

## Editorial

# Midwives - Catalysing Transformation

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## I N F O

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## A B S T R A C T

Nurses and Midwives are the backbone of any healthcare system. They play an important role in the journey of birth and lives of individuals by the promotion of health, prevention and treatment of diseases and rehabilitation. Midwives have significantly contributed in the reduction of newborn, infant and maternal mortality and reduction of caesarean rates through their skilled care. A midwife is a person who has successfully completed a midwifery education programme that is duly recognized in the country where it is located and that is based on the ICM's Essential Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice and the framework of the ICM Global Standards for Midwifery Education; who has acquired the requisite qualifications to be registered and/or legally licensed to practice midwifery and use the title 'midwife' & who demonstrates competency in the practice of midwifery. (International Confederation of Midwives, 2017).

The development and scaling up of midwifery services is challenging in every part of the world. India has made a good progress in improving maternal and newborn health, with a reduction in maternal mortality rate from 172 in (SRS 2015) to 130 in (SRS 2018). Despite the progress, current MMR and NMR remain a cause of concern. Further there are disparities on several basis - state to state, urban and rural, public and private and so on. It is need of the hour to prepare a cadre of educated, expert and compassionate midwives for India and programmes so as to bring a humanizing transformation.

India's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to transform India to a more prosperous, more equal, more secure country for all by 2030. Quality and Respectful Maternity care-RMC (which refers to care organized for and provided to all women in a manner that maintains their dignity, privacy and confidentiality, ensures freedom from harm and mistreatment, and enables informed choice and continuous support during labour and childbirth) is vital to this transformation. As evidence proves that midwives can contribute by saving lives, improving quality of care and reducing costs of care by providing RMC to mass population, (UNFPA 2014; WHO 2015). They have a tremendous role in invigorating the progress of India towards achievement of SDGs which will be accomplished through strategic advocacy, raising awareness, competency building, knowledge dissemination, stakeholder pooling, mobilizing initiatives and leadership, essential for significant, timely and lasting transformation.

All members of society can play their role by participating in the journey of safe motherhood by competent midwives.

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