


Going to Scale with Skilled Birth Attendants in Afghanistan

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Jhpiego in partnership with Save the Children, Constella Futures, The Academy for Educational Development, The American College of Nurse-Midwives and Interchurch Medical Assistance

Outline

- The maternal health situation
- Creating the policy environment and building national commitment
- Ensuring quality in midwifery education
- Results and achievements
- Challenges



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Afghanistan Maternal Health Situation





Photo credit Med Air

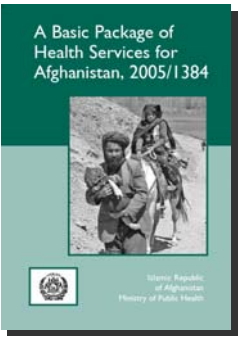
- Maternal Mortality Ratio 1,600/100,000 (2002)
- 8% of births attended by a skilled provider (2003)
- Only 21% health facilities had female staff
- 467 midwives (2002)
- Estimated 2661 – 5181 midwives needed to staff expected (ideal) number of health facilities




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Policy Environment

- Development of Basic Package of Health Services
- Maternal mortality reduction strategy included improving coverage of SBA and an intrapartum care strategy
- Policy statement on cessation of TBA training issued (2003); focus on training SBAs
- Midwifery curriculum existed; out of date, focused on training midwives for hospitals



Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Public Health



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Creating the Policy Environment

GOAL: To prepare qualified and competent midwives, to work in underserved areas of Afghanistan


- Competency-based curriculum and training materials developed and midwives job description developed (2004)
- National program of community midwifery education began 2004; one pilot program started in 2002
- Testing and certification process of previously trained midwives established
- Midwifery Education Policy endorsed (2005)



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Health Workforce Planning

- **Recruitment & Selection**
 - Geographic need and commitment to work in designated facilities upon deployment
- **Education**
 - Focused on competencies and required clinical skills
- **Deployment**
 - Planned at time of recruitment and in close coordination with communities and MOPH authorities
- **Integration**
 - Runs alongside implementation of BPHS
- **Supervision**
 - Supervision teams established and checklists used. Supported by Afghan Midwives Association



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Translating Policy to Practice: Steps in the Educational Accreditation Process



Translating Policy to Practice: Steps in the Educational Accreditation Process

1. **Set educational standards**
 - 66 Standards developed in 5 areas:
 - Classroom instruction and practice
 - Clinical instruction and practice
 - Infrastructure, curriculum
 - School Management
 - Clinical areas where students midwives undertake clinical experience
2. **Implement process**
3. **Problem solve to fill gaps – use baseline assessments to identify gaps, continual internal assessment**
4. **Accredit program – external assessment**

Standards

Performance Standards for MIDWIFERY EDUCATION IN Afghanistan AREA: CLINICAL AREAS WHERE STUDENT MIDWIVES UNDERTAKE CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

School (name and place): _____ Date: _____ Supervisor/Assessor: _____

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS	VERIFICATION CRITERIA	Y, N or NA		COMMENTS
1. The provider receives the pregnant woman in labor in a cordial manner.	Observe two women in labor and determine whether the provider (in the labor and delivery rooms): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensures that she speaks the language spoken by the woman or seeks someone who can assist in this regard • Greets the woman and her companion in a cordial manner • Introduces herself • Encourages the woman to ask her companion to remain at her side, as appropriate • Responds to questions using easy-to-understand language • Responds to her immediate needs (thirst, hunger, cold/hot, need to urinate, etc.) 	1 st	2 nd	
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Translating Policy to Practice: Ensuring Quality in Midwifery Education

1. Unified, national system built based on education standards
2. All programs initially “encouraged” to implement standards
3. National Midwifery Education Accreditation Board established
4. Standards and accreditation became mandatory
5. Improvements extended to clinical areas



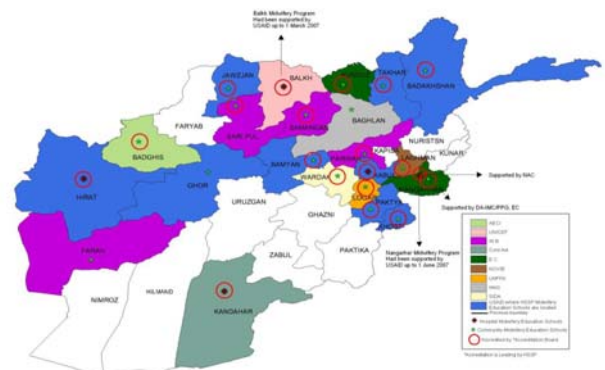
Results...

