primary health care in Latin America and advancing the role of advanced practice nursing in the Caribbean.

In support of the universal health coverage agenda, the chief nursing officers and nursing representatives of Member States are currently presenting their nursing contributions toward advancing universal access to health and universal health coverage through a series of webinars. This collective information will provide a compressive view of nursing in the Region of the Americas, and the evidence will help in identifying gaps and opportunities for strengthening the profession in the Region.

Recorded webinars are located on the PAHO/WHO webpage on human resources for health.

The International Nurses Day event in May 2015 was attended by at least 611 in-person and online participants, and 150 nurse leaders from around the Region were invited to attend. The event was based on the project Contribution of Nursing towards Universal Access to Health and Universal Health Coverage. Information related to nursing and its contributions was disseminated throughout the event and on subsequent days through various social media sites. The International Nurses Day webpage reached 31 442 views during the week of the event. The event promoted the discussion of topics and facilitated the communication and dissemination of information.

Education

The Pan American Directory of Schools of Nursing is a resource available on the web that provides information on schools of nursing recognized by the governments of the countries in the Region. The development of the Directory aims to provide access to a range of information related to nursing education in the Region. The Directory is located on the website of the Regional Observatory of Human Resources for Health (http://www.observatoriorh.org/direnf/en) in English, Spanish and Portuguese and stores information on more than 1000 schools of nursing in the Region.

A self-learning virtual course Nursing Leadership: Empowering Nurses in Latin America and the Caribbean was produced to empower nurses in Latin America and the Caribbean by enhancing their understanding of the principles of nursing leadership and management that can be used in nursing practice. This course was provided in Spanish and English for bachelor-prepared nurses in leadership positions. A total of 57 participants received certificates of completion for the course in English and 112 in Spanish. The course was delivered through a 12-week period on the Virtual Campus for Public Health.

The Pan American Health Organization is currently developing an evaluation instrument nursing schools can use to assess the extent to which they are preparing students to contribute to achieving the goal of universal health. The instrument will be prepared in English and Portuguese, with hopes to perform a cross-cultural adaptation to make it available to other nursing and midwifery programmes globally.

Nursing research publications

Analysed current trends and directions in nursing research in Latin America and the Caribbean and identified areas that need development *(12)*.

Identified the current state of advanced practice nursing and licensed nursing regulation and education in Latin America and the Caribbean and the potential for development of these roles, particularly in the provision of primary health care *(13)*.

Systematically reviewed literature on priorities in nursing research on the health systems and services in the Region of the Americas as a step toward developing a nursing research agenda that will advance the regional strategy for universal access to health and universal health coverage *(14)*.

Provided editorials on nursing networks as means to strengthen research and extension studies and on the advanced practice nursing role in Latin America *(15,16)*.

Based on the concepts of universal access to health and universal health coverage, developed a regional list for nursing research priorities in health systems and services in the Region of the Americas. The results of this list are encouraged to help inform research and funding decisions *(17)*.

Communication strategies

Social networks have been an important strategy towards disseminating information and increasing recognition of nurses' contributions.

	2013	2015
EnfAmericas Listserv	2512 participants	4249 participants
EnfAmericas Twitter	132 users	1124 users
EnfAmericas Facebook	348 users	2893 users

Other websites devoted to distribute information include the webpage on nursing of the Regional Observatory for Human Resources in Health (http://www.observatoriorh.org/?q=enfermeria) and Health Topics – Nursing (http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_topics&view=article&id=189&Itemid=40855&lang=en) and Programs – Nursing (http://www.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=11170&Itemid=41547&lang=en) at PAHO's website.

WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean

The WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region has identified health system strengthening as one of the five strategic priorities for its work with Member States over the next five years.
The WHO Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean recognizes the importance of supporting Member States in their efforts to scale up nursing and midwifery capacity, creating positive practice environments, developing strong committed leadership and advocating for new specialized roles.

Framework for action: strengthening nursing and midwifery in the Eastern Mediterranean Region 2015–2025 *(18)* was finalized in September 2015.
This work was based on the analysis report of the country nursing profiles, review of the present challenges facing nursing and midwifery, and the achievements and lessons learned over the past decade.
The vision of the nursing and midwifery leaders was that countries should strive to provide quality people-centred nursing and midwifery services where nurses and midwives practice within the healthcare team or as autonomous practitioners contributing to improved health outcomes and the well-being of society. The framework for action presented at the session of the WHO Regional Committee for the Eastern Mediterranean in September 2015.

