

# African Health Profession Regulatory Collaborative FOR NURSES AND MIDWIVES

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## Introduction

Nurses and midwives are the frontline of health service delivery in many countries. A critical shortage of nurses and midwives in some African countries threatens the ability to provide even basic health services to populations in need. The HIV pandemic in Africa has created a greater demand for health services and the need for HIV skills and competencies in the health workforce. Improvements to the practice and education of nurses and midwives can have a significant impact on the delivery of critical HIV services. Ensuring the sustainability of the improvements requires revising and strengthening national regulations and standards for nursing and midwifery practice and education.

A new initiative by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will assist the regulatory leadership of 14 sub-Saharan African countries to update and enhance their national nursing and midwifery regulations. The African Health Profession Regulatory Collaborative for Nurses and Midwives (ARC) is a four-year partnership between the CDC, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Lillian Carter Center for International Nursing at Emory University, and the East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community. ARC convenes nurse and midwife leaders from participating African countries for the purpose of facilitating south-to-south collaboration around professional regulatory issues, such as credentialing, licensing, accreditation of training, and continuing education.

The ARC initiative was made possible through funding from the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

### The ARC Initiative

- *Objectives*
- *Conceptual Framework*
- *Participating Countries*
- *Partners*

### The ARC Approach

- *Regional Meetings*
- *Short-Term Grants*
- *Targeted Technical Assistance*
- *Evaluation*
- *Key Strengths*

### ARC Year 1

- *Country Regulation Priorities*
- *Photos and Testimonials*

### ARC Objectives Years 1-4

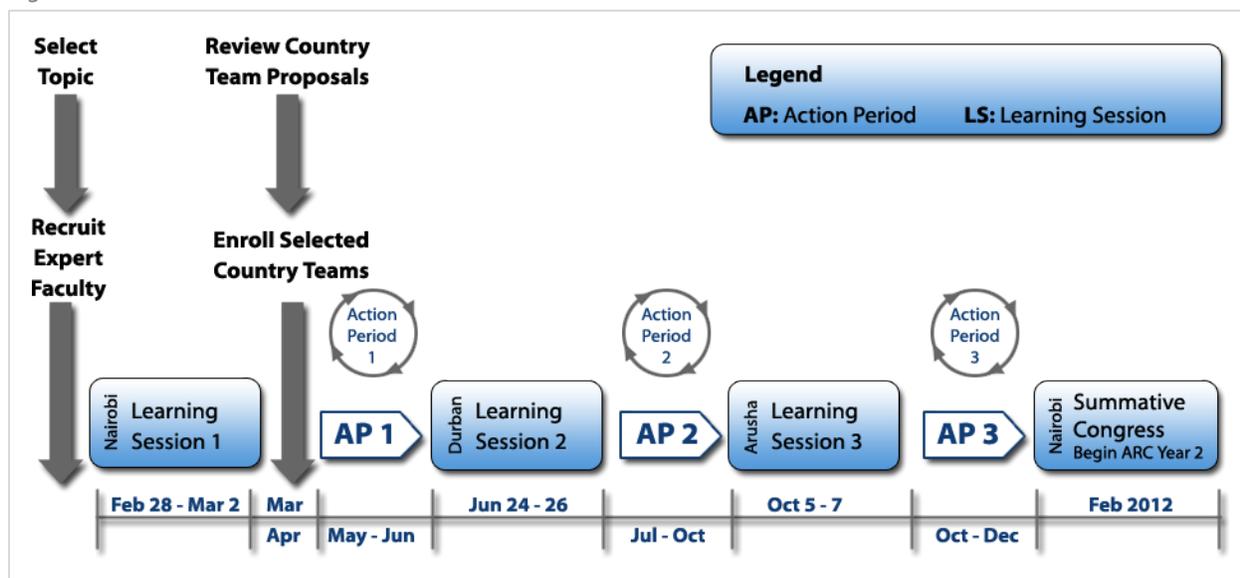
ARC has four overarching objectives for meeting global standards for education and practice. These objectives are aimed at advancing regulatory frameworks, strengthening organizational capacity and developing nursing and midwifery leadership.

