



CAM ACSF

Midwives for everyone, everywhere
Des sages-femmes pour tous, partout

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we reflect on the past year, one message is clear: the world needs midwives, now more than ever. But for midwifery to truly meet the demands of this moment, our profession must be sustainable. That means investing in midwives, creating environments where they can thrive, and ensuring that our work is valued as the essential health service it is.

In 2024, CAM focused on strengthening the foundations of our profession while continuing to lead bold, systems-level change. This year marked the launch of [CAM Learns](#), our new national, bilingual platform for continuing professional development. We kicked off the program with an inspiring [IBPOC Midwifery Research Showcase](#), highlighting the work of researchers whose leadership and scholarship are shaping the future of midwifery in Canada.

We also saw the Canadian Journal of Midwifery Research and Practice (CJMRP) continue to be provided [fully online](#), increasing access to Canadian midwifery research for practitioners, students, and the public. And we launched [Strength in Practice: A CAM Podcast](#), creating a new space for midwives to hear directly from one another, share insights, and have tough conversations about issues that matter.

On January 30, 2024, [history was made](#) when the first regulated midwives began practicing in Prince Edward Island, a major milestone made possible by years of advocacy. This achievement not only expands access to midwifery care in PEI, but signals what is possible when governments invest in the profession. Across the country, the message is the same: midwives can – and must – be part of the solution to health system gaps. CAM's work was featured in a national [article](#) in *The Globe and Mail* this year, calling attention to how midwives are ready to do more – if only the system lets us.

Throughout 2024, CAM has continued its commitment to justice, equity, diversity and inclusion. With support from Health Canada's Sexual and Reproductive Health Branch, CAM was able to support Canadian Alliance of Racialized Midwives (CARM) projects including the unveiling of their new logo. Other Health Canada Anti-Indigenous Racism (HC-AIR) federal funding allowed us to advance work addressing anti-Indigenous racism in health care, including the launch of CAM Learns courses entitled Introduction to Anti-Racism for Midwives and other Health Professionals and Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility for Healthcare Workers in partnership with Indigenous leaders and midwives across the country.

We also saw CAM's Global Program continue to thrive thanks to Global Affairs Canada and our partnership with UNFPA, even amid global instability. These midwife-led partnerships reflect the best of what our profession has to offer: community-driven, rights-based care that centers people and transforms systems. If you haven't already, I strongly encourage you to read about [CAM Global's](#) work and the power of collaboration.

Personally, I had the great privilege of meeting midwives virtually from coast to coast to coast as well as in person – from Edmonton to Montreal, Quebec City to Mississauga, and beyond. No matter where I go, I see the same truth: midwives are leading with innovation, integrity, and an unwavering commitment to their communities, even in the face of burnout, structural barriers, and staffing shortages.

As I look ahead to 2025, I am deeply honoured to continue serving as CAM's President. There is difficult work ahead – but we are strong, we are ready, and we are in this together.

With gratitude,

CJ Blennerhassett, RM, MHA, CHE
President, Canadian Association of Midwives

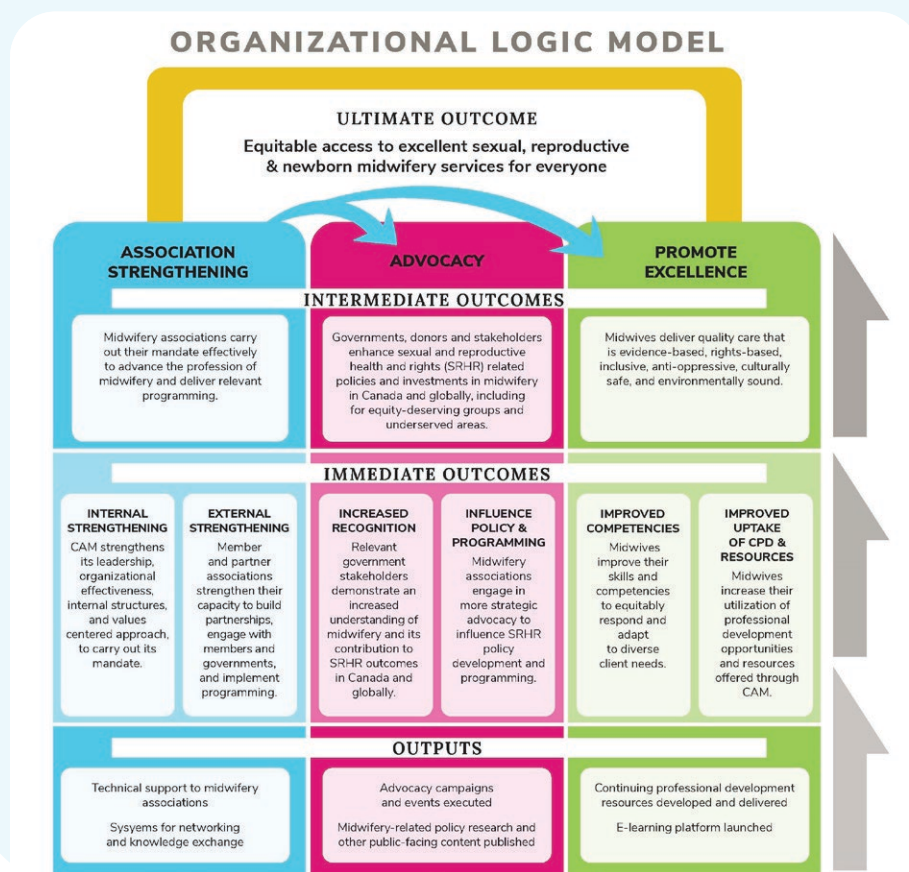


CAM'S THEORY OF CHANGE

The Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM) intended impact is to ensure more equitable access to high quality sexual, reproductive, and newborn midwifery services in Canada and globally in partnership with midwifery associations, midwives, and relevant stakeholders.

