



Volunteer Mandate: Support the Development of In-service Training Material for Midwives

Somali Midwives for Improving Lives and Enhancing SRH (SMILES) project

Summary

The Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM) in collaboration with the Somaliland Midwifery, Nursing Association (SLNMA), the Somalia Midwives Association (SOMA) and Puntland Association of Midwives (PAM) wishes to recruit **three (3) Canadian midwife volunteers** to support the development of an in-service training package as a part of the Somali Midwives for Improving Lives and Enhancing SRH (SMILES) project.

Midwife In-service Training Volunteer

Timeframe: approximately 15 days of work (105 hours) in total, non-consecutive, to be completed by October 2026.

Location: Remote.

This volunteer assignment is an opportunity for three Canadian midwives with experience in developing educational content and/or facilitating in-service training to contribute their expertise to strengthening midwifery practice in Somalia and Somaliland. Each volunteer will be paired with one of three partner midwifery associations (SLNMA, PAM or SOMA) to support the development of a six-module in-service training package designed to strengthen the knowledge and skills of practicing midwives.

Working collaboratively with a Somali consultant and the assigned midwifery association, the volunteer will provide technical guidance throughout the development process. This will include supporting an environmental scan of existing in-service training resources from the partner midwifery associations and other organizations working in Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn, Child, and Adolescent Health (RMNCAH), identifying relevant evidence-based resources and best practices, and contributing to the development and review of training content and accompanying learning materials.

The assignment is expected to require approximately 15 days (105 hours) per volunteer. The work can be completed remotely on a flexible, self-directed schedule, allowing volunteers to contribute at times that accommodate their availability while meeting agreed-upon milestones.

CAM will provide support to the volunteers by facilitating their access to relevant documentation and materials as needed, overseeing overall coordination of the assignment, and arranging introductory and coordination meetings between each volunteer and their respective MA.



Background to the Placement

The SMILES project is a 5-year initiative funded by Global Affairs Canada and led by CARE Int. Canada, in partnership with CAM, CARE Int. Somalia, SOMA, PAM and SLNMA. The Ultimate Outcome of this project is to contribute to improved SRHR for Somali women and adolescent girls (ages 15–49) in targeted areas of Somalia and Somaliland.

The project focuses on reducing SRHR access barriers by increasing the availability of qualified midwives and strengthening rights-based, gender-responsive services by strengthening, among other things, in-service midwives' ability to deliver high-quality, gender-responsive care (immediate Outcome 1120), recognizing that a critical factor in reducing maternal mortality is ensuring access to skilled birth attendants at every birth.

Although Somali midwives are among the most important healthcare providers for improving maternal and newborn health outcomes, decades of conflict, insecurity and more recently prolonged climate extreme events (drought and floods) have fragilized the health workforce, including the midwifery profession.

The SMILES baseline assessment found that only 38.6% of midwives working in project-supported health facilities demonstrated proficiency in midwifery care, based on their recall of critical elements across relevant clinical topics. Midwives' confidence in delivering rights-based sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) care was also assessed using eleven confidence-related items¹, yielding an overall mean score of 3.19 out of 5. Confidence was notably lower in soft skills and rights-based practices than in clinical knowledge, underscoring the need for targeted training, mentorship, and supportive supervision.

To enhance midwifery clinical skills and confidence with the aim of improving the quality of care, the MAs will design, develop and deliver an in-service training program that will be delivered in the project's targeted health facilities. Training will strengthen midwives' competencies while integrating gender-responsive and climate-responsive approaches to education and the provision of health care.

Goal and Objectives of Placement

The goal of this placement is to contribute to improving the quality of reproductive and sexual health care at the project's targeted health facilities by supporting three MAs and their consultants in Somalia and Somaliland in the development of a six-module in-service training package for midwives

Specific objectives include:

¹ The right-based confidence items used in the assessment are the following: confidence counselling adolescent girls on Family Planning (FP) options; managing FP side-effects/complications; screening adolescent girls & women for Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) during routine care; referring/linking survivors to appropriate services; protecting privacy and confidentiality during labour and birth; respecting client preferences (positions, cultural practices); advocating for respectful, dignified maternity care in workplace; supporting client's choice of birth companion; managing situations when colleagues are not respectful; balancing respectful care with clinical urgency in emergencies; supporting informed decision-making when a client declines a recommended intervention.