1. Ensure that quality standards of nursing and midwifery practice are harmonized in the East, Central and Southern Africa (ECSA) region and align with global standards
2. Ensure that national regulatory frameworks for nursing and midwifery are updated to reflect nationally-approved reforms to practice and education
3. Strengthen the capacity of professional regulatory councils to conduct key regulatory functions in nursing and midwifery within the ECSA region
4. Establish sustained consortia of African health leadership in nursing and midwifery practice and regulation

### Conceptual Framework

The approach of the ARC initiative is adapted from the [Institute for Healthcare Improvement](#) (IHI) model for “breakthrough” organizational change.<sup>1</sup> The Institute for Healthcare Improvement Breakthrough Series® model is a short-term (6 to 15 month) learning system in which organizations learn from each other, as well as from recognized experts, about an area needing improvement. The structure of the IHI model is a series of alternating Learning Sessions and Action Periods (see Figure 1).

Figure 1



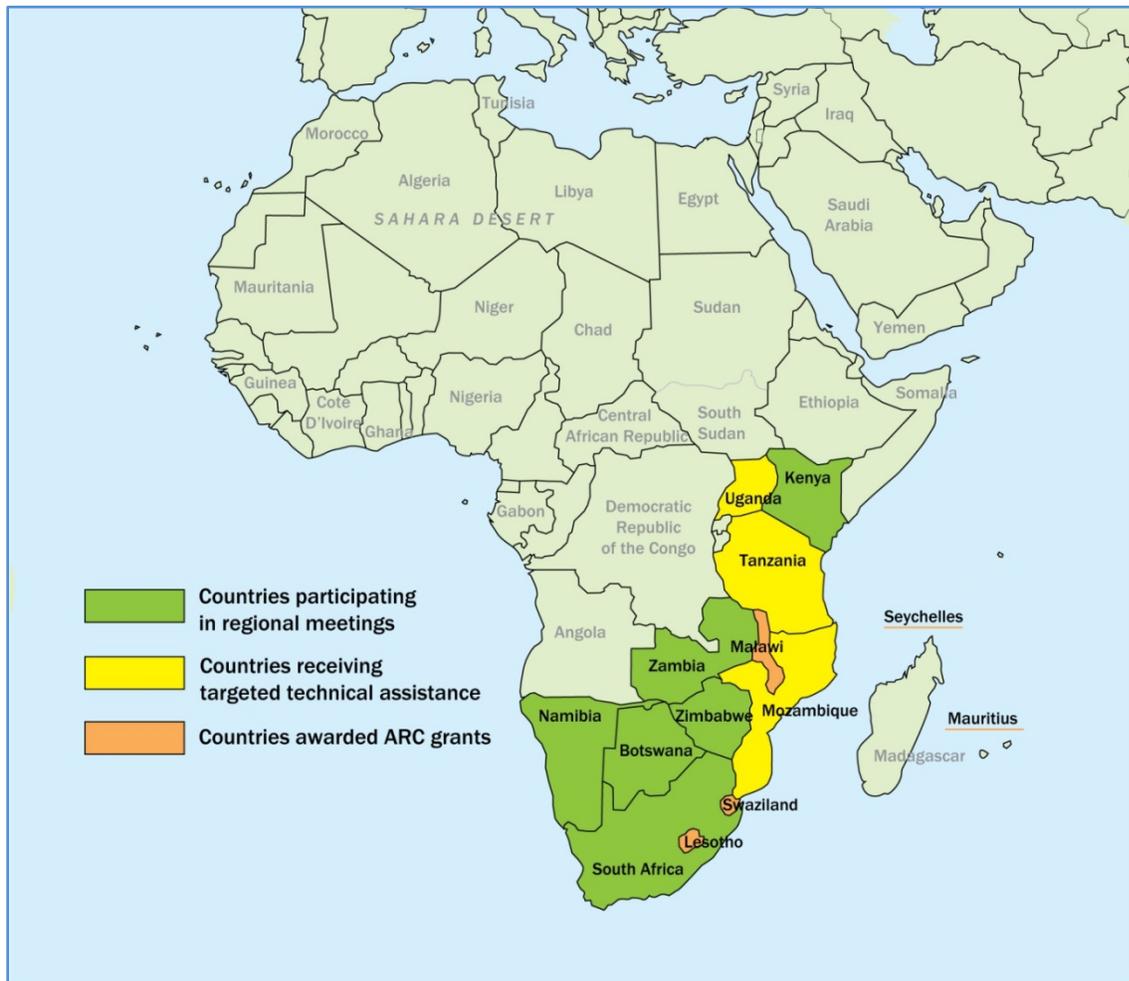
<sup>1</sup> The Breakthrough Series: IHI's Collaborative Model for Achieving Breakthrough Improvement. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for Healthcare Improvement; 2003. Available at [www.IHI.org](http://www.IHI.org).