CAM achieves this by focusing its efforts in three key areas:

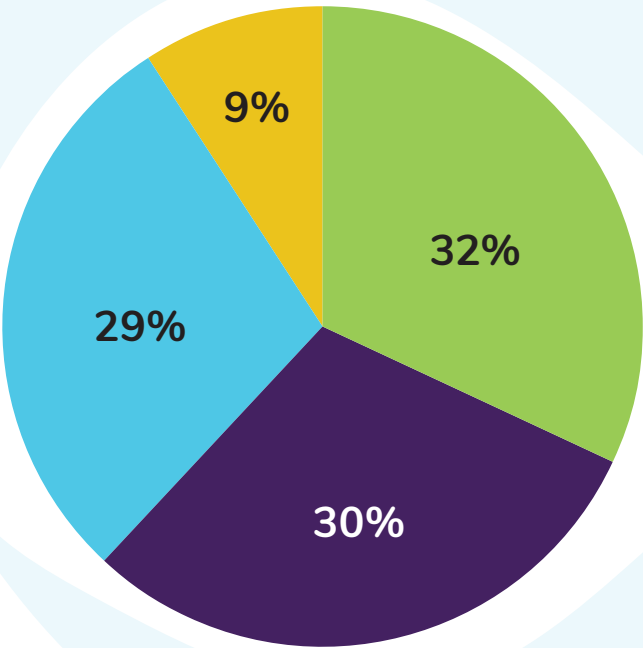
- › **Association Strengthening:** CAM partners with midwifery associations (provincial, territorial, national and global) for mutual capacity building and to ensure all associations, including CAM, can carry out their mandate effectively and deliver relevant programming.
- › **Advocacy:** CAM, together with partners, works to influence policy changes and increase investments to integrate midwifery into health systems at various levels. These efforts focus on improving access to midwifery care, especially in underserved and Indigenous communities and by shifting perceptions and increasing knowledge of midwifery's role in sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR).
- › **Promoting Excellence:** CAM aims to provide quality, continuing professional development content to help midwives deliver quality care that is evidence-based, rights-based, inclusive, anti-oppressive, culturally safe, and environmentally sound.



In 2024, CAM's work focused on:

- › partnering with the National Council of Indigenous Midwives (NCIM), Canadian Alliance of Racialized Midwives (CARM) and the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC) to increase resources and capacity to deliver national programming;
- › strengthening our partnership with midwifery associations in South Sudan, Somalia, Somaliland and Puntland, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo and in Haiti;
- › supporting local advocacy in Alberta and attending events and conferences in Quebec and Ontario;
- › advocating for policy changes and programming to the federal government through meetings with the Minister of Health, the Honorable Mark Holland and other departments;
- › launching targeted campaigns in BC, AB, MB and ON to inform the public on essential role of midwives in sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- › advancing CAM's national strategy for midwife-led abortion care in Canada;
- › launching CAM Learns – a new bilingual online learning platform offering long and short form courses, microlessons and access to many resources developed BY and FOR midwives!
- › and, finalizing CAM's governance reform and implementation plan for 2025.

CAM and NCIM's work is funded mostly by publicly funded contribution agreements and grants, a small amount from corporate sponsorships and membership fees.



Total Revenue 2024: \$7,949,165

Breakdown of Total Revenue
(General Operations and Program Funding)

- CAM Global Programming:**
\$2,568,461 = 32%
- NCIM Programming:**
\$2,350,504 = 30%
- CAM National Programming:**
\$2,261,854 = 29%
- General Operations:**
\$731,575 = 9%

