Dear Colleagues

This year will be eventful for ICM and for midwives. Our Triennial Congress in Durban, South Africa will provide a high profile platform where we can come together to highlight global inequalities in maternal mortality and to demonstrate the difference that midwives make.

Our ‘Road to Durban’, however, starts closer to home on International Day of the Midwife 5 May 2011 (IDM). On this day we are asking you to take the message that ‘the world needs midwives now more than ever’ to the streets; coming together in your own community to walk 5km as part of the global campaign for better access to midwifery services.

I am writing to urge you, as one of our 101 member organisations, to join us and to help to organise and support local activity for IDM. I also encourage midwives to come together with local community groups to organise, participate and fundraise with an IDM walk - even if it means a walk round your hospital or clinic grounds.

Many of you have already started planning activities on or around 5 May. We have developed materials to help you organise your local walk. In this pack you will find ideas to help you:

- plan and engage local partners in your walk
- get publicity and increase awareness of key issues
- produce a news release for local distribution
- connect with others using social media
- explain why we are walking

If you go the ICM web site you will also find a poster for local use onto which you can insert your local walk details; this can be downloaded for copying or printing locally.

I know that many thousands of midwives will be walking on the Road to Durban for International Day of the Midwife and send my best wishes for your local efforts.

Yours sincerely

Agneta Bridges, ICM Secretary General
Planning your local walk
Building your team, agreeing your route, engaging supporters & keeping people safe

**Build your team** - get together a small group of people to organise the event and share the planning tasks.

**Make a decision about where and when you will hold the walk** – you don’t have to walk 5km, you could do the walk as a relay, or choose a shorter route. If it is easier to organise your walk at the weekend, than on the 5th of May, that’s OK.

Here are some ideas for places to walk that might be undertaken with least amount of red tape:
- a local park or public recreation area,
- school recreation or sports arena,
- local sports club grounds such as a football club or training area are great. If there is no safe, suitable walk from A to B then consider using laps of a sports track as this may be a good and easier alternative,
- footpaths or pathways that do not involve crossing major roads. Some countries have a good public footpath network, so make the most of these.

**Seek permission from the local authority or the proper authorities land owners to hold your walk.**

**Invite other people to support or join your walk:** you could ask
- local politicians
- representatives from non-governmental organisations
- women and families you have served in your local community
- women’s groups
- healthcare colleagues
- local businesses
- church groups
- voluntary and community organisations

**Think about preparations you may need to make for your walk,** for example:
- find out how many people will be taking part in your walk. You will need this information for any local permission and as a guide to how much water you will need
- make sure there is a watering station at every 1 Kilometre – this might involve one person dispensing cups/bottles of water depending on number participating
- identify toilet stops
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Agree who in your group will be responsible for leading the walk and who will make sure no-one falls behind.

Make an arrangement to have help just in case anyone has an injury, trips over, has cramps; or other injury related to walking.

If going from A to B over 5K - consider having a vehicle available at the rear of the walk to pick up anyone who wishes to drop out or has an injury.

Decide if there should be a certificate or a memento for the walk, perhaps supported by the local health authority or a local business

Make a decision about whether or not the local walk is sponsored – in other words if walkers are raising money for safe motherhood projects.

If funds are being raised that is marvellous, but remember—the important thing is midwives walking together to raise consciousness about access to sexual and reproductive healthcare for women in our communities and around the world.

If you choose to raise funds for international projects, these should be sent to ICM in The Hague and will be allocated to safe motherhood projects. The allocation of funding will be dependent on how much is raised. We will announce allocation on the ICM website and in the newsletter.

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www.internationalmidwives.org
Journalists like to put a face to a story. To find a face for your story, you could try to find a local celebrity who will start the walk, blow a whistle, use a pump or a starting pistol and spend some time chatting to walkers beforehand.

Here are some ideas:

- the local Mayor or leader of the local authority/Neighbourhood Council
- a broadcaster from local radio or television news
- a Member of Parliament or other significant politician
- the editor of a local/area/regional newspaper
- an actor or singer who lives in the area
- a business leader
- a church leader or if more appropriate a small group of multi faith leaders
- a senior health manager

If you can’t persuade a local celebrity to start your walk, an alternative might be to find a local mother and/or midwife who are prepared to work with a journalist to tell their ‘midwifery’ story.