During the Learning Sessions, teams from participating organizations come together to learn about and discuss the chosen topic and plan specific changes to implement in their home institutions. During the Action Periods, the teams return to their home institutions and work together on the planned changes. At the conclusion of the collaborative cycle, participating organizations engage in a Summative Congress to share lessons learned and produce publications to share their breakthrough improvements.

In adapting this approach, ARC is designed to create long-term capacity among East, Central and Southern Africa region's regulatory leadership and to assist participating countries in implementing joint problem-solving approaches that target national issues affecting the health workforce.

## Participating Countries

### Type of ARC Year 1 Support by Participating Country



## ARC Partners

### 1. [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)

[Center for Global Health, Division of Global HIV/AIDS](#)

The Health Systems and Human Resources team resides within the Division of Global HIV/AIDS at CDC's headquarters in Atlanta, GA. This multi-disciplinary team has expertise in nursing, midwifery, and health policy, as well as legal, scientific and technical competencies. The team frequently collaborates with global partners such as the International Council of Nurses, the International Confederation of Midwives, the American College of Nurse Midwives, and the World Health Organization. Their relationship with the Commonwealth and ECSA spans over ten years.

### 2. [The East, Central, and Southern Africa Health Community \(ECSA\)](#)

[Human Resources for Health and Capacity Building Programme](#)

Established in 1974, ECSA is an African intergovernmental organization comprised of member states in eastern, central, and southern Africa. ECSA routinely convenes health regulatory officials, health ministers and other officials on an annual basis for policy and priority-setting. Through its Colleges of Nurses and Surgeons, ECSA works to strengthen and harmonize medical and nursing education, accreditation, and credentialing in the region. In 2007, ECSA partnered with the International Council of Midwives to develop a draft *Professional Regulatory Framework*, which identified "acceptable minimum parameters for professional practice, core competencies, core content and standards of education for nurses and midwives". In 2008, ECSA College of Nursing (ECSA-CON) partnered with the Commonwealth Secretariat and the World Health Organization to establish standardized curricula in advanced midwifery education for the ECSA region.

### 3. [The Commonwealth Secretariat](#)

[Health and Human Development](#)

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 54 countries that support each other and work together toward shared goals in democracy and development. The Commonwealth Secretariat has been supporting HIV and AIDS activities over a number of years and recently received a mandate to "strengthen its work on Human Resources for Health, and assist member countries to develop their capacity in providing quality maternal, neonatal and child health." The Commonwealth has provided technical assistance to ECSA for many years, including advancing the harmonization of midwifery practice standards and pre-service curricula in the region.

### 4. [Emory University Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing](#)

[The Lillian Carter Center for Global Health & Social Responsibility](#)

The Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, which houses the Lillian Carter Center for Global Health & Social Responsibility (LCC), is the coordinating partner for ARC. LCC has a nine-year history of working with the CDC-Kenya Office (and more recently the CDC-Zimbabwe Office) in creating and supporting the development of a robust health workforce information system. LCC also has experience collaborating with The Commonwealth, which will serve as a major sub-contractor over this one-year period.