Research

In recognition of the importance of generating regional and country-specific research and improving research capacity in the Region, two meetings were held at two collaborating centres for nursing and midwifery development.
The first one was held at the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery of the Iran University of Medical Sciences in 2014 and the second one at the College of Health Sciences of the University of Bahrain in 2015 with aim of establishing national research networks.
Action plans were developed outlining the way forward in establishing these national research networks. These networks should facilitate exchange of information, experiences and collaborative research in these countries to contribute to addressing the health agenda at the national level.

Education

A prototype macro-curriculum on psychiatric mental health nursing was developed in 2014. The curriculum is based on the premise of a post-basic specialty level nursing education. The programme is designed to prepare graduates to meet the urgent need for mental health nurses, especially in countries with limited human resources for health in crisis and experiencing shortages of mental health workers.

In addition, a guide to nursing and midwifery education standards was published this year. The tool is intended to support the establishment of national nursing education standards, promote greater national and regional uniformity in the quality of nursing and midwifery education, provide guidelines in setting up quality improvement systems at the institutional and programme levels and inform

the development of an accreditation process for nursing and midwifery education.

WHO Regional Office for Europe

Health 2020, the policy framework for health and well-being in the WHO European Region, highlights nurses and midwives as having key and increasingly important roles to play in society's efforts to tackle the public health challenges of our time, ensure the continuity of care and address people's rights and changing health needs. The potential impact of nurses and midwives in supporting Health 2020 implementation in the WHO European Region has not yet been fully realized.

The policy framework *European strategic directions for strengthening nursing and midwifery towards Health 2020 goals (19)* has been developed through a regional-wide consultation process with Member States and key stakeholders.
The policy framework identifies 12 objectives, four priority areas and four enabling mechanisms that strengthen nursing and midwifery and align policy and practice with Health 2020.

Education

A compendium of good practices in nursing and midwifery *(20)* has been launched based on 55 country case studies from 18 countries in the European Region. The compendium demonstrates good practices in nursing and midwifery and describes how they contribute to implementing Health 2020 and to improving the quality of health-care services. The compendium is designed to provide evidence to policy-makers on how nursing and midwifery contributions and different models of care can influence future progress and key health policy targets and, hence, how to make the best use of the nursing and midwifery workforce as a vital resource for better health and well-being.

WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia

Strengthening nursing and midwifery policies

WHO supported Myanmar in developing Strategic Directions for National Nursing and Midwifery Development Plan 2013–2017 and the Sri Lanka Nursing Council in strengthening their role and function through study visits and an in-country workshop.

WHO has provided Bhutan with technical support in determining the country situation in nursing. The results have been the basis for: advocating for the chief nurse position in the Ministry of Health and setting the nursing service standards, the standard or basic nursing and midwifery curriculum and strengthening of the regulatory body in registration.

Following the adoption of resolution SEA/RC67/R6 on strengthening health workforce education and training in South-East Asia at the 67th session of the WHO Regional Committee for South-East Asia in September 2015, in collaboration with the Human Resources for Health Unit of the Regional Office, a regional Meeting on Strengthening Human Resources for Health in the South-East Asia Region: Time for Action and Commitment was convened on 19–21 November 2014 in Bhutan. The Member States in the South-East Asia Region have agreed on a Decade for Strengthening Human Resources for Health in South-East Asia, 2015–2024, and country action plans have been developed to strengthen physicians, nurses and midwives with the focus on transforming education and retention. The health workforce profiles for selected countries are available from the regional human resources for health observatory.

Progress has been reported in various countries such as the implementation of a midwifery programme (three years) in Bangladesh and the enactment of the Midwifery Act in Indonesia. The draft regional roadmap to strengthen midwifery has been agreed on.

The first national nursing symposium was organized on 25–27 October 2015 in Paro, Bhutan. The aim was to update nurses in the country about the nursing and midwifery

situation at the global, regional and country levels, the discussion on the First National Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Directions, 2015–2019 and to build capacity on patient safety.

