

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 sub-Saharan 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 and reaching World AIDS Day targets requires revising and strengthening national regulations and standards for nursing and midwifery practice and education.

An initiative by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) assists the regulatory leadership of 17 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 Global Health and Social Responsibility 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 scope of practice, 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*

The ARC Initiative

ARC Objectives Years 1-4

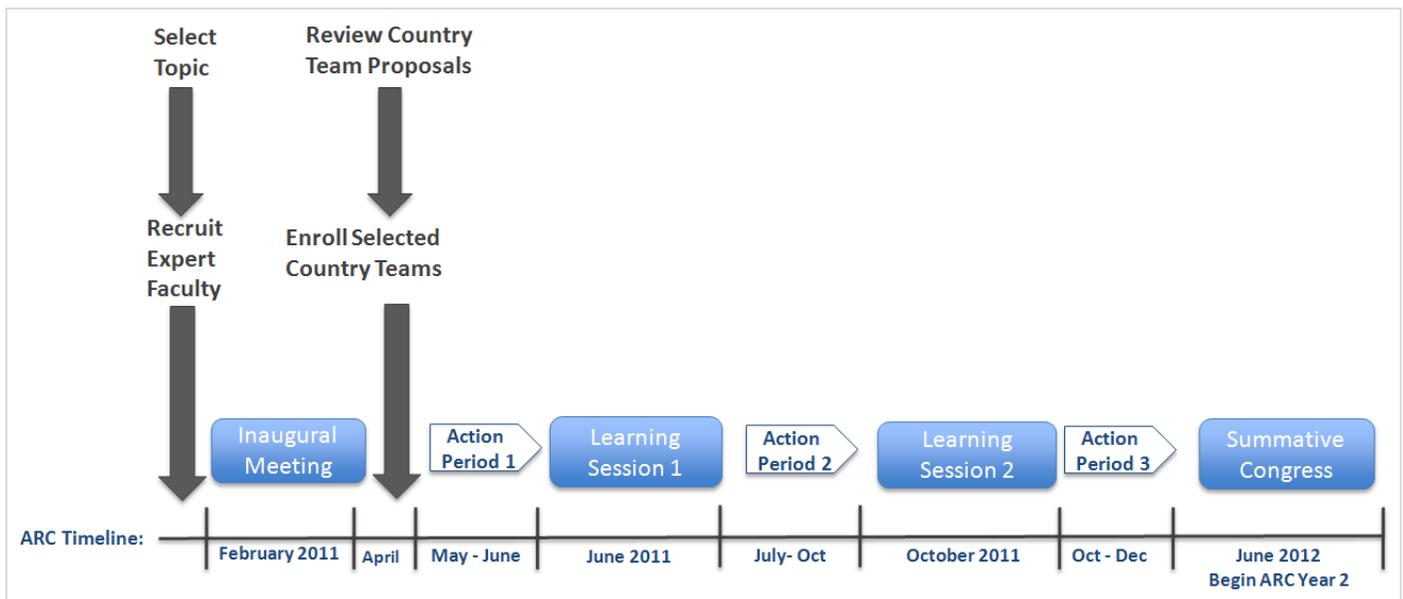
ARC has four overarching objectives for meeting global standards for education and practice. These objectives are aimed at advancing regulatory frameworks, strengthening organizational capacity and developing nursing and midwifery leadership.

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.¹ 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: Breakthrough Improvement Model Adapted to ARC



¹ The Breakthrough Series: IHI's Collaborative Model for Achieving Breakthrough Improvement. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Institute for Healthcare Improvement; 2003. Available at 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.

Similarly, the ARC initiative began with a meeting of 14 country teams in Nairobi, Kenya in February 2011 and was followed up by two regional Learning Sessions (Figure 1). The Learning Sessions convened five country teams receiving ARC grant funding to implement a country-designed regulation improvement project. The ARC Summative Congress, held June 2012 in South Africa with 17 country teams, served as both a chance for the five funded countries to broadly share the successes and challenges of implementing their projects, and the kick-off of a new ARC cycle of grant funding and Learning Sessions. 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



Figure 2: Countries participating in ARC as of June 2012

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 \(ECSA\)](#)**

[East, Central, and Southern African College of Nursing \(ECSACON\)](#)

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, ECSACON 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, ECSACON 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.