### Regional Meetings

ARC convenes regional meetings of nursing and midwifery regulatory leadership from participating ESCA countries to present and share resources for strengthening nursing and midwifery regulation. The regulatory leadership from each country typically includes the chief nursing officer, the registrar of the nursing and midwifery council, and the president of the national nurses associations and a representative of a nursing and/or midwifery training institution. Globally and regionally recognized regulation experts join with country teams to identify and discuss national and regional nursing and midwifery workforce challenges.

#### Meeting Overviews

- **February 28-March 2, 2011; Nairobi, Kenya**

The ARC initiative convened its first regional conference February 28-March 2, 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya. Fourteen national nursing and midwifery regulatory leadership teams from the ECSA region participated, along with invited technical experts in nursing and midwifery from the International Confederation of Midwives, the International Council of Nurses, the World Health Organization, the Commonwealth Nurses Federation, and U.S. nursing academic institutions. These experts presented recently published global and regional standards in nursing and midwifery and provided valuable feedback and suggestions during breakout sessions and country team planning.

#### Kenya Meeting Objectives

1. Foster regional dialogue on shared challenges and promising solutions in nursing and midwifery regulation, practice, and standards
2. Facilitate country teams' identification of regulatory issues that can be advanced through a south-to-south collaborative
3. Foster collaboration between African nursing and midwifery stakeholders in the East, Central and Southern Africa Region
4. Advance nursing/midwifery leadership, problem-solving skills through the implementation of grants that target nursing/midwifery regulatory advancement

Activities in this meeting included small breakout sessions where chief nursing officers, registrars of the nursing and midwifery council, presidents of the national nurses associations, and representatives of either a nursing and/or midwifery training institutions convened separately to discuss professional regulatory issues impacting the functioning of their respective roles. Following these sessions, a second breakout activity comprised of country teams took place; during which, teams discussed national regulatory issues and identified a priority area for improvement (See Table 1 on page 11).

- **June 24-26, 2011; Durban, South Africa**

During this session, country teams shared progress on their respective projects, as well as challenges and lessons learned. ARC faculty conducted coaching sessions with country teams, and technical experts presented relevant content on quality improvement methodologies, regulatory change, and continuing professional development.

### **Durban Meeting Objectives**

1. To equip ARC country teams with improvement principles and tools to revise and strengthen their action plans
2. To engage global and regional experts in the provision of technical assistance to strengthen ARC country team action plans
3. To facilitate interactive sessions to foster peer learning in nursing and midwifery regulation

- **October 5-7, 2011; Arusha, Tanzania**

The Arusha meeting again convened the country teams with funded ARC Year 1 regulation improvement projects. Each country team shared its progress and challenges in implementing their projects since the Durban meeting. The Arusha meeting sessions introduced tools for implementing and evaluating projects and presented resources to strengthen continuing professional development in the region.

### **Arusha Meeting Objectives**

1. Discuss, develop and disseminate regional nursing and midwifery regulation resources and tools
2. Assess progress, challenges and lessons learned during implementation of country regulation improvement grants

- **ARC Summative Congress**

In June 2012, ARC will convene the Summative Congress in Johannesburg, South Africa. The ARC Summative Congress is the annual meeting of all fourteen ECSA countries to mark the conclusion of the past ARC cycle and the commencement of the new ARC cycle. The Summative Congress will showcase regulatory improvements made during ARC Year 1 and facilitate dialogue on key issues facing nursing and midwifery in the region. A call for proposals will be made prior to the meeting, inviting country teams to submit proposals for the second round of regulatory improvement grants. The meeting will focus on sustaining regulatory collaboration and the following key meeting objectives:

### **Summative Congress Objectives**

1. To facilitate regional dialogue on shared challenges and promising solutions in nursing and midwifery legislation, regulation and standards
2. To foster collaboration between African nursing and midwifery stakeholders in each country, and advance their collaborative leadership skills
3. To celebrate regulatory achievements and progress made during ARC Year 1 and identify regulatory streams (e.g. scope of practice) for ARC Year 2
4. To initiate a second round of ARC grant funding to support national regulatory improvement projects for nursing and midwifery
5. To introduce nursing and midwifery leaders from the east, central and southern Africa region to scientific writing for peer-reviewed, professional journals in collaboration with the African Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health

## Short-Term Grants

Following the annual meeting, all countries are encouraged to submit a short-term grant proposal to address one area of nursing and midwifery regulation they identified as a priority for improvement. Four to five proposals are selected each year for funding from ARC to implement the regulation improvement projects. Country teams with funded proposals are convened for two additional meetings during the year to report on project progress and share lessons learned with other regional leaders and global experts.