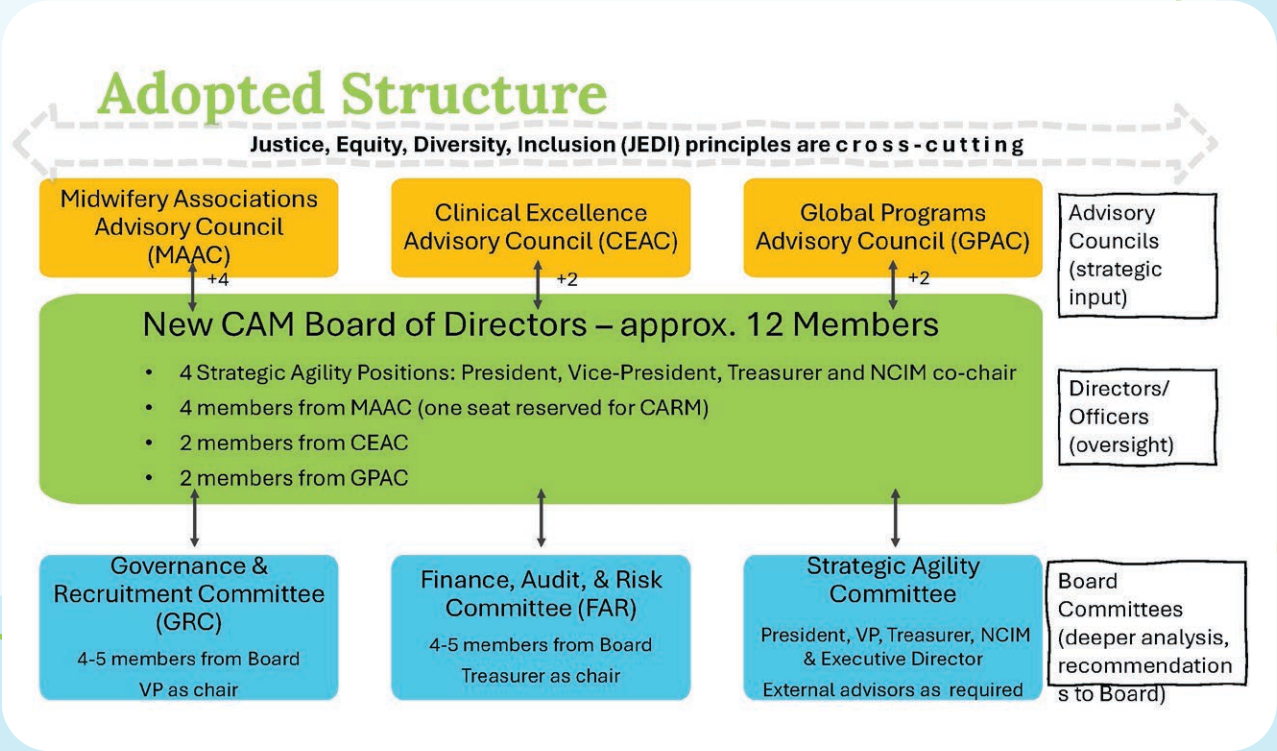


ASSOCIATION STRENGTHENING

GOVERNANCE REFORM – STRENGTHENING CAM’S CAPACITY TO LEAD CHANGE

After two+ years of hard work and many consultations with our members and external stakeholders, CAM finalized its new governance structure, bylaws and all related governance documents in 2024. These changes were approved by the Board of Directors on October 23, 2024 and by the membership at a Special Meeting of Members held on March 26, 2025.

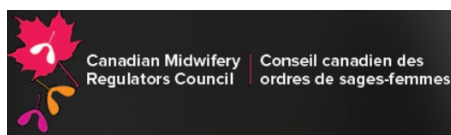
CAM’s original governance structure was in place since its incorporation in January 2001. This historic and significant change will ensure our national midwifery association is equipped to realize our intended impact and that our governance structure aligns with our values. Most importantly, we want to ensure equitable and appropriate representation of all CAM members and national midwifery stakeholders on the Board of Directors.



MIDWIFERY PARTNERSHIPS

CAM's programming in 2024 aimed to strengthen the capacity and resourcing of several midwifery associations in Canada and globally.

Here in Canada, CAM targeted funding from Health Canada to strengthen the capacity of the Canadian Alliance of Racialized Midwives (CARM) to deliver programming for its members and to support programming impacting midwives across the country.



CAM's programming also included our long-time partner, the National Council of Indigenous Midwives (NCIM), the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC), le Regroupement les sages-femmes du Quebec (RSFQ), midwifery practices and provincial/territorial associations recipients of micro-grants to support midwives administering vaccinations, and several external partners such as the National Abortion Federation (NAF).

Funding from Health Canada Sexual, Reproductive Health and Rights Branch (2024):\$1,548,000 (CAD) (Projects FORWARD & CART)

Funding from Health Canada Addressing Racism in Canada's Health Systems Program (2024):\$530,000 (CAD) (Project AIR)

Funding from Public Health Agency of Canada Immunization Partnership Fund (2024):\$188,500 (CAD)

Learn more about our Global Partnerships here:

<https://canadianmidwives.org/global>



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ADVOCACY

FEDERAL MINISTER OF HEALTH'S VISIT TO CAM OFFICE

On August 8, 2024, Canada Minister of Health, the Honorable Mark Holland visited CAM's office in Montreal as part of his Quebec Tour.

CAM President CJ Blennerhassett, CAM Executive Director Tonia Occhionero and NCIM Co-chair Alisha Julien-Reid met with the Minister. This was a unique opportunity to review CAM and NCIM's work, the essential role of midwives in the health care system and to advocate for better inclusion of midwifery in health human resource planning, healthcare policy and programming.



MIDWIVES IN CANADA'S STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

In the Federal Budget 2024, the government announced its intent to introduce amendments to the Canada Student Financial Assistance Act and the Canada Student Loans Act to permanently expand the reach of the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program to more health care and social services professionals working in rural and remote communities – including MIDWIVES. \$253.8 million over four years were included in Budget 2024 to support these changes. Once amendments to the Acts are done, we look forward to sharing information on how midwives can access the program.

MEETING WITH THE ALBERTA MINISTER OF HEALTH

On May 13, 2024 CAM President CJ Blennerhassett, AAM President Marita Obst, and AAM Executive Director Jennifer Gullage-Payne met with Alberta Minister of Health, Adriana Lagrange.

Current opportunities and challenges were discussed, including increasing access to midwifery services in rural and remote communities and the creation of a strategy for the retention of existing workforce. Also discussed was the need for support in the implementation of advanced competencies for midwives to fill gaps in the healthcare system such as prescribing contraceptives, assisting during c-sections, and performing ultrasounds.



**CANADIANS HAVE
DIVERSE REPRODUCTIVE
HEALTH CHOICES;
MIDWIFERY
CARE IS ONE
OF THOSE.**

**HAVING A
baby**
Financial contribution:
Canada



**WOMEN IN CANADA
HAVE CHOICES;
MIDWIFERY CARE
IS ONE OF THOSE.**

**HAVING A
baby** Financial contribution:
Canada



PROMOTING MIDWIFERY CAMPAIGN

CAM developed a digital campaign to engage and inform the Canadian public about midwives' important role in maternal and child health. Building on the first phase of the 2023-2024 Promoting Midwifery Campaign and using the established campaign branding, the creative concept juxtaposed the reproductive health rollbacks in the United States with the reproductive freedoms protected in Canada – highlighting the critical role of midwives in upholding these rights. The campaign was executed through ad on Facebook and Instagram and targeted website placements.

Total Reach:
3,767,123
unique users

Total Impressions:
9,171,013
ad views

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**PROMOTING
EXCELLENCE**

CAM LEARNS

In 2024, CAM officially launched [CAM Learns](#), a new bilingual online learning platform designed to support the professional development needs of midwives and other health care worker.

Over the course of the year, CAM Learns introduced 14 new courses in both French and English, covering a range of topics tailored to the needs of midwives at various stages of their careers.

CAM Learns' growing catalogue of self-directed courses and resources range from short micro-lessons to in-depth, long-form training. These bilingual offerings were designed to meet the diverse learning needs of midwives across Canada. Courses cover key topics such as Indigenous cultural safety and humility, anti-racism training, and educating families on RSV, among other topics. Each course was developed in collaboration with midwifery experts, ensuring relevant, accessible, and evidence-based content.