- Review and provide input to MAs and their consultants in the preparation of an environmental scan of currently used in-service training resources in Somalia and Somaliland.
- Review and refine the six-module in-service training package that will be developed by the MAs and their consultants.

Methodology and Approach to the Volunteer Mandate:

1. Parties Involved – During the volunteer mandate, collaboration will occur between the following actors:

- Canadian midwife volunteers
- Midwifery Associations: SLNMA, SOMA and PAM.
- Somali Midwife Consultants who have been hired by the MAs.
- CAM Project Coordinator for SMILES.
- CAM Midwifery Technical Expert.

Methods

- 1. Environmental scan:** The MAs with their consultants, will conduct a scan that will assess the availability of existing in-service training material that address the clinical skills and knowledge gaps that were identified in the project's baseline and CPD needs assessment. It will identify materials that can be used as is, those that require adaptation and what training material needs to be developed. The role of the Canadian midwife volunteer is to review and provide input of a draft version of the environment scan.
 - 2. Consultative meetings:** The Canadian midwife volunteer will have the opportunity to meet with the MAs and their consultants to identify areas of support in the development of the in-service training materials.
- **Support in the development of training materials:** The adaptation of existing and development of new in-service training materials will be led by the MAs and their consultants. The in-service training material includes facilitator and participant manuals, agenda, pre and post-tests, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), slide presentations, training handouts and any other relevant materials. The Canadian midwife volunteer will provide technical support in the review and refining of the six training modules ensuring that the material is relevant, practical and aligned with identified training needs. Of particular note, the Canadian midwife volunteer will:
 - a. Ensure the draft materials are evidence-based, competency-focused, and aligned with national clinical guidelines and the three-year midwifery diploma curriculum, WHO recommendations, and relevant professional standards.
 - b. Incorporate principles of adult learning, simulation-based education, and climate- and gender-responsive, rights-based approaches throughout the materials.



3. Resources available

During the assignment, the volunteers will have access to the following resources:

- a) Ongoing support from CAM staff;
- b) Documentation related to the project.

CAM will support the volunteer with respect to assignment planning and coordination.

All questions and concerns before and after the placement should be directed to the CAM Project Coordinator.

Timeline

The development of the in-service training package is anticipated to take place between September and October 2026. During this period, volunteers will have the opportunity to collaborate with the project team, MAs and the consultants throughout this process.

CAM plans to hold a preparatory meeting at the beginning of September 2026 to introduce the project.

Volunteers are asked to submit an activity report at the end of their placement, ideally no later than November 2026.

Reporting

To support documentation of the mandate and capture key learning, volunteers will be asked to provide the following at the end of their placement:

1. An activity report summarizing the assignment, including key meetings, outputs, achievements and any challenges encountered. CAM will provide a report template.
2. A detailed timesheet documenting the hours worked and activities completed throughout the mandate. CAM will provide a time sheet template.

Qualifications and requirements

CAM is looking for Canadian midwives with the following qualifications:

- Be a registered Canadian Midwife
- Experience in the facilitation of in-service training and/or the development of the content and material of in-service training for midwives;
- Familiarity with adult principles of learning and rights-based approaches to care, including Respectful Maternity Care (RMC)
- Familiarity with concepts of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI)
- Cultural sensitivity and experience with cross-cultural communication;
- Flexibility and availability to participate in morning meetings with MAs in Somalia and Somaliland;
- Strong analytical and writing skills;

Assets:



- Experience collaborating with not-for-profit, development or humanitarian organizations.
- Knowledge of Somalia and/or the Horn of Africa region.
- Experience in working in low resource settings.

How to Apply

Interested applicants are requested to submit a CV and a cover letter that does not exceed 2 pages that outlines your qualifications and interest in the volunteer mandate.

The application should be sent to admin@canadianmidwives.org with the Subject Line: “SMILES In-service Training Support” no later than **August 23, 2026**.

For inquiries please contact: Letizia Gianfranceschi, CAM Project Coordinator for SMILES at lgianfranceschi@canadianmidwives.org