- 18 Community Midwifery Schools
- 5 Hospital Midwifery Schools
- 971 hospital midwives graduated since 2003
- 611 Community midwives graduated since 2004
- USAID-funded programs seen as technical lead

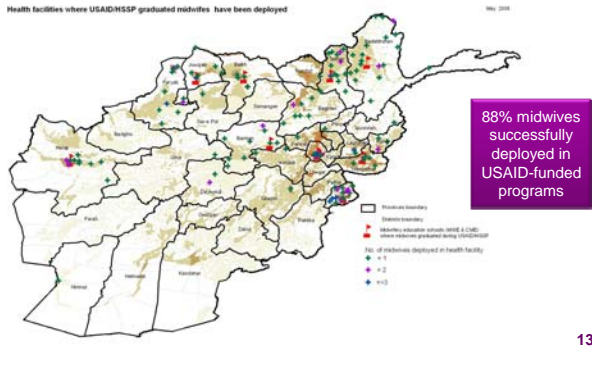


Community midwifery students in Bamyan

Accreditation Coverage of Midwifery Programs



Coverage of midwives



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Results

- Increased number of deliveries by SBA:
 - 8% in 2002
 - 19% in 2006
- Increased antenatal care coverage in facilities

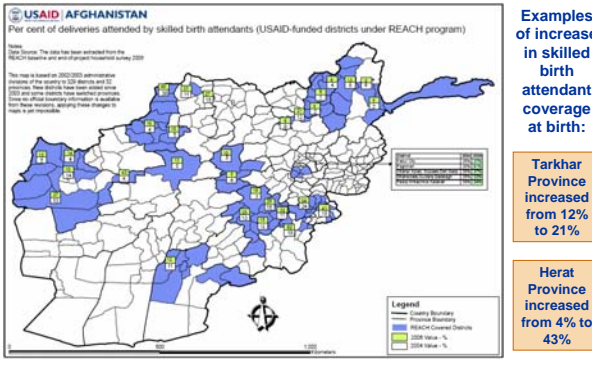


New mother and a midwife in Jalalabad



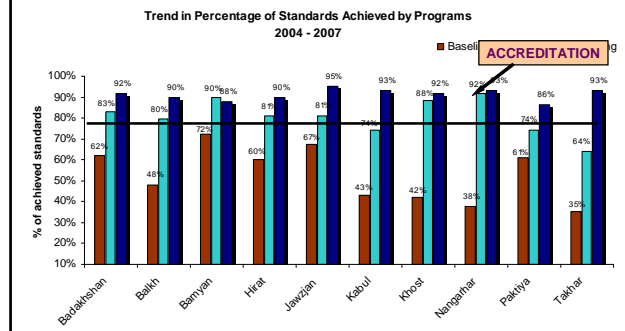
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Results: Increasing the Number of Deliveries by Skilled Attendants



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Accreditation 2006-2007



Are Midwives Working as Midwives?

- Graduated March 2006
- First trained midwife in Khetayan District (Takhar)
- Started the community female health shura before she graduated to improve the referral and utilization system
- Increased number of deliveries from 2 to 30 per month
- Supportive supervision provided from NGO



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Are Women Getting the Services they Need?

"Before there was no midwife in our health centre and we had to travel over one hour to the nearest town. I had all my babies at home before because of this. But now Midwife Hadia is at the health centre and because of this more women are seeing a midwife. I will have my next baby with Hadia in this health centre, she is very nice and makes me feel safe"



Woman in Tarkhar province who was delivered by Midwife Hadia



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Challenges

- Planning the HR needs for midwives nationally – how many do we need?
- Supervision post-graduation – are midwives under worked? Or over burdened and not able to focus on maternal and newborn health?
- Tracking deployment nationally
- Retention for remote and insecure areas
- Focusing on quality of existing programs
- Cultural isolation of women and female literacy rates

Conclusions

- It is possible to scale-up a national program
- Scale-up is not just about numbers trained; systems and processes need to be put in place
- Think about the quality at the beginning
- Requires sustained political will and commitment

**THANK
YOU**



Newly graduated midwives in Badakhshan province take midwifery pledge