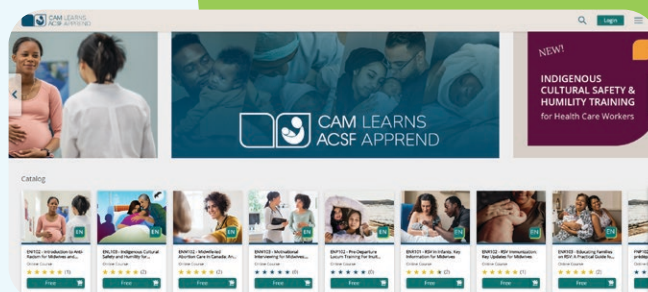
In November 2024, CAM hosted a virtual launch event to officially introduce CAM Learns to the membership. The event brought together midwives, educators, and partners from across Canada to showcase the platform's features, preview courses, and invite collaboration. Spanning two days and seven live sessions, the launch event was met with great reception.

In its first year, CAM Learns laid the groundwork for ongoing course development and strategic partnerships that will enhance midwifery-led and – directed professional development across Canada. This foundation positions the platform to support the evolving learning needs of midwives through accessible, relevant, and engaging learning opportunities.

To learn more or to share your course ideas, contact: admin@canadianmidwives.org

List of courses developed and launched in 2024 on CAM Learns:

- › Introduction to Anti-Racism for Midwives and other Health Professionals
- › Indigenous Cultural Safety and Humility for Healthcare Workers
- › Midwife-led Abortion Care in Canada: An Introduction to CAM's National Strategy and Policy Tools
- › Motivational Interviewing for Midwives: Understanding and Applying the OARS Tool
- › Pre-Departure Locum Training For Inuit Communities
- › RSV in Infants: Key Information for Midwives
- › RSV Immunization: Key Updates for Midwives
- › Educating Families on RSV: A Practical Guide for Midwives



STRENGTH IN PRACTICE PODCAST

“Yes!! We need this podcast Thank you for this well put together show! I love the topics, guests, and pacing. Excellent way to keep updated on current issues and connected to the greater midwifery community.”

Launched in June 2024, *Strength in Practice* amplifies the voices of midwives and highlights the complex intersections shaping the profession across Canada through storytelling, in-depth discussion, and feature interviews. With four episodes released, the series explored urgent themes such as health equity, the meaning of care (including burnout and the role of AI in midwifery), expanding scope of practice, and the coerced sterilization of Indigenous women. The final episode examined the path to justice through Bill S-250, the role of midwives in defending reproductive rights, and the healing still needed to ensure a safer future for all.

Guests included frontline midwives, researchers, senators, and community leaders. While the podcast began slowly, it gained strong momentum, reaching 1,345 downloads by year-end, with listenership rising over 700% in the final week. With six new episodes planned for 2025, we hope the podcast continues to serve as a vital resource for midwives navigating a rapidly evolving and often inequitable healthcare landscape.

Episodes launched to date:

- › Health Equity & Access
- › Care
- › Scope of Practice
- › Ending Forced Sterilization: A Path to Justice
- › The Colour of Birth Project: Uncovering the Hidden History of Black Midwifery in Canada
- › Midwifery Care Beyond the Gender Binary

Comments and suggestions:

CAMPodcast@canadianmidwives.org

Reviews to date:



“Thank you so much for putting this excellent podcast together. I would thoroughly recommend it!”

CANADIAN JOURNAL OF MIDWIFERY RESEARCH AND PRACTICE (CJMRP)

The Canadian Journal of Midwifery Research and Practice (CJMRP) is available online and free of charge at <https://cjmrp.com/>. In 2023, the journal transitioned to a digital format to enhance the profession's visibility and credibility. [CJMRP.com](https://cjmrp.com/) continues to offer research articles, literature reviews, abstracts, case reports, and articles for midwives and reproductive health care providers.

In 2024, the Editorial Board appointed two new co-Editors to replace long time Editor Patricia McNiven. Deepa Upadhyaya and Karen Lawford have taken over the editorial leadership of the Journal.

8,100 active users

79,000 event clicks

7,000 article abstracts downloaded

5,733 full article downloads

ADVANCING ACCESS TO ABORTION FOR UNDER-SERVED POPULATIONS

CAM continued to participate again in 2024 in the Contraception Abortion Research Team (CART) Access Project, a large project funded by Health Canada. This project involves numerous stakeholders and aims to improve access to abortion for under-served populations. The work was carried out in collaboration with several organizations, including the College of Midwives of Manitoba (CMM), and the University of British Columbia's Contraception and Abortion Research Team (CART).

The focus in 2024 was primarily on the dissemination of the National Strategy Framework for midwife-led abortion care, as well as other advocacy resources which had been developed in the previous year. This was accomplished by sharing these resources during a webinar in June 2024, as well as attending several regional conferences, such as those organized by the Association of Ontario Midwives (AOM), the Alberta Association of Midwives (AAM), the Regroupement les Sages-femmes du Québec (RSFQ), and the Ordre des Sages-femmes du Québec (OSFQ). In November 2024, an online micro-learning course to introduce the National Strategy and advocacy tools was launched on CAM's new online learning platform, CAM Learns.

Additional resources were also developed to expand on work done in the previous year, such as an implementation checklist for midwifery practices planning to integrate medication abortion care. CAM was fortunate to have the support of a committed Steering Committee, including representatives from a variety of stakeholders and midwifery associations, such as the National Council of Indigenous Midwives (NCIM), the Canadian Alliance of Racialized Midwives (CARM), the Canadian Midwifery Regulators Council (CMRC), Action Canada for Sexual Health & Rights, and Abortion Care Canada (formally known as the National Abortion Federation Canada).