Partnerships

In collaboration with the Tobacco Unit of the Regional Office, a workshop to include tobacco cessation in the nursing curriculum was conducted in March 2013 in Colombo, Sri Lanka. The Regional Office supported the 7th Asia Pacific Emergency and Disaster Nursing Network Meeting on 18–20 September 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific and the secretariat of the Network. The theme was: nurse-midwife: a catalyst in contributing to build community resilience. Lessons learned from community resilience in response to disaster were shared. A table-top exercise on initial assessment and management, triage and transport and communication was demonstrated. A checklist on the roles of nurses in building community resilience was reviewed.

Ten nurses from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Thailand participated in the 8th Asia Pacific Emergency and Disaster Nursing Network Meeting with the theme of building the workforce for post-disaster response on 25–27 November 2014. It was organized by HOPE School of Nursing, Wuhan University, Wuhan, China. In addition to updating nurses' responses to recent major disasters in the Region, including Yolanda in the Philippines and the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan and the WHO publication on foreign medical teams during humanitarian crises, participants reviewed the work progress and were trained on mass casualties, maternal and child health and mental health and psychosocial support.

Education

A regional meeting on strengthening the quality of midwifery education and service was held on 30 July–1 August 2013 in Bangkok, Thailand. The focus was on the policy and standards of midwifery education and services. Recommendations were made on country actions to improve quality of the education and services.

A meeting was held with the Ministry of Health of Myanmar and UNFPA on 25–28 September 2015 on action to strengthen midwifery. This includes developing the midwifery curriculum, building the capacity of teachers and strengthening midwifery laboratory. In addition, support was extended to the University of Nursing in Yangon to organize a meeting to review their nursing and distance education programme.

The WHO Collaborating Centre for Training and Research in Newborn Care, All India Institute of Medical Sciences, New Delhi, India has revised the learner's guide on newborn nursing for facility-based care and will launch it on 11 December 2015 along with e-learning modules.

Service delivery

The WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia has supported the participation of nurses in the meetings organized by the Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery, including the Third International Conference on Prevention and Management of Chronic Conditions on the theme of a global perspective for prevention and management of chronic conditions, which was held on 25–27 February 2015 in Bangkok, Thailand, and the meeting of the Southeast and East Asia Nursing Education and Research Network on 1–2 July 2015 in Chiang Mai, Thailand. The 9th Asia Pacific Nursing and Midwifery Emergency and Disaster Nursing Network Meeting under the theme of strengthening capacity and building linkages for disaster risk reduction was also organized on 24–26 September 2015 by the Faculty of Nursing of the University of Philippines in Manila. The meeting focused on the lessons learned from recent disasters: the Nepal earthquake, Ebola and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus. The role and direction of the Asia Pacific Emergency and Disaster Nursing Network in relation to the Sendai framework for risk reduction and core competencies in selected areas including maternal and newborn care was also discussed.

WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific

The Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery has carried out much of the work on nursing and midwifery in the WHO Western Pacific Region. In Cambodia, the Cambodia Nurse Bridging Program was successfully implemented concludes during a recognition ceremony held on 28 January 2015 at the Technical School for Medical Care of the University of Health Sciences in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The first Cambodia Nurse Bridging Program comprises 29 members of the Faculty of Nursing of the Technical School for Medical Care of the University of Health Sciences, and the regional training hospitals from the four Cambodian provinces of Battambang, Kampot, Kampong Chan and Steung Tren are involved in this programme. The Cambodia Nurse Bridging Program is a two-year collaborative project of WHO, the Technical School for Medical Care of the University of Health Sciences and the WHO Collaborating Centre for Leadership in Nursing Development at the College of Nursing of the University of the Philippines in Manila. It provided technical support to countries for upgrading the associate degree in nursing to a bachelor of science in nursing degree.

The 8th Asia-Pacific and Emergency Disaster Nursing Network Meeting was held in Wuhan, China on 25–27 November 2014. The meeting was attended by 120 participants from 20 countries in Asia and the Pacific. The organizers included the HOPE School of Nursing, Wuhan University, China; the WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia, the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific and the College of Nursing of the University of the Philippines as the secretariat. This Meeting intended to:

- promote best practices and standards for effective and high-quality health services in post-disaster situations;
- define the role of the Network in enhancing the competencies of the workforce for post-disaster response; and
- define the national and regional operational mechanisms of the Network to contribute in enhancing the workforce competencies of national and international surge teams in emergency response.

A key outcome of the Meeting was the mapping of the role of the Network in enhancing the competencies of the workforce in disaster risk management and promoting regional coordination mechanisms.

