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**Lancet to launch new series on midwifery**

A new global project has been launched in an effort to enhance the evidence base on midwifery and to further advocate for developing midwifery services at scale. This collaborative endeavor, supported by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, brings together an international team of 35 researchers comprised of health systems analysts, health economists, statisticians and specialists in midwifery.

Specifically, the research will focus on the impact of midwifery and health systems interventions on improving maternal, newborn and child health outcomes while placing particular emphasis on low- and middle-income countries. The aim of this extensive project will be to inform and provide guidance to decision-makers at the national level on key areas (i.e., budget allocations, health system development) which will increase access to midwifery services. Additionally, it will provide impetus to improving the competency and coverage of midwifery services. The research will contribute to global actions in achieving Millennium Development Goals 4,5 and 6.

The papers will be featured in *The Lancet* in a special series on midwifery in Spring 2013.

The project is being steered by an executive group that includes the University of York, the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the White Ribbon Alliance, ICS Integare, the University of Southampton, Yale University and the University of Technology, Sydney.