At the end of 2024, CAM received the news that their ongoing participation in the CART Access Project has been approved. This will enable CAM to continue expanding on this important work.





ENR102 - RSV Immunization: Key Updates for Midwives

Online Course



Free



INCREASING MIDWIFERY KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL VIRUS (RSV)

In 2024, CAM developed several resources to help midwives prepare for new publicly funded immunization programs which started in the Fall of 2024 particularly in Quebec and Ontario. CAM held a webinar in October summarizing the latest immunization options available in Canada. This session was recorded and is available on CAM's website. Additionally, CAM developed three microlessons to help midwives increase their knowledge of RSV, what immunization options are available, as well as how to have conversations with families about RSV prevention. Each of these microlessons was complemented by job aids, to help present information to clients succinctly. These microlessons are available in English and French on CAM's new online learning platform, CAM Learns. Information about these new microlessons was shared during two regional midwifery conferences, those of the Alberta Association of Midwives (AAM) and of the Ordre des sages-femmes du Québec (OSFQ). A webinar entitled "Midwives and Immunization: RSV and beyond" was also held during the CAM Learns launch event in November. This work was accomplished with financial support from Sanofi and Pfizer.



**CAM
GLOBAL**

2024: A YEAR OF RESILIENCE, PARTNERSHIP, AND PROGRESS

The end of 2024 and the beginning of 2025 were marked by a profound sense of global instability – politically, economically, and culturally, for all of us, and especially for our partners across the Global South. Amid escalating conflicts, climate crises, and economic hardship, the unwavering resilience and commitment of midwives to provide safe, respectful care have continued to inspire, empower, and save lives. Midwives are not just delivering babies; they are transforming health systems. At CAM Global, we are proud to stand alongside them.



2024 was CAM Global's busiest year to date, with six active projects underway. This included the launch of the **Strengthening Midwifery in Tanzania (SMIT)** project, the approval of the \$8.5 million CAM-led **TRUST: Women's Voices, Midwifery Leadership for Resilient Health** (<https://canadianmidwives.org/global/womens-voices-and-midwifery-leadership-for-resilient-health-trust/>) Project in Malawi and South Sudan (set to begin in 2025), and the initiation of the **Somali Midwives for Improving Lives and Enhancing SRH (SMILES)** (<https://canadianmidwives.org/global/project-smiles/>) project in Somalia and Somaliland. These projects reflect the growing confidence of funders like Global Affairs Canada in CAM's mission to equip midwives with the tools and support they need to make birth safer and families stronger. None of this would be possible without the leadership and partnership of midwives – both in the Global South and here in Canada.

SAFE AND RESPECTFUL CARE IN VENEZUELA (ZULIA PROJECT)

In a year marked by political instability and limited mobility, CAM and its dedicated midwife partners adapted rapidly, training local leaders to scale up respectful and culturally safe maternal care, with a focus on Indigenous communities.



KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- › 23 trainers delivered respectful care education in 7 hospitals, reaching 98 workers.
- › 3 replication workshops trained 83 midwives, SAOI staff, and health workers.
- › First meeting of 34 Wayuu and Yukpa midwives to build long-term partnerships.
- › University to launch a new Respectful Maternal Health program in 2025.
- › Regional collaboration with NCIM and Ministry of Health at Mexico City meeting.

For more detailed information kindly visit

ENG <https://canadianmidwives.org/global/zulia-project/>

FR <https://canadianmidwives.org/fr/mondial/atencion-segura-respetuosa-projet-zulia/>



HUMAN RESOURCES FOR SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS IN SOUTH SUDAN (HR4-SRHR)



Despite ongoing political instability, threats to both physical safety and economic collapse, our partners in South Sudan continue to inspire with their dedication and resilience. Their commitment to the HR4SRH project supported progress in strengthening midwifery leadership, youth engagement, and rights-based reproductive health services across South Sudan.

2024 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- › 36 episodes of YouthZone72 aired, reaching 1.3 million+ weekly listeners. The Facebook Live edition, with live Deaf interpretation has reached over 200,000 viewers.
- › Finalized and printed 100 copies of the Rights-Based Family Planning handbook for national rollout
- › Facilitated 4 South-South exchanges with Ethiopia and Tanzania, promoting shared learning and collaboration.
- › Conducted focus groups in 4 regions, generating 100+ key messages for a new inclusive SRHR IEC Toolkit. Produced 21 advocacy products: 6 PSAs, 7 videos, 2 op-eds and more.

For more detailed information kindly visit

ENG <https://canadianmidwives.org/global/hr4-south-sudan/>

FR <https://canadianmidwives.org/fr/hr4srh-ressources-humaines-pour-la-sante-et-les-droits-sexuels-et-reproductifs/>

SUPPORTING EQUAL SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH IN HAITI (PASSREL)



“What the world needs to know... is that midwives in Haiti are the silent pillars of a health system in crisis.”

Jeffthanie Maturin, ASFH.

In the face of ongoing instability and gang violence in Haiti – particularly in Port-au-Prince – project partners and midwives adapted their strategies to continue to advance midwifery and to ensure that all women received the care they deserve.

2024 KEY HIGHLIGHTS:

- › Epidemiological surveillance officers and support staff in health institutions received training on data collection and Respectful Maternity Care.
- › Canadian midwife Emmanuelle Hébert presented PASSREL's RMC training work at the International Mukwege Chair Congress in Montreal.
- › ASFH conducted planning workshops throughout 2024, resulting in a new roadmap for 2024–2027.