On April 15, 2011, 10 country teams submitted one-year grant proposals for regulation improvement projects. The five countries selected for the first round of grant funding (up to \$10,000 each) include:

- **Lesotho:** Development of a national continuing professional development (CPD) program for nurses and midwives
- **Malawi:** Advancement of a national continuing CPD program for nurses and midwives
- **Mauritius:** Targeted revision of the national professional act governing the midwifery education
- **Seychelles:** Targeted revision of the national professional acts impacting nursing and midwifery
- **Swaziland:** Development of a national continuing CPD program for nurses and midwives

Following receipt of funding, each country team began project implementation during the first Action Period. Action Period 2 began immediately following the Durban meeting.

## Targeted Technical Assistance

In addition to supporting the five country teams who received grants, ARC is also interested in maintaining the momentum that this collaborative has generated among other country teams in the ECSA region through the provision of targeted technical assistance. Thus far, ARC has been able to provide targeted technical assistance to three additional country teams (Mozambique, Tanzania and Uganda). This technical assistance includes legal consultation for the revision of nursing legislation, assistance in developing national continuing professional development programs, and the review of national scopes of practice for nurses and midwives.

### *Mozambique*

*Regulation Priority:* Review national nursing legislation to promote the formation of a nursing council to regulate nursing and midwifery education and practice

*Targeted Technical Assistance:* The CDC human resources for health policy advisor met with the Mozambique country team to assist it in preparing initial legislation for a Nurses and Midwives Act. ARC supported the professional translation of key international guidelines on nursing and midwifery regulation and standards (from the International Council of Nurses and the International Confederation of Midwives) into Portuguese.

## **Tanzania**

*Regulation Priority:* Develop a mechanism for implementing CPD nationally to support continuing nursing and midwifery education

*Targeted Technical Assistance:* Support for the Tanzania Nurses and Midwives Council Registrar to attend ARC meetings in Durban and Arusha. These two meetings focused on CPD, thus the Registrar benefited from the content presented by regional and global CPD experts and the south-to-south sharing on lessons learned in implementing CPD programs.

## **Uganda**

*Regulation Priority:* Develop a scope of practice for 13 cadres of nurses and midwives that is relevant to task-shifting in Uganda

*Targeted Technical Assistance:* The Uganda regulation improvement proposal identified an important regulation improvement objective but did not rank high enough to qualify for ARC funding in Year 1. ARC faculty met with the country team in Uganda to assist with revising and strengthening their regulatory proposal and facilitated introductions with UNFPA representatives and other potential supporters of the proposal.

## **Evaluation**

A key component of ARC is measuring and evaluating the impact of the initiative on nursing and midwifery regulation and standards, at both national and regional levels.

### **National Level**

- Improvements in regulation will be evaluated on a national level each year as countries with funded proposals measure and report progress towards their regulation improvement goals.
- Each nursing council registrar is interviewed to understand and document the organizational challenges to advancing regulation at the national level.

### **Regional Level**

- ARC's evaluation activities at the regional level include conducting an initial baseline survey of nursing and midwifery regulation in all 14 ARC countries.
- Data retrieved from interviews and the baseline survey enabled the creation of a framework that identifies eight common regulatory functions of professional bodies and describes four progressive stages in advancing and strengthening each of the eight functions.
- The framework is capable of capturing the initial degree of regulatory activity for each country and monitoring progress in updating and strengthening regulation each year and over the four-year period of the initiative.