Send out your local version of the draft news release (provided in this pack) to local media the week before the walk. Follow up with a telephone call, to ensure they have received your walk details. The news media can then plan to attend your event and perhaps send a photographer. Many local newspapers will print your own photographs if you can ensure a good quality camera is used to capture the start of your walk.

Gaining support from the community will help considerably, and you may ask your local council or health authority to help with the supply of water, a few sweets/chocolates and some marshals on the route. Any publicity you send out should include groups of sponsors or helpers.
Seek support from the local chamber of commerce, specific businesses, the Lions, the Round Table, volunteering organisations, any local UN organisation or any other charitable group that might help out with planning, participation or sponsorship.

Issue an invitation to participate to those listed above and to as many local groups as possible, particularly women’s groups, family organisations and health associations.

You may want to issue stickers to participants and supporters with specific messages or have some T-shirts printed; slogans for banners or publicity might be:

- **The Road to Durban – midwives walking together to save lives**
- **The world needs more midwives now more than ever**
- **Midwives walking the world for safer maternal care**

Let ICM have your news releases about your activity so that we can help provide wider publicity through our website and social networking sites.

**Using social networking sites to connect with other people on the Road to Durban**

The ICM has an official Facebook page called International Confederation of Midwives. If you have a Facebook profile, go to our page and click ‘like’. Doing this will help you to connect with ICM, midwives and supporters and help us to campaign for greater access to essential midwifery services around the world.

For those who use twitter, you can share what’s going on in your area for International Day of the Midwife by tagging your tweets with #IDM11.

Send us photographs and videos of your event and we will post them on to our social media sites.
On the next page is a draft news release for you to use to publicise your walk in the local news media. This is available as an editable Microsoft Word document on our website.

We cannot write a news release that will fit every single local walk but the following words below should help get a local message to you press and media.

The spaces at the beginning allow you to insert your town or area, along with the date and item of your walk – most of you are walking on the 5th May but some on other days as it is more convenient.

There is a space for a quote from a celebrity, if one is involved. But the quote could come from any midwife leader in your country, or in the local community.

And finally, the press will want to talk to someone for further information so make sure a contact number or address is given for follow-up.
NEWS RELEASE

(Insert date of sending out)

[insert name of country/area/town] midwives take to the road to tackle maternal mortality

Midwives and their supporters around the world are walking to raise awareness [and funds] to tackle global inequalities in maternal and newborn health.

On 5th May (or insert other date) at [insert time of walk] [insert name of celebrity or walk leader] will lead [insert estimated number] midwives and mothers in a walk from [start location] to [end location] to mark International Day of the Midwife. Over 340,000 women die each year, with millions more suffering infection and disability, as a result of preventable maternal causes. The ICM is committed to reducing inequality, through greater access to essential midwifery care worldwide, particularly in developing countries where 90% of maternal deaths occur.

Speaking at the launch of the event [insert name of spokesperson] said, ‘The world needs midwives more than ever. Access to essential midwifery services reduces maternal and infant mortality and reduces the cycle of poverty in developing countries. We want to demonstrate our commitment to tackling maternal and newborn mortality by walking shoulder to shoulder with midwives and mothers around the world. While inequalities are a global issue, we also want to raise awareness of local challenges. Right here in [insert region/country] the quality of maternal and newborn care is being affected by [insert key national/local issue]. We want to see mothers and babies getting the support they need through increased global and local commitment to midwifery services.’

The walk on the 5th of May is the start of a journey that finishes at the International Confederation of Midwives Congress in Durban, a global gathering where 3000 midwives will share evidence of what works to reduce maternal mortality and improve the care and support available to mothers and newborns around the world.

For more information contact [insert local media contact/spokesperson’s telephone & email].
Why are we walking?  
Key messages and key facts

We are walking because...

It is **International Day of the Midwife** and one of the most appropriate days to highlight that over 340,000 women and over 5 million infants around the world die each year as a result of preventable pregnancy and childbirth complications.

**The world needs midwives now more than ever.** The World Health Organization, UN agencies and other global partners have identified that midwives are the key to achieving reductions in maternal and newborn deaths and disabilities globally.

**We want to demonstrate our shared commitment to tackling the issue of maternal and newborn mortality** with midwives and mothers around the world. The locations and levels of maternal mortality indicate serious inequalities throughout the developing world.