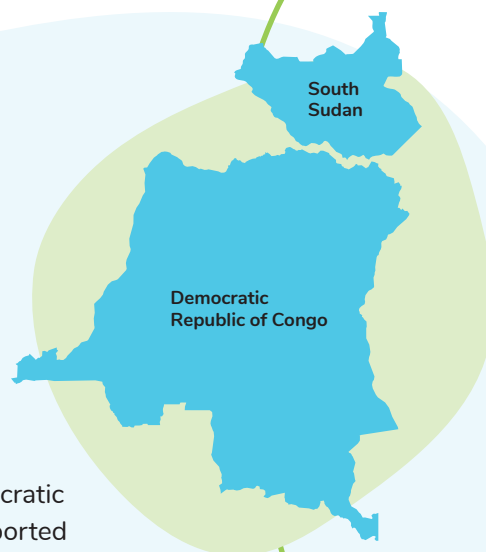
For more detailed information kindly visit

ENG <https://canadianmidwives.org/global/supporting-equal-sexual-and-reproductive-health-sesrh/>

FR <https://canadianmidwives.org/fr/mondial/projet-dappui-a-la-sante-sexuelle-et-reproductive-egalitaire-passrel/>

RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE IN SOUTH SUDAN AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (SMART-RMC)

The SMART-RMC project continued to transform maternal health by embedding Respectful Maternity Care in the healthcare systems Democratic Republic of Congo and South Sudan. This first CAM-led initiative, supported by Global Affairs Canada, concluded in May 2025 and was a resounding success, thanks to the unwavering support of GAC and our dedicated partners South Sudan Nurses and Midwives Association (SSNAMA) and Societe Congolaise De La Pratique Sage-Femme (SCOSAF)



2024 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- › 275 providers mentored monthly in DRC; 85 trained in South Sudan.
- › 40 facilities implemented quality improvement tools.
- › Over 25, 000 listeners weekly reached via “Ask the Midwife” local radio program in DRC and South Sudan, generating increased SRHR allyship among men, boys and community gatekeepers.
- › Over 500 girls and women accessed family planning, cancer and HIV screening, blood pressure checks, abortion care, and education on RMC rights through mobile clinics and theatre performances.
- › Midwifery Bill drafted in DRC; 3 SSNAMA position papers released.

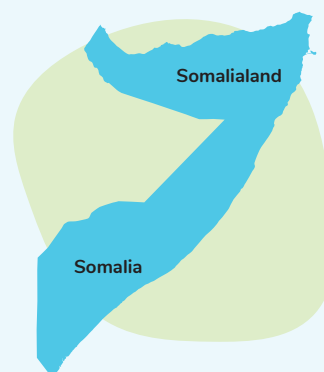


For more detailed information kindly visit

ENG <https://canadianmidwives.org/global/smart-rmc/>

FR <https://canadianmidwives.org/fr/mondial/smart-smr/>

STRENGTHENING MIDWIFERY EDUCATION AND PRACTICE IN SOMALIA AND SOMALILAND (SMEPS)



In its final year, SMEPS, the 5-year project in Somalia and Somaliland, focused on sustainability, peer mentorship, and youth engagement, equipping local leaders to carry the work forward.

2024 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- › 64 tutors trained and 6 student assessment workshops delivered to strengthen teaching capacity
- › BARO mobile app piloted with 175 youth and officially launched in Somalia and Puntland; handover to MoHs underway
- › 11 community dialogues and 3 mass media campaigns advanced nutrition and safe delivery with over 1M views on social media
- › Online midwifery curriculum repository updated, and local associations trained to maintain it
- › MACAT 2.0 assessment launched to measure midwifery association growth and readiness for the future



For more detailed information kindly visit

ENG <https://canadianmidwives.org/global/strengthening-midwifery-education-and-practice-in-somalia-and-somaliland-smeps/>

FR <https://canadianmidwives.org/fr/mondial/renforcement-de-la-formation-et-de-la-pratique-des-sages-femmes-en-somalie-et-au-somaliland-smeps/>

STRENGTHENING MIDWIFERY IN TANZANIA (SMIT)

Amid growing demand for skilled maternal health services, the Project SMIT sometimes known as [Thamini Uzazi Salama-Value Safe Birth \(Project SMIT\)](#) initiative made critical investments in midwifery leadership, education, and service access. Strong collaboration with national institutions and the empowerment of midwives positioned the project for long-term sustainability and impact.



