



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **ACNM Joins in Support of International Call for More Midwives** *Recent global call to action made by United Nations Population Fund and other international organizations*

**SILVER SPRING, MD**—The American College of Nurse-Midwives supports the recent global call to action for more midwives worldwide, which was led by United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) preceding the Women Deliver conference on maternal/child health and interventions. Each year, hundreds of thousands of women die as a result of pregnancy and childbirth; in addition, more than three million newborns die during the first week of life. Most of these deaths would be preventable with the help of midwives.

ACNM staff and members attended this year's conference. ACNM's Department of Global Outreach (DGO) Director Suzanne Stalls, CNM, explained, "Women Deliver is a culmination of a focus on the interventions needed to achieve the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 4 and 5: reducing child mortality and improving maternal health. Goal #5 has made the least progress of any of the MDGs in achieving its objectives by 2015."

The global call to action encourages governments to focus on strengthening midwifery services, including improving education and training; strengthening laws, regulations and midwifery associations; and enhancing the recruitment and retention of midwives. If these actions are prioritized, rapid progress is possible towards achieving the health-related Millennium Development Goals and reducing child death, improving maternal health and combating HIV and AIDS, according to the call.

It is estimated that midwives could help prevent more than 90 percent of all maternal and infant deaths. ACNM President Melissa Avery, CNM, PhD, FACNM, FAAN said, "Midwifery care is essential to improving maternal health around the world. This call to action will help governments and organizations focus, both domestically and internationally, on the importance of working together to ensure that every woman has access to the high-quality care."

Stalls said, "We are very pleased that the Global Call to Action, led by UNFPA, has focused on the provision of midwifery services as a key strategy to improving the well-being of women. We welcome this opportunity to collaborate with partners around the globe to save women's lives and improve their health."

DGO assists in pairing organizations and projects that need midwifery expertise and supports the development of high-quality training programs for midwives in developing countries. Many ACNM members engage in international works, such as disaster relief and development projects in education, public policy and quality improvement.

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With roots dating to 1929, the American College of Nurse-Midwives is the oldest women's health care association in the U.S. ACNM's mission is to promote the health and well-being of women and newborns within their families and communities through the development and support of the profession of midwifery as practiced by certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives. Midwives believe every individual has the right to safe, satisfying health care with respect for human dignity and cultural variations.