## Key Strengths

As ARC continues to evaluate its proof of concept, key strengths that have emerged include an investment in health systems strengthening, strong country ownership, and the value of south-to-south collaboration.

### *Health Systems Strengthening*

ARC is a strategic investment in health systems and human resources capacity, as it supports strengthening the infrastructure around regulation and developing the capacity of the health workforce.

Through grants to revise nursing and midwifery legislation, ARC supports updating health worker policies and legal frameworks to safely implement critical health service delivery strategies such as task-shifting and pre-service reform.

The grants to develop national continuing professional development (CPD) programs in Malawi, Swaziland and Lesotho will help link licensure renewal for nurses and midwives to continuing education, helping to ensure a competent workforce. Furthermore, CPD programs provide a distribution mechanism for health modules that teach best practices in HIV prevention, care and treatment, and maternal child health to help meet key health service delivery goals.

### *Country Ownership*

ARC fosters country ownership by supporting nationally-identified regulation improvement projects which are developed, proposed, and implemented by country teams and national institutions. The composition of ARC country teams—leaders from the nursing and midwifery council, the nursing and midwifery professional associations, the ministry of health, and the education sector—helps ensure local acceptance and sustainability of investments in updating legislation and regulation. Support from these sectors is considered critical for the acceptance and integration of key advancements in health service delivery into national regulation.

### *South-to-South Collaboration*

ARC supports south-to-south collaboration by convening three regional meetings annually. An important element of each meeting is the opportunity for country teams to network and share experiences regarding nursing and midwifery regulation with other leaders in the region. Discussions around the development of national CPD programs and the revision of national nursing and midwifery acts, both relevant to the ECSA region, allow cross-country collaboration as country teams implement, adapt and share lessons learned in their project focus area. ARC creates a network that supports the transfer of ideas and key regulatory standards from one country to another. This regional exchange of ideas allows countries to advance their regulatory frameworks rapidly, as they benefit from the lessons learned and resources developed by their neighboring countries. It also supports the creation of regional regulatory tools and standards.

## Country Regulation Priorities

Table 1: Regulatory Improvement Priority by Country

Country	Regulatory Improvement Priority
<b>Botswana</b>	Establish new standards of practice for nine cadres of nurses and midwives
<b>Kenya</b>	Finalize the Nursing Council of Kenya's 2011-2016 strategic plan and revise the scope of practice for nurses and midwives
<b>Lesotho</b>	Develop a national continuing professional development program for nurses and midwives
<b>Malawi</b>	Evaluate, strengthen and enhance the uptake of a national continuing professional development program for nurses and midwives
<b>Mauritius</b>	Review and revise national nursing and midwifery lecturer profile regulation
<b>Mozambique</b>	Review national nursing legislation to promote the formation of a nursing council to enhance nursing and midwifery regulation
<b>Namibia*</b>	Strengthen intra-country collaboration between nursing/midwifery institutions and leadership to support regulatory improvements
<b>Seychelles</b>	Review and revise the Nurses and Midwives Act of 1985 to establish the role of the Registrar for the nursing and midwifery council
<b>South Africa*</b>	Create the position of Chief Nursing Officer within the Ministry of Health to drive reform in pre-service curriculum and licensing
<b>Swaziland</b>	Establish a model for continuing professional development to support new legislation requiring continuing education of all health professionals
<b>Tanzania</b>	Develop a mechanism for implementing continuing professional development nationally to support continuing nursing and midwifery education
<b>Uganda</b>	Develop a scope of practice for 13 cadres of nurses and midwives that is relevant to task-shifting in Uganda
<b>Zambia*</b>	Review the standards for nursing and midwifery education and practice to enhance quality of care
<b>Zimbabwe</b>	Create a continuing professional development system that links continuing education to annual licensure renewal for nurses and midwives

\* Indicates country teams that identified their regulatory improvement priorities at the Nairobi ARC meeting; otherwise, country teams specified their regulatory improvement priority in their ARC grant proposals.