Partners

International Confederation of Midwives

In support of improving midwifery education and practice, the International Confederation of Midwives developed several documents including: the global standards on midwifery education, regulation and professional associations – completed in 2011 and amended in 2013. The global standards include: standards for midwifery education, essential competencies for basic midwifery practice, standard equipment list for competency-based skills training, model curriculum outlines for professional midwifery education.

A series of gap analysis workshops have been conducted with member associations and government stakeholders to identify and make plans to address gaps in education, regulation and association. In support of quality education, a series of training processes for teaching the competency-based education approach to teaching and learning to midwifery educators has also been conducted. A regulation toolkit is also being developed. This will help guide countries in developing or strengthening their regulatory systems.

Strengthening midwifery services

A Midwifery Services Framework was developed in collaboration with partners and stakeholders. The framework provides health system developers and planners, maternal and newborn health experts, policy-makers and other stakeholders such as midwives, educators, regulators and professional associations with an evidence-informed tool from which to develop new or strengthen existing effective and efficient midwifery

services. The Midwifery Services Framework explains key midwifery concepts, outlines a step-by-step approach on how to set up or strengthen midwifery services by discussing the quality care that women and newborn need, education, regulation and effective management of the workforce and building the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the process.

Advocacy

Advocacy is achieved through training associations to help prepare midwives to work with government decision-makers and policy-makers in developing and implementing relevant policies. Given the critical nature of this role for the International Confederation of Midwives and for midwifery, the Confederation is recruiting a policy and advocacy officer.

Partnerships

The first phase of collaborative agreements with WHO was established in 2011–2013. The current agreement is for 2014–2017. The most recent agreement focuses on education and research. There is also ongoing collaboration with other partners such as the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics. In collaboration with UNFPA, work is ongoing to strengthening midwifery at the country level in francophone Africa (2014–2017).

International Council of Nurses

The International Council of Nurses has undertaken activities to strengthen nursing and midwifery in response to World Health Assembly resolution WHA64.7 on strengthening nursing and midwifery in 2011. Many of the activities to strengthen nursing and midwifery are through supporting the member national nurse associations. These activities are summarized below.

International Council of Nurses leadership programmes (http://leadership.icn.ch)

1. **Global Nursing Leadership Institute** – annually providing a leadership programme for nurses in senior and executive-level positions since 2010. This has brought together next-generation nurse leaders from government, service provision, education, regulation and intergovernmental agencies. WHO hosts a session on the role of the organization and the priorities health systems are facing.

2. **Leadership for Change programme** – to assist senior nurses and other health professionals at the country, region or organizational level for management and leadership during health sector change and reform and to enhance their contribution to health services. Since it started in 1996, it has been implemented in more than 60 countries in all WHO regions, working in close collaboration with several of the regional nursing leads at WHO regional offices.
3. **Leadership in Negotiation** – This programme aims at assisting nursing leaders in leadership skills and negotiation techniques. It has been implemented in WHO regions and is currently active in the Bahamas, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Swaziland, Uganda and Zambia. The programme has recently been updated and new contemporary resources have been developed.

Collaboration with partners

Triad meetings between the International Council of Nurses, International Confederation of Midwives and WHO. These meetings are held jointly with the International Confederation of Midwives and WHO. The International Council of Nurses convened biennial triad meetings with government chief nursing and midwifery officers, leaders of national nursing and

midwifery associations and national regulatory bodies in 2012 and 2014 in Geneva, Switzerland. As an outcome of the meetings, a joint triad communiqué was issued *(21).*

Advocacy

The International Council of Nurses lobbies governments and WHO to actively engage the expertise of nurses and midwives in planning, developing, implementing and evaluating health and health system policy and programming to optimize the contributions of nursing and midwifery to implementing national health policies and achieving the internationally agreed health-related development goals. These include International Council of Nurses interventions at World Health Assembly and WHO Executive Board meetings, dissemination of the International Council of Nurses position statement on the participation of nurses in health services decision-making and policy development *(22)* and International Council of Nurses publications such as the International Nurses Day kits *(23–26)*.

As part of advocacy, the International Council of Nurses has developed various position papers on regulation, protecting the title of nurse and the scope of nursing practice. Several fact sheets have been produced, including credentialing, nurse practitioner and advanced practice nurse, mutual recognition agreements and workers' councils.

