

# 2020 INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE NURSE AND THE MIDWIFE TOOLKIT

Photo: The Global Fund



**2020**  
INTERNATIONAL YEAR  
OF THE NURSE AND  
THE MIDWIFE



World Health  
Organization

# Introduction

*Do what you can, where you  
are, with what you have*  
- Theodore Roosevelt

Throughout 2020 we will focus on the critical contribution nurses and midwives make to global health. If the world is to meet its SDG target of providing universal health coverage, it must urgently address the global shortfall of 9 million midwives and nurses.

**Welcome to your ‘Year of the Nurse and the Midwife toolkit’.**

**This toolkit will provide you with a timeline of opportunities, ideas, tools and resources to aid your local, national and global initiatives supporting nursing and midwifery campaign activities.**

**Your advocacy - no matter how big or small the action – is key to recognizing the many hundreds and thousands of committed, skilled and inspirational midwives and nurses in every country of the world!**





Photo: @GHWA



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# 2020: International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife



In 2020 we celebrate the world's 22 million nurses and 2 million midwives who make up half of the global health workforce – providing vital health care everywhere, as they have been doing for centuries.

Together, they are the cornerstone of the strong, resilient health systems needed to achieve universal health coverage. They prescribe life-saving drugs, administer vaccines, provide family planning advice, and assure expert care during childbirth. Without them, millions of mothers and children have no one to diagnose illnesses, dispense treatment, or assist at births.

We also highlight the need to invest in strengthening the nursing and midwifery workforce. In many areas, there simply aren't enough nurses and midwives to do all this work effectively. Even where they are present, many lack the power, training, equipment and medical supplies to deliver the basic health services we all need to live healthy lives. 2020 is the year to change this.





Photo: @GHWA



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# Fast Facts

- Nurses and midwives provide a broad range of essential services close to the community and in all levels of health facility.
- Nurses and midwives provide essential health services, including e.g:
  - Prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of HIV, tuberculosis, malaria and other communicable diseases
  - Prevention, diagnosis and treatment of noncommunicable diseases
  - Sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, and maternal and newborn health care, including immunization and breastfeeding support.
- Nurses and midwives play a key role in caring for people everywhere, including in the most difficult humanitarian, fragile and conflict-affected settings.
- As part of strong multi-disciplinary health care teams, nurses and midwives make a significant contribution to delivering on the commitments made in the 2018 Astana Declaration on Primary Health Care, ensuring patient-centred care close to the community.
- Achieving health for all will depend on there being sufficient numbers of well-trained and educated, regulated and well supported nurses and midwives, who receive pay and recognition commensurate with the services and quality of care that they provide.
- The world needs 18 million more health workers to achieve and sustain universal health coverage by 2030. Approximately half of that shortfall – 9 million health workers – are nurses and midwives. The most acute shortages of nurses and midwives are in South East Asia and Africa.
- Globally, 70% of the health and social workforce are women. Nurses and midwives represent a large portion of this.
- Midwifery, where care includes proven interventions for maternal and newborn health as well as for family planning could avert over 80% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths and neonatal deaths. Midwife-led continuity of care, where a known midwife or group of midwives provides care from pregnancy to the end of the postnatal period, can prevent 24% of pre-term births.

# 9 things to do to build up health worker momentum throughout the year

The global spotlight on nurses and midwives for 2020 is a unique opportunity to engage and demonstrate broad public and political support for more health workers, better supported to address the 18 million health worker shortage. Here's how you can get engaged:

Photo: @AKDN

# 1. Recognition awards/ certificates

Organize recognition awards/ certificates for midwives and nurses in your local/ national healthcare facilities in appreciation of their contribution to the community. Share your photos on social media **#SupportNursesAndMidwives**

# 2. Set up or take part in public events

Organize **public events and meetings** with active participation of nurses and midwives, patients, national health leaders and health sector partners. You could use an event to recognize and appreciate nurses and midwives – live on stage or through videos – encouraging nurses and midwives to tell their own stories.