## Testimonials

*"The approach used by ARC is fantastic as it gives room for country specific priorities without forgetting the regional prototype."*

Alphonse Kalula  
Senior Program Officer

**East, Central and Southern African College of Nursing**

*"The ARC initiative has assisted the Lesotho Nursing Council to successfully develop the CPD framework to address the continuing education strategic plan of the [Ministry of Health and Social Welfare] which requires that "all health care workers" undertake continuing education to improve competencies to address health care issues. Through the ARC initiative LNC is the first among the regulatory bodies to develop the CPD framework in order to monitor implementation of the CE strategy by its members."*

Tjoetso Lehana  
Director of Academics, National Health Training College

**Lesotho**

*"It [ARC] has highlighted the importance of articulating nursing and midwifery concerns as a quad (through the representative of the four pillars of nursing and midwifery). It has certainly developed our level of assertiveness and leadership. Through the learning sessions, we have come to appreciate the success, challenges and the opportunities that we have. This collaboration should remain to support the work of advancing nursing and midwifery leadership within this region and possibly throughout Africa."*

Bella Henderson  
Chief Nursing Officer

**Seychelles**

*"ARC project has wakened the Malawi Quad to see that there are more benefits in working together than disadvantages."*

Jonathan Abraham Gama  
President, Nurses Union

**Malawi**

*"I have enjoyed very much all the sessions, group work, sharing of CPD experiences. This has been useful for us (TZ) in developing our CPD framework."*

Valleria Prosper Mushi  
Nursing and Midwifery Professional Association Representative

**Tanzania**

*"The spirit of collaboration prevails throughout the session"*

Sylvio Pierre,  
Deputy Director of Nursing, Ministry of Health

**Mauritius**

*"Learned a lot from other countries and appreciated the different levels of progress in different countries. We have improved in regulation of CPD and quality improvement learnt from ARC. We have received extra support from development partners to strengthen CPD."*

Martha Mondwa  
Registrar, Nurses and Midwives Council

**Malawi**

*"This project of revising the Nursing and Midwives Act of Seychelles will surely provide modern regulatory tools that will be practical, functional and reflective of modern nursing and midwifery."*

Jeanne D'Arc Suzette  
Nurse Lecturer

**Seychelles**

## Links and Resources

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### International Confederation of Midwives (ICM)

<http://www.internationalmidwives.org/Home/tabid/205/Default.aspx>

ICM Global Standards, Competencies and Tools:

<http://www.internationalmidwives.org/Documentation/ICMGlobalStandardsCompetenciesandTools/GlobalStandardEnglish/tabid/980/Default.aspx>

ICM links: <http://www.internationalmidwives.org/Links/tabid/341/Default.aspx>

### International Council of Nurses (ICN)

<http://www.icn.ch/>

ICN on Regulation:

<http://www.icn.ch/pillarsprograms/regulation/>

<http://www.icn.ch/pillarsprograms/publications-related-to-regulation/>

International Centre for Human Resources in Nursing (free publications):

<http://www.icn.ch/publications/international-centre-for-human-resources-in-nursing/>

## World Health Organization

Global standards for the initial education of professional nurses and midwives

<http://www.who.int/hrh/resources/standards/en/index.html>

## State of the World Midwifery Report

<http://www.unfpa.org/sowmy/report/home.html>

## Maternal and Child Integrated Program (MCHIP) Program Roadmap for Pre-service Education

<http://www.k4health.org/system/files/MCHIP%20Preservice%20Roadmap%20Aug%2011%202011%20v1.2.pdf>

## African Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health

<http://www.africanjournalofmidwifery.com/>

## Commonwealth Nurses Federation

<http://www.commonwealthnurses.org/>



As a science-based public health and disease prevention agency, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) plays a key role in implementing the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). CDC provides support to over 75 countries to strengthen their national HIV/AIDS programs and build sustainable systems through PEPFAR.

For more information about CDC's global HIV/AIDS activities, go to [www.cdc.gov/globalaids](http://www.cdc.gov/globalaids).

For more information on PEPFAR, go to [www.pepfar.gov](http://www.pepfar.gov).