2024 KEY HIGHLIGHTS

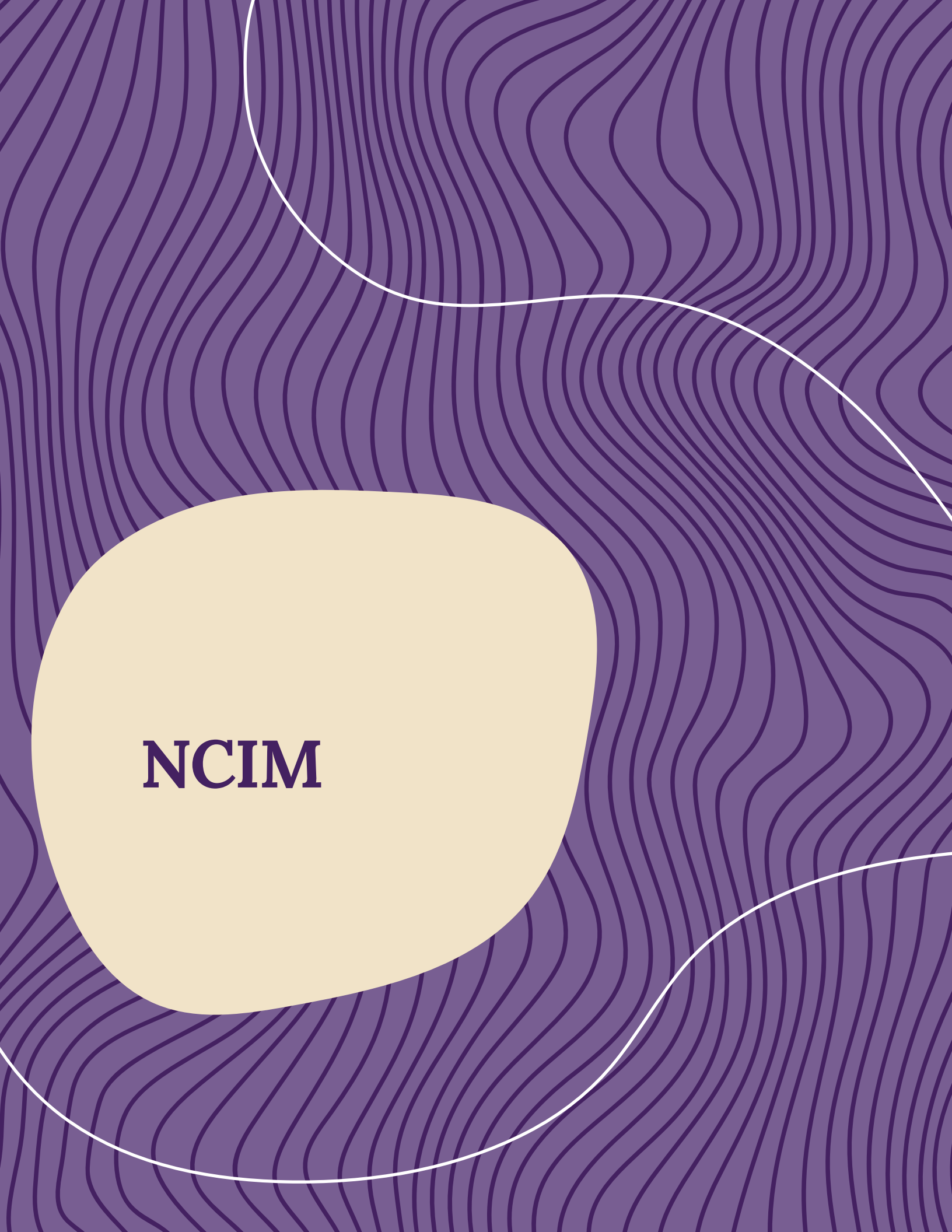
- › 6 Emergency Skills Training modules re-accredited and digitized for national e-learning platform.
- › 20 days of technical assistance provided to strengthen TAMA's leadership and systems.
- › Drafted a 5-year strategic plan for TAMA through national stakeholder engagement.
- › Initiated country analysis for Midwifery Bridging Program; 4 universities shortlisted.
- › Hosted validation workshops and planning meetings with MoH, TNMC, and UNFPA.

For more detailed information kindly visit

ENG <https://canadianmidwives.org/global/https-canadianmidwives-org-global-smit-project/>

FR <https://canadianmidwives.org/fr/mondial/thamini-uzazi-salama-valeur-dun-accouchement-sur-projet-smit/>



The image features a purple background with a dense, wavy, topographical-like pattern of thin white lines. A large, light-yellow, rounded rectangular shape is positioned in the lower-left quadrant. Inside this yellow shape, the letters "NCIM" are written in a bold, dark-purple, serif font. Two thin white curved lines sweep across the background, one from the top-left towards the right and another from the bottom-left towards the right.

NCIM

MESSAGE FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

As we close out a transformative year for the National Council of Indigenous Midwives, we offer our deepest gratitude to the midwives, Elders, students, and communities who continue to breathe life into our shared vision. 2024 was a year of both growth and challenge – a time when we deepened our roots and widened our circle, even as we navigated the realities of working within colonial systems that were never built for us.

This year's Annual Gathering – rooted in ceremony, story, and solidarity – reminded us why we do this work. From the teachings of *Dibenimisowin* to the tireless efforts of those reclaiming birth in their Nations, we are witnessing Indigenous midwifery not just as healthcare, but as a force for sovereignty, healing, and resurgence.

As we reflect on this powerful year, we also mark a transition in leadership. We offer our heartfelt thanks and warm wishes to our outgoing Executive Director Ellen Blais, who now steps into a new role as Co-CEO of the Association of Ontario Midwives. Her contributions to NCIM were immense, and we know she will carry this spirit forward in her continued advocacy for Indigenous midwifery.

Following an extensive search process, we are thrilled to announce that Laura Mayer has joined us as our new Executive Director in January 2025. Laura brings a wealth of experience in Indigenous governance, legal advocacy, and health policy, and we are confident in her ability to help guide NCIM through its next chapter with strength, clarity, and cultural grounding.

To everyone who walks this path with us: thank you. Together, we will continue to grow, resist, and return birth to our communities – on our terms.

Wela'lin and Nakurmiik

Alisha Julien Reid & Samantha Leclerc

Co-Chairs, National Council of Indigenous Midwives



ADVOCACY, POLICY, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Over the last year, NCIM leadership and advocacy staff continue to support our membership and advance our key priorities – increasing community-based Indigenous midwifery funding, criminalization of forced and coerced sterilization, and regulatory and policy changes that empower Indigenous midwives and students in jurisdictions across Canada. We have included two highlights from our year below.

VIP RECEPTION ON PARLIAMENT HILL

On the evening of October 9, 2024, a delegation of Indigenous midwives and NCIM leaders attended a VIP Reception on Parliament Hill titled “Allied Healthcare in Canada – Why We CANNOT Ignore Indigenous Midwifery.” The event brought together Members of Parliament, Senators, and federal stakeholders to engage in meaningful dialogue about the importance of Indigenous midwifery in Canada’s healthcare system.

The primary objective of this event was education and advocacy – to ensure federal decisionmakers understand the scope, value, and barriers facing Indigenous midwifery today. Speakers shared powerful testimonies about their roles, emphasizing the broad scope of care they provide: from prenatal to postpartum support, sexual and reproductive health, cultural teachings, and crisis prevention including child welfare and housing support.



BILL S-250

In March 2024, NCIM testified at the [Senate Standing Committee for Legal and Constitutional Affairs on Bill S-250](#) on the issue of forced and coerced sterilization. We continued to advocate for the passing of the Bill, including at our Parliament Hill event.

