The year 2008 marks two important milestones: the 60th anniversary of the founding of WHO, and the 30th anniversary of the Declaration of Alma-Ata, a landmark in the global development of primary health care. As the 2015 deadline approaches for achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the WHO Director-General has called for a renewed emphasis on PHC to strengthen health systems, building on the legacy of Alma-Ata and the struggle for health for all. Strengthening health systems and equitable access is also the fifth of seven global priorities being delivered through Engaging for Health, WHO’s 11th General Programme of Work.

Nurses and midwives took the Alma-Ata declaration to heart and have continued to put its principles into practice. Their contribution lies at the heart of PHC services worldwide. It is therefore an opportune moment to reflect on the role played by nurses and midwives past and present, to learn from their achievements and to build on them in the global revitalization of PHC – within the context of interdisciplinary team working and community/client involvement.

Aim of the project
The aim of this year-long project, led by the WHO Office of Nursing and Midwifery, is to maintain, improve and scale up the contribution of nurses and midwives to PHC worldwide. This will be achieved through:

- Reviewing the contribution of nurses and midwives to PHC worldwide, past and present.
- Identifying and disseminating care models, examples of best practice, and the common elements of successful PHC service delivery.
- Recognizing the contribution of nurses and midwives to PHC worldwide, providing incentives that facilitate the recruitment, motivation and resilience of front-line staff.
- Offering guidance on scaling up the nursing and midwifery contribution to leadership and policy-making in PHC.
Project Activities

**Activity 1:** Setting the scene. Review the contribution of nurses and midwives to PHC worldwide, past and present, particularly in delivering PHC services according to the principles and values of the Declaration of Alma-Ata, and disseminate the results worldwide. This will be achieved through publication of an evidence-based paper on the relevance of the Declaration and what needs to change.

**Activity 2:** Compendium of case studies. Identify and disseminate current examples of good care models and best practice in PHC worldwide; review them to discover the common elements of successful PHC service delivery; and use the lessons learned to shape future developments. Studies from each of the six WHO regions will be described within a common framework based on indicators of good practice.

**Activity 3:** Resource package. Promote best practice by nurses and midwives in PHC through a resource package of materials for use by countries, organizations and individual practitioners.

**Activity 4:** Global award scheme. Provide incentives for the recruitment, motivation and resilience of front-line PHC staff, and stimulate further development and innovation. This will be promoted through a global award scheme to recognize and reward outstanding individual and team contributions.

**Activity 5:** On-line Community of Practice. Share experiences, evidence and lessons learned in PHC service development through the launch of an on-line WHO network for PHC. This will support sharing and professional development, following the successful experience of other COPs.

**Activity 6:** Policy guidance. Help nurses and midwives to be active, politically astute participants in health policy development processes through publication of a paper on influencing policy-making and leadership in relation to PHC.

**Partnerships and target audiences**

The project’s primary purpose can only be achieved with the active support of fellow health workers, policy-makers, service managers, educators, researchers, and above all the communities in which the services are located. The project therefore aims to work with a variety of groups including nurses and midwives delivering PHC services; other PHC planners, managers, practitioners and support workers; policy-makers and opinion-leaders; health professional organizations; education and research institutions; and civil society organizations that represent users of PHC services.

The Office of Nursing and Midwifery will lead the project, with nursing and midwifery advisors in the six WHO regional offices, and will work with a range of partners including:

- The WHO Global Advisory Group on Nursing and Midwifery.
- The Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery.
- WHO Collaborating Centres with an interest in PHC.
- Government chief nurses and midwives.
- The International Council of Nurses.
- The International Confederation of Midwives.

**Further information**

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