**We’re on the Road to Durban**

The International Day of the Midwife walk on 5 May is the first leg of a walk that will finish on 18th June at the International Confederation of Midwives Congress in Durban, South Africa.

By participating at this stage, midwives and supporters are taking the vital first steps to Durban, where 3,000 midwives will meet to share their knowledge and skills about better quality care for mothers and their newborn and greater access to skilled midwifery support.

The Road to Durban walk is about ‘midwives supporting midwives’ and nations walking side by side to publicise the urgent need for better maternal and newborn health across the developing world. By finishing the walk in Durban we can also draw attention to the particular problems in Africa and the Sub-Saharan Region.
Factsheet

Maternal mortality rates
- An estimated 342,900 maternal deaths occurred worldwide (this figure is from 2008).
- 75% of maternal deaths occur during childbirth and the post-partum period.
- 80% of maternal deaths are due to 5 direct causes: haemorrhage, sepsis, unsafe abortion, obstructed labor and hypertensive disease of pregnancy.
- Approximately 7 million women suffer injury, infection or disability from maternal Causes.
- More than 60% of all maternal deaths occur in 6 countries (India, Nigeria, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Ethiopia and Democratic Republic of Congo).
- Only 23 countries are on track to achieve a 75% decrease in maternal mortality rates by 2015.

Inequality
- 99% of all maternal deaths occur in developing countries: the chances of dying due to pregnancy or childbirth in Somalia is 1 in 14, in Sub-Saharan Africa 1 in 31 and 1 in 4,200 in Europe.
- Pregnancy and childbirth are among the leading causes of death and disability for girls and women in developing countries.
- Approximately 13 million adolescent girls give birth each year in developing countries, they often miss out on years of education which reduces their chances for adequate income and opportunity to escape poverty.

Neonatal mortality
- In 2010 3.1 million neonatal deaths, 2.3 million post neonatal deaths and 2.3 million childhood deaths (aged 1-4) occurred.
- Worldwide mortality in children younger than 5 years has dropped from 11.9 million deaths in 1990 to 7.7 million deaths in 2010.
- 3 Million stillbirths, and 3.7 million newborn deaths occur each year. Less than 1% of these deaths occur in high income countries.

Effects of maternal mortality
- Infants of mothers who die due to delivery are more likely to die within two years.
- Children under 10 whose mothers die are 3 to 10 times more likely to die within 2 years than children whose mothers live.
- School enrolment and drop-out numbers are higher for children whose mother has Died.
- Immunisation rates, nutritional status and growth are lower for children whose mother has died.
- Each year approximately US$ 15.5 billion in potential productivity is lost when mothers and newborns die.
Access to essential midwifery services

- Only 63% of births in the developing world are attended by skilled health workers. In Southern Asia this is 45% and Sub-Saharan Africa 46%.
- Women in urban areas have 50% more births attended by skilled personnel than women in rural areas.
- 84% of Women who have completed secondary or higher education have skilled attended births.
- In developed countries 99% of births is assisted by a skilled attendant.

Effects of skilled attendance in pregnancy and birth

- Up to 90% of maternal deaths could be prevented by universal access to adequate reproductive health services, equipment, supplies and skilled healthcare workers.
- A 10% increase in skilled health workers leads to a 5% reduction in maternal deaths.
- Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Thailand managed to half their Maternal Mortality Rate within 10 years by increasing the number of midwives.
- It was estimated 350,000 extra midwives are needed to ensure universal coverage for maternity care but this number is now under review.

What ICM is doing to promote skilled midwifery care

- In 2011 the ICM completed the development of global standards for education and regulation standards, as well as competencies for basic midwifery practice to ensure skilled midwifery care across the world.
- ICM are active partners within the UN Secretary General’s global strategy Every woman, every child. A programme, led by ICM and UNFPA, for midwives is active in 23 countries in Africa, South Asia and the Caribbean, working closely with Ministers of Health and Education to increase the capacity and the number of midwives.
- We work with the World Health Organization, the International Federation of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists and the International Pediatrics Society to provide midwives training and maternal and newborn health policy at global and national levels.
- ICM has developed the Midwifery Association Capacity Assessment Tool to help strengthen midwives associations globally.
References for key facts


2 UNFPA. Facts about Safe Motherhood


13 Sein, T. Et.al. 2002. No more cradles in the graveyard. Regional Health Forum. WHO Regional office for South East Asia, Geneva

