Midwifery Services Framework (MSF) 2020: Invitation to register interest

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has enabled the ICM to provide extensive technical support to one eligible country to undertake the revised MSF during 2020-2021. Implementation of the MSF is initiated at the request of a national government. If you are interested in implementing the MSF in your country, please register your interest for the MSF 2020 by answering the following questions. You will receive an invitation to move further in the process only after ICM has determined your eligibility based on your answers to the following questions.

**MSF Eligibility Questions**

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<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
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<td>Your country is located in the ICM’s African or South East region</td>
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<td>The working language in your country is English</td>
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<td>You have a Midwives’ Association (MA) that is an ICM member</td>
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<td>You are willing to commit resources for MSF implementation at least for the next three years</td>
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<td>You have an in-country donor/s that is/are willing to support your MSF implementation for at least the next three years</td>
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<td>Your Ministry of Health (MoH) has close links with your MA and in-country funding partner and has been working in partnership with them on improving SRMNH services</td>
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<td>Your MoH is willing to lead, coordinate, and send a completed EoI to ICM by no later than 28 February 2020</td>
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1. The ICM will appoint technical experts to support the Government, national Midwives’ Association, and other in-country stakeholders before and after the MSF workshop. The technical support will include: a) improving understanding about core concepts around midwife-led continuum of care, scope of practice, respectful maternity etc, b) collection of baseline data and report production, c) planning and preparation for the MSF workshop, d) facilitating MSF workshop, e) undertaking capacity assessment for Midwives’ Association, and create capacity improvement action plan; f) provide support to Technical Working Groups in implementing MSF priorities identified during the MSF workshop. The details of the ICM technical support will be discussed during the ICM high-level visit to the successful country.

2. The ICM is unable to provide cost estimates of the resource requirement from the applicant country for MSF implementation, however, the ICM expects participating countries and their partners to be willing to budget and fund: a) time, per diem etc for their staff involved in the MSF Eol, preparatory stage, MSF workshop, MSF follow up phase and continuation of MSF implementation after ICM’s exit; b) venue, refreshments, transport etc for meetings and workshop during the entire period; c) subsequent activities after MSF workshop such as: i) consultations and surveys, ii) creation of high-level posts (eg: Chief Midwife or Midwifery Directorate), iii) a range of educational, health sector and labour force initiatives etc. This is by no means an exhaustive list; cost-sharing activities will be discussed and agreed before the final agreement is signed.
Please register your interest in the MSF 2020 by sending your answers to the above questions to: s.mandke@internationalmidwives.org by 2nd January 2020.

Next steps:
If you are eligible, the ICM will send you an MSF Expression of Interest (EoI) template. The MSF EoI template will require you to submit additional information about your motivation and readiness to adopt a midwife-led continuity of care model for your country’s maternity services.

Please note that the deadline for submitting the MSF EoI is 28 February 2020. The EoIs will be assessed by the ICM’s panel of MSF experts and a shortlist of potential MSF countries will be established.

The ICM will undertake a virtual or in-person due diligence exercise in the shortlisted countries. Subject to the recommendations of the due diligence report, the successful country will be notified by 30th March 2020.

A high-level delegation consisting of ICM’s Chief Executive or ICM’s President, ICM’s MSF project manager and MSF technical expert will visit the successful country to confirm selection and sign agreement.

See MSF 2020 implementation timeline on pages 4 and 5 below.
What is MSF
Sexual, Reproductive, Maternal and Newborn Health (SRMNH) services are crucial to the health of women and children and a core component of every health system. In the light of discussions about sustainable and affordable health care across all regions of the world, the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) has developed the Midwifery Services Framework (MSF) to help countries apply the latest evidence, standards, and guidance to improve their policy and programming environment for developing and implementing SRMNH services provided by midwives.

Why MSF
The MSF offers a systemic approach for health system strengthening and improvements in the quality of sexual and reproductive health care. The quality of maternal and newborn health services can be improved by the integration of midwife-led services across the health system. Research shows that midwives, educated to international standards, licensed, regulated and fully integrated into well-functioning health systems can provide the full scope of interventions necessary for maternal and newborn health as well as for family planning\(^3\). Over 80% of all maternal deaths, stillbirths, and neonatal deaths\(^4\) can be averted by care from midwives\(^4\). Furthermore, continuity of care from midwives improves other health outcomes, reduces unnecessary interventions, and improves the quality of care, including women’s satisfaction with care\(^5\). It is clear that midwives have an essential role in accelerating progress for the survival and wellbeing of mothers and children and for ensuring quality of care (QoC).

The Midwifery Services Framework provides health planners, maternal and newborn health experts, policy makers, and other stakeholders with an evidence-based tool to develop new or strengthen existing midwifery services to enhance their effectiveness and efficiency. The MSF supports the implementation of the model of midwife-led continuity of care, which research has proven to be the most effective and desirable model of care provision for women and their families\(^6\),\(^7\).

The objectives of the MSF are to:
- Provide detailed guidance on how to set up, develop, or improve midwife-led continuity of care services that fit a country’s specific health system, health workforce, and population needs.
- Operationalise the common understanding of the fundamental role that midwife-led continuity of care services play in improving women’s and children’s health.
- Build on the current commitment to reducing maternal and newborn mortality and morbidity with a practical approach to making access to midwives available to all families.

The MSF:
- explains core midwifery and health system concepts,
- outlines a step-by-step approach on how to establish SRMNH services: including discussion of the package of care that women and newborns need, education of midwives, regulation of midwives,

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\(^6\) ibid
effective management of the maternal and newborn health sector workforce, and the enabling environment that midwives need in order to achieve positive outcomes
➢ builds in the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the MSF process, and
➢ results in a clear to-do list regarding organising the health care system to fully enable midwife-led care and developing the services around the needs of women and their families.

MSF 2020
The MSF was developed in 2015 by SRMNH experts convened by the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM). Between July 2015 and April 2018, with the support of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF), the MSF was implemented in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Ghana, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, and Togo. In December 2018, the ICM engaged an independent evaluation consultant to review progress of the implementation of the Framework in these six countries. The MSF evaluation was designed to:
➢ identify conditions that led to optimal uptake of the Framework; and
➢ recommend any changes to improve future implementation.
The evaluation concluded in May 2019.

ICM convened a panel of experts in June 2019, to review the findings, reflect on the implications of these findings for future implementation of the Framework, and to revise the MSF accordingly. The Panel suggested a number of modifications to the MSF. The diagram below provides an overview of the MSF 2020.

Overview of the MSF 2020

Timeline for MSF implementation:
Identification of participating country: Dec 2019 to March 2020
Preparatory phase: April 2020 to September 2020
MSF workshop: October 2020
MSF Follow-up: October 2020 to October 2021 (the ICM exits, but the MSF implementation continues beyond October 2021, the ICM is sent regular updates on the MSF implementation).