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Editorial – July 2024

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Economy & Environment: Impact through Nursing Care

Welcome to the latest issue of *Journal of Asian Midwives, JAM 2024*. We would like to take the opportunity to highlight an interesting conference which took place in early May 2024. The conference, titled "Economy and Environment: Impact through Nursing and Midwifery care", highlighted the pivotal role healthcare professionals play in shaping economies and environmental sustainability. The event coincided with the global celebrations as part of the International Day of Nurse and Midwives, hosted by the Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery (AKU-SONAM), successfully convened to commemorate the invaluable contributions of nurses and midwives worldwide.

The conference featured distinguished speakers and experts in the field who offered insights and perspectives on the diverse benefits of nursing and midwifery care. The conference provided a platform for engaging discussions, interactive sessions for attendees, panel discussions, networking opportunities, and collaboration among healthcare professionals, policymakers, educators, and stakeholders, to further the conversation about nursing and midwifery's impact on the economy and the environment.

Three-day Midwifery Association of Pakistan Board Meeting (June 4-6, 2024):

The Midwifery Association of Pakistan (MAP) held a productive 3-day board meeting culminating in critical advancements for midwifery services and maternal health in Pakistan. The **key discussion**, including insights on emergency management and strategic discussion from UNFPA, laid the groundwork for future collaborations and training workshops. The meeting fostered robust stakeholder engagement, with commitments from UNICEF and other agencies to support awareness campaigns and establish model midwifery-led units. The members discussed resource mobilization and team started internalizing the resource mobilization and financial competencies.

The **Significant outcomes** Members requested for their development to serve as effective members of MAP. The strategic planned discussed and needed to update that was developed according to MACAT, however; the team struggled but they could not find MACAT tool. The Provincial Minister of Health's endorsed recommendations and shown commitment by supporting MAP through advocacy , strategic alignment with international standards, and plans to enhance MAP's visibility and funding strategies. These initiatives underscore MAP's commitment to improving maternal, neonatal, and child health through strengthened partnerships and innovative midwifery practices.

An Important role of midwives when disasters happen

Climate change is one of the issues we believe we should highlight. Climate disasters appear to be on the rise worldwide, owing mostly to global warming, but also to urbanization and other human factors. Some Asian countries are among the world's most climate-vulnerable, such as Nepal

ranking 139th out of 182 in terms of exposure, sensitivity, and ability to adapt to the negative effects of climate change. Nepal, well-known for its mountains, the Himalayans, and especially, Mount Everest, is grappling with not solely earthquakes, but also floods, landslides, wildfires, and droughts. In the past decades we have also seen major natural disasters in many other South Asian countries, such as cyclones in Bangladesh, earthquakes and flooding in Pakistan, tsunami and drought in India, and so on.

Marginalized populations, suffer already from poverty, food insecurity, and discrimination, and agriculture-based livelihoods, are especially susceptible to environmental effects. These calamities frequently adversely impact low-income populations. We must not forget that when a disaster strikes, regardless of climate change, the impacted areas will require emergency rescue teams, temporary shelters, food and medication, and other necessities, as well as infrastructure support to keep non-emergency services functional. Remember that even after an earthquake, flood, or volcano eruption, there will still be a mother going into labour!

The ICM (International Confederation of Midwives, 2023)ⁱ issued a position statement titled ‘Role of the Midwife in Disaster/Emergency Preparedness’ (ICM 2023) after recognizing that “midwives are often not included in emergency preparedness and response planning at local, national and international levels.” This statement makes no mention of climate change, which has the potential to worsen the effects of natural disasters. There is a rising call to involve midwives in the quest against climate change. Midwives working in their local communities can more easily visit areas affected by climatic disasters and deliver critical reproductive and maternal health care when something goes wrong. As editors, we believe that midwives, with the right political support, may help ensure that women and babies receive care during the most severe impacts of global warming.

The first issue of 2024 of the *Journal of Asian Midwives* features eleven (11) interesting articles on Pakistan's various areas and Bhutan.

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ⁱ International Confederation of Midwives (2023). Role of the Midwife in Disaster/Emergency Preparedness, online accessed May 2024. <https://internationalmidwives.org/resources/role-of-the-midwife-in-disaster-emergency-preparedness/>