The International Council of Nurses produces the International Classification for Nursing Practice to help to ensure that nursing is adequately represented in multidisciplinary terminologies *(27)*. International Council of Nurses publications recognize the distinct contribution of nursing and midwifery in interdisciplinary health teams to address health and health system priorities such as the International Council of Nurses International Nurses Day kits *(28)*.

The International Council of Nurses continues working with other health professionals on several issues as part of the World Health Professions Alliance (www.whpa.org) *(29)*.

Further, the International Council of Nurses has lobbied to increase the appointment of professional nurses and midwives to specialist posts at WHO by highlighting job advertisements and encouraging appropriately qualified candidates to apply.

Technical input into WHO policy and technical documents

The International Council of Nurses continues to contribute to the development of WHO strategies and global action. Recent contributions include: WHO Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020 *(30)*, WHO global strategy on people-centred and integrated health services *(31)*, the global action plan on antimicrobial resistance *(32)*, the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 *(33)*, WHO Global Code of Practice on the International Recruitment of Health Personnel *(34)*, the Sustainable Development Goals indicators, the WHO strategic directions on strengthening nursing and midwifery development *(35)* and the strategic directions on strengthening nursing and midwifery for the Eastern Mediterranean Region. The International Council of Nurses provided comments on the report review of the WHO Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery in 2013 *(7)*.

The International Council of Nurses requested that a safe working environment be provided for nursing personnel working in the locations in which the Ebola virus has spread. The International Council of Nurses held a high-level summit meeting on Ebola in conjunction with the Spanish Nursing Council in October 2014 in Madrid and emphasized the need for protecting health-care workers, with appropriate protocols for each individual case.

Legislation and regulation

Regulation is one of the three pillars of the International Council of Nurses. Several activities have taken place, including the following.

- The Observatory on Licensure and Registration held the annual meetings of Observatory on Licensure and Registration (in 2012 in Ottawa, Canada, in 2013 and 2014 in Geneva).

- The International Council of Nurses as part of the World Health Professions Alliance organized the Third World Health Professions Regulation Conference in Geneva in 2014 *(36)*.
- International Council of Nurses issues publications on regulation (http://www.icn.ch/what-we-do/publications-related-to-regulation). A new toolkit provides information and promotes discussion and self-assessment for regulatory structures in all stages of development. It identifies and describes effective models of regulation and regulatory board governance and also explores the core functions of a regulatory authority *(37)*.

Nursing and midwifery workforce

The International Council of Nurses strengthens the dataset on nurses and midwives as an integral part of national and subnational health workforce information systems. The International Council of Nurses works with member national nurse associations, governments and WHO to have accurate data on the number of nurses in the countries. Further, the International Centre for Human Resources in Nursing *(38)* is a unique online resource serving policy-makers, planners, educators, associations, employers, regulators, researchers and practitioners in nursing human resources. The International Centre on Nurse Migration *(39)*, hosted by International Council of Nurses, is a global resource for developing, promoting and disseminating research, policy and information on nurse migration.

UNFPA

The state of the world's midwifery: a universal pathway – a women's right to health

As a follow-up to The state of the world's midwifery 2011 (40), the International Confederation of Midwives again worked in partnership with UNFPA and other agencies to prepare and produce The state of the world's midwifery 2014 (41). WHO, and especially the Health Workforce Department, and UNFPA organized the launch of the French version of The Lancet series on midwifery in April 2014. The workshop was organized for French researchers to discuss research on midwifery in francophone countries. Other similar collaborative meetings have been held in other countries such as Thailand and the United States of America. The most recent one was held in Cairo, Egypt on 15–18 November 2015.

Conclusion

WHO is currently developing the Strategic Directions for Nursing and Midwifery Development (2016–2020). This draft document was a result of recommendations from a global survey on the Strategic Directions on Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2011–2015 *(35)*. This review embraced relevant strategies and key documents such as the Global Strategy on Human Resources for Health: Workforce 2030 and the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals agenda to determine the relevance and effectiveness of having another Strategic Directions on

Strengthening Nursing and Midwifery 2016–2020 (or similar document). The results of the options analysis suggest evidence-informed strategies and recommendations to WHO to determine the best way forward.

The future of nursing and midwifery will be increasingly aligned with the interprofessional, multidisciplinary approaches to education and practice. Accurate and relevant data will be key to ensure that the nursing workforce is responding to the health needs of given contexts and providing high-quality services in response to the Sustainable Development Goals and universal health coverage.