INDIGENOUS MIDWIFERY EDUCATION

The Indigenous Midwifery Education (IME) program supports First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities in building their own midwifery education pathways. While not a formal academic institution, NCIM provides a flexible, community-led education framework grounded in Indigenous values, traditional knowledge, and NCIM's Core Competencies. The IME is currently tracking 12 learners across the country, spanning west from Ontario to British Columbia.

The IME curriculum, adapted from the Inuulitsivik Midwifery Training Program, is offered in modular learning bundles covering health sciences, midwifery skills, and cultural teachings. Learners can also take on health support roles such as doulas, prenatal educators, or lactation consultants while on their educational journey. NCIM remains a lifelong partner in supporting community-led midwifery education, contributing to health sovereignty and the rematriation of Indigenous birth care.

LAND-BASED LEARNING

For the land-based learning event of 2024, we welcomed 16 learners from across the country – from Labrador to British Columbia. Carol Couchie, Ashley Lickers, Darlene Birch, Heather Heinrich, and Sandy Howard were the key leadership for this week of socializing and critical learning. The learning started with a small gathering at Darlene's homestead in a beading workshop and art project relating beading knots to suturing.

Intensive, hands-on clinical skills workshop was held at the University of Manitoba from August 19th to 21st, to provide our learners the opportunity to learn PAP smears, internal examinations, and breast examinations. The other topics and skills covered were culturally-safe care, blood pressure and vitals, physical assessment of the newborn, blood draw and IV training, and theories of palpation and fetal well-being. These learning opportunities brought a new level of motivation and excitement to our learners.

**INDIGENOUS MIDWIVES
FACILITATE BIRTH AS AN
ACT OF RECLAMATION.**

#BirthBack

INDIGENOUSMIDWIFERY.CA



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

2024 ANNUAL GATHERING

About 80 people attended NCIM's Annual Gathering on the unceded Territory of the Anishinaabe Algonquin Nation, from October 8-11, 2024. Centered around the theme *Indigenous Midwifery Governance*, this year's gathering emphasized reclaiming birth through Indigenous governance, law, and tradition. From the opening prayer to guided strategy sessions and a presence on Parliament Hill, the event wove together political advocacy, cultural revitalization, and the lived realities of Indigenous midwifery. Each session built upon the last, affirming the central role of Indigenous midwives in the restoration of community wellness and sovereignty.

The Gathering opened with a powerful keynote by Elder and midwife Katsi Cook, who framed birth as a spiritual and political act rooted in Haudenosaunee teachings. This was followed by the "Governance on Our Terms" panel, where Indigenous midwives, students, and Elders shared how they are reclaiming birth through self-determined models that bridge traditional and clinical care, beyond colonial frameworks.

It was a transformative space affirming Indigenous midwifery as resistance, resurgence, and love. Participants called for more regional circles, youth involvement, and continued collective knowledge-sharing. NCIM will carry this momentum into its next phase of advocacy, education, and strategic action.



LANGUAGE PROJECT: LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

This year, NCIM continued our work on the Language Revitalization project, an initiative aimed at revitalizing Indigenous Languages in the care setting through community-led resource creation. Nations, communities, and Indigenous organizations were invited to bring together knowledge keepers and language experts to create resources that document midwifery-related words in Indigenous languages, as well as contain traditional knowledge and teachings around birth, postpartum and infant care. 3 communities are working with an Indigenous graphic designer to produce 4 resources.

ANNUAL VIRTUAL FORUM

In February 2024, NCIM facilitated the Connecting Together Symposium – two half-day virtual symposiums to talk about Indigenous midwifery and birth. 23 presenters discussed topics including obstetric research sharing, powerful stories of communities bringing back birth, and strengths and barriers within community-based education programs.

Additionally, NCIM partnered with people and organization across Turtle Island to host viewing parties locally. There were almost 400 attendees, plus 100 who attended local viewings, and 38 responded to a post-event survey. We received positive feedback from 91% of survey respondents, and received suggestions for future sessions, including how to support gender diverse clients, policy management, colonialisms impact on birth, and more knowledge from Elders and positive birth stories.



INDIGENOUS MIDWIFERY VIDEOS

We launched NCIM's advocacy videos (NCIM and our work; birth evacuation; community-based midwifery education; and responding to anti-Indigenous racism in care settings) which have been a huge success. These videos are important to get the message out publicly in a very accessible and simple way that Indigenous midwives are here, we do meaningful work, and families should not be separated for birth as a matter of routine. Next, we are creating a final video in the series about child apprehension.

In tandem with the video on evacuations, NCIM launched a communications campaign on forced birth evacuations.

NCIM UNIVERSITY-BASED MIDWIFERY EDUCATION SURVEY ON ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM

In 2024, NCIM laid the foundation for its first national Anti-Indigenous Racism (AIR) Survey, set to launch in February 2025 across all six university-based Midwifery Education Programs (MEPs) in Canada. This national initiative builds on a successful pilot conducted with McMaster University and the University of British Columbia in early 2024. The AIR Survey is designed to assess how MEPs are embedding safety, equity, and accountability for Indigenous students, educators, and administrative staff; a significant step in NCIM's broader strategy to transform midwifery education and restore Indigenous birth sovereignty through structural change, informed by lived experience and community leadership.



ABOUT NCIM

The National Council of Indigenous Midwives (NCIM) exists to promote excellence in reproductive health care for Inuit, First Nations, and Métis women. We advocate for the restoration of midwifery education, the provision of midwifery services, and choice of birthplace for all Indigenous communities consistent with the U.N. Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As active members of the Canadian Association of Midwives, we represent the professional development and practice needs of Indigenous midwives to the responsible health authorities in Canada and the global community. Indigenous Midwives enable access to culturally-safe sexual and reproductive health care for Indigenous families, the return of birth to Indigenous communities, and a reduction in the number of medical evacuations for births in remote areas.

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CAM ACSF

Midwives for everyone, everywhere
Des sages-femmes pour tous, partout