5. [The Commonwealth Nurses Federation](#)

The Commonwealth Nurses Federation (CNF), founded in 1973, is a federation of national nursing and midwifery associations in Commonwealth countries. The CNF has regular and constructive contact with major Commonwealth bodies in London including the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Foundation. The CNF's current Constitution exists to influence health policy throughout the Commonwealth, develop nursing networks, enhance nursing education, improve nursing standards and competence, and strengthen nursing leadership.

The ARC Approach

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

- **The Inaugural ARC Meeting: 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.

Participating Countries: Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

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

- **Learning Session 1: June 24-26, 2011; Durban, South Africa**

During this session, country teams with ARC Year 1 grants 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.

Participating Countries: Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles, Swaziland

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

- **Learning Session 2: 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.

Participating Countries: Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles, Swaziland

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: June 20-22nd, 2012; Johannesburg, South Africa**

The Summative Congress is the annual meeting of all participating ARC countries which marks the conclusion of the past ARC cycle and the commencement of the new ARC cycle. Three new countries attended ARC this year, bringing to total number of countries involved in ARC to 17. The meeting was opened by the Deputy Director General of the South Africa Department of Health and included sessions on continuing professional development, global guidelines for education and practice, nurse-initiated HIV care, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV, and challenges related to task shifting. The Summative Congress showcased the regulatory improvements made by the five countries that received ARC grants in Year 1 and announced the grant recipients for ARC Year 2: Botswana, Kenya, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe (see map). These six countries will be convened for two smaller regional meetings over the course of the year to provide support while they implement their projects.

Participating Countries: Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, South Africa, South Sudan Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe

Summative Congress Objectives

Meeting Objectives

- To facilitate regional dialogue on shared challenges and promising solutions in nursing and midwifery legislation, regulation and standards
 - To foster collaboration between African nursing and midwifery stakeholders in each country, and advance their collaborative leadership skills
 - To celebrate regulatory achievements and progress made during ARC Year 1 and identify regulatory streams (e.g. scope of practice) for ARC Year 2
 - To announce a second round of ARC grant funding to support national regulatory improvement projects for nursing and midwifery
- **The first learning session of ARC Year 2 will be held September 19-21, 2012 in Pretoria, South Africa**

Participating Countries: Botswana, Kenya, Swaziland, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zimbabwe.

Meeting Objectives

- To facilitate regional dialogue on shared challenges and promising solutions in nursing and midwifery legislation, regulation and standards
- To foster collaboration between nursing and midwifery stakeholders in each country and advance their collaborative leadership skills
- To identify and explore future issues and challenges for nursing and midwifery regulation in the ECSA region
- To provide specific assistance and support to Year 2 grant recipient countries in refining, consolidating and implementing their projects

Short-Term Grants

All ARC 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. Five to six proposals are selected for funding each year through an objective review and scoring process. 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.

In ARC Year 1, 11 country teams submitted grant proposals for one-year regulation improvement projects and five countries were selected for funding up to \$10,000 each. The five funded countries and their regulation strengthening project in Year 1 were the following:

- **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

In ARC Year 2, ten countries submitted proposals and the following six were selected for funding:

- **Botswana:** Development of a national strategy for continuing professional development
- **Kenya:** Decentralization of key regulation services to the county level
- **Swaziland:** Finalization and launch of a national continuing professional development program
- **Tanzania:** Develop a national continuing professional development program
- **Uganda:** Revision of scopes of practice for all nurse and midwife cadres
- **Zimbabwe:** Strengthen the existing national continuing professional development program

Targeted Technical Assistance

In addition to supporting the country teams who received grants, ARC helps maintain the momentum that this collaborative has generated among other country teams in the ECSA region through the provision of targeted technical assistance. In Year 1, ARC provided targeted technical assistance to three country teams who submitted proposals but were not selected for funding. This technical assistance included legal consultation for the revision of nursing legislation (Mozambique), assistance in developing a national continuing professional development program (Tanzania), and the review of national scopes of practice for nurses and midwives (Uganda).