If you do decide to organize an event, keep in mind the following:

- *What are you trying to achieve?*
- *Who are you targeting?*
- *What would make your target audiences want to participate?*
- *When and where will your activity be held?*
- *Should you join up with other organizations?*
- *Who will you invite? Are there any well-known figures who could help you achieve your goals?*
- *Do you have the resources to achieve your goals? If not, how can you mobilize them?*
- *How will you promote your event?*
- *Can the media help you achieve your goals? If so, which media should you target?*
- *How will you share information about your activities after the event?*
- *How will you measure success?*



NB if you are inviting media, involve them well in advance to secure their interest and support; provide them with information and impactful testimonials.

While this is a one-year campaign, and as such, activities can be organized throughout the year, we encourage you to consider hosting activities around key dates as outlined in the toolkit.

### 3. Display campaign posters

Produce and display International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife posters at strategic locations – supermarkets, bus stops, schools, local health facilities, health ministry etc. (more campaign posters will be available throughout the year)



### 4. Engage local leaders and celebrities

Ask your leaders, health care leaders to promote the Year of Nurse and the midwife in their speeches, on social media, websites, television and radio interviews. Identify and contact local celebrities and influencers to speak up for midwives and nurses and support your campaign activities.

### 5. Work through the media

Getting media coverage for your activities can take our message to mass public audiences and helps to get the attention of policy-makers and politicians. There are a number of different tactics you can take: pitch opinion pieces which can stimulate debate and keep our issues in the media; ask a prominent writer, celebrity, or even health worker to write a piece explaining the current situation in your country. Organize television and/or radio spots promoting nurses and midwives at key moments. Arrange a media round table inviting the media and other partners to ask questions and start to build a dialogue with the political targets.

## 6. Work with artists

Approach artists to create artwork for health workers, with a focus on nursing and midwifery. Encourage theatre groups to produce plays on health workers, with emphasis on nurses and midwives.

## 7. Build and strengthen partnerships

Many voices strengthen our call. Work with organizations that share your goals and form coalitions so that there are more voices behind the celebration. Engage with nursing and midwifery groups and associations, non-governmental organizations and local health-care advocates and community leaders in your efforts.

## 8. Get active on social media

Join the drum roll and participate in our appreciation social media campaign on *Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn*. Share photos and video “testimonials”—of and from nurses and midwives, patients, health leaders, influencers and advocates—explaining why this vital workforce is essential, and why we need greater investment in the health workforce.

Throughout the campaign we will be communicating via our WHO social media channels.

The primary hashtag that we are using is **#SupportNursesAndMidwives** but look out for posts using **#Nurses2020** and **#Midwives2020** as well.

Make sure to tag your local/favourite midwives, nurses, policy makers and other relevant actors.





## 9. Get moving - organize your own national Walk the Talk

“Walk the Talk: The Health for All Challenge” promotes healthy lifestyles and highlights the need for access to health for all people around the world.

We encourage you to work with local partners and organize this fun event to get people moving. This could be arranged to celebrate World Health Day (7 April – devoted this year to nurses and midwives) as well as the International Day of the Midwife (May 6) or International Nurses day (May 12).

There may be other moments and opportunities in your own country that you know would be a good time to celebrate and lobby for more, better supported health workers





Photo: International Council of Nurses



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## 2020 timeline of potential opportunities

- **1 January** – Kick off
- **8 March** – International Women's Day
- **9-7 March** – 64th Session of Commission of Women
- **7 April** – World Health Day  
(launch of the *State of the World's Nursing Report*)
- **24-30 April** – World Immunization Week
- **5 May** – Hand Hygiene Day  
– International Day of the Midwife
- **12 May** – International Nurses Day
- **17 -22 May** – World Health Assembly
- **21-25 June** – ICM Congress
- **17 September** – World Patient Safety Day
- **September - October** – WHO Regional Committee meetings
- **26-28 October** – Nightingale 2020 Conference
- **22 September** – UN General Assembly
- **12 December** – UHC Day

## Campaign Assets

We have developed some campaign assets (<https://www.who.int/campaigns/year-of-the-nurse-and-the-midwife-2020>) to get the campaign started – in **Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian** and **Spanish** – WHO's six official languages.

Throughout the year, we will be updating these assets.

We will also be communicating via our social media channels:

<https://www.facebook.com/WHO/>  
[@WHO](https://twitter.com/who)  
[@WHO](https://www.instagram.com/who)  
<https://www.youtube.com/c/who>

We encourage you to share our posts with your own networks, share your own materials and join discussions on issues related to the campaign.

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Thank you!

Photo: Aga Khan Development Network/ @wiltonphoto



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