In ARC Year 2, targeted technical assistance will be provided to the following countries on their regulation improvement priority:

- **Lesotho:** Strengthen training on continuing professional development before national roll-out
- **Mauritius:** Developing scopes of practice for all nurse and midwife cadres
- **Mozambique:** Development of nursing education standards
- **Rwanda:** Development of a national nursing registration and licensure database

Table 1. Type of Participation in ARC by Country

Country	Year 1	Year 2
Botswana	Participated in the inaugural ARC meeting	Receiving an ARC Grant for the development of a national strategy for continuing professional development
Ethiopia	Not yet involved in ARC	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
Kenya	Participated in the inaugural ARC meeting	Receiving an ARC Grant for decentralization of key regulation services to the county level
Lesotho	Received an ARC Grant to develop a national continuing professional development program.	Receiving technical assistance to strengthen training on continuing professional development before national roll-out
Malawi	Received an ARC Grant to strengthen the national continuing professional development program	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
Mauritius	Received an ARC Grant for revising the Nurses and Midwives Act to update standards for nursing and midwifery educators	Receiving technical assistance for developing scopes of practice for all nurse and midwife cadres
Mozambique	Received technical assistance on development of nursing education standards	Receiving technical assistance on development of nursing education standards
Namibia	Participated in the inaugural ARC meeting	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
Rwanda	Not yet involved in ARC	Receiving technical assistance for development of a national nursing registration and licensure database
Seychelles	Received an ARC grant to revise the national Nurses and Midwives Act	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
South Africa	Participated in the inaugural ARC meeting	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
South Sudan	Not yet involved in ARC	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
Swaziland	Received an ARC grant for development of a national continuing professional development program	ARC Grant for finalization and launch of a national continuing professional development program

Country	Year 1	Year 2
Tanzania	Received technical assistance on developing a national continuing education program	Receiving an ARC grant to develop a national continuing professional development program
Uganda	Received technical assistance on collaboration and proposal development	Receiving an ARC grant for revision of scopes of practice for all nurse and midwife cadres
Zambia	Participated in the inaugural ARC meeting	Participated in the 2012 Summative Congress
Zimbabwe	Participated in the inaugural ARC meeting	Receiving an ARC grant to strengthen the existing national continuing professional development program

Evaluation

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

- ARC's evaluation activities began with an initial baseline survey of nursing and midwifery regulation in all 14 ARC countries
- Data from the baseline survey enabled the creation of a framework that identifies seven key regulatory functions and describes five 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.(Figure 3)
- Improvements in regulation are evaluated on a national level each year as countries with funded proposals measure and report progress towards their regulation improvement goals.

Example: Lesotho

The Lesotho quad received an ARC grant in Year 1 on the topic of continuing professional development (CPD). When Lesotho began their project they were at Stage 1—there was not a national program for nurses and midwives to undergo CPD. Over the course of the year, the Lesotho team received support and technical assistance from ARC. By the end of the year, Lesotho was in Stage 2—the national CPD program was developed and was undergoing pilot testing in selected districts. Nurses and midwives are the first healthcare cadre in Lesotho to have a CPD program.

Figure 3: Progress of Lesotho during ARC Year 1

Country: Lesotho	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4	Stage 5
Regulation: Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	National CPD program for nurses and midwives is not yet developed.	CPD program for nurses and midwives has been developed. Implementation is in pilot or early stages. CPD not yet required for re-licensure.	CPD program in place across the country. CPD is required for re-licensure. Tracking system not yet fully electronic	CPD content is accredited. Electronic tracking of CPD in place. Various levels of compliance status exist.	Multiple models of web-based CPD available. CPD content aligns with regional standards or global guidelines.

Key Strengths

As ARC enters its second year and the number of countries involved increases, key strengths have emerged, including 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. For example, the grants to revise nursing and midwifery legislation support updating health worker policies and legal frameworks to safely implement critical HIV service delivery strategies, such as task-shifting and pre-service reform. The grants to develop national continuing professional development (CPD) programs 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 care as countries strive to reach ambitious targets for HIV treatment and prevention.

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. Developing national CPD programs, revising nursing and midwifery legislation, and updating scopes of practice are relevant throughout the ECSA region, allowing for cross-country collaboration as 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.

ARC Year 1

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 Mondywa
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

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.

For more information on PEPFAR, go to www.pepfar.gov.