

# THE PINARD

Newsletter of the Canadian Association of Midwives

## “MIDWIVES ARE FEISTY VISIONARIES”

- Sophie Grégoire Trudeau  
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# LEADERSHIP MESSAGE

*Taanshi - Koolamalsi* - Hello, Greetings

By the time this Pinard arrives we are sure that most of your lands will be covered in *la niizh*- snow- and that you have been learning from and settling into this new season. As the incoming CAM president and junior NACM co-chair, we are pleased to have this opportunity to introduce ourselves and *attayooke*-tell our story- to our members and supporters. Languages are precious, they capture the very essence of a culture. We want to share some of our culture through the *Mechif* and **Lenape** language in this message.

I, Nathalie, am a francophone Métis midwife working in the employee model in Manitoba for 13 years, serving the diverse urban Indigenous community of Winnipeg. I am a singer/artist/activist who has a healthy appreciation for folks who speak their mind, consensus decision-making, and being outside. I identify with radical politics of body and land sovereignty.

I, Claire, am a Lenape-Potawatomi and mixed settler midwife working at Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto. I have worked at SGMT for the past five years and am dedicated to serving the urban Indigenous community. I am a proud auntie and enjoy cooking, baking, and canning. I am deeply committed to Indigenous body and land sovereignty and the roles that midwives can have in our fight for sovereignty.

This is a very exciting time to be involved with NACM/CAM! Our recent Global Health Symposium highlighted the contributions midwives can make to health work including the unique contributions of Indigenous midwifery. Through various panels we explored the shift from maternal health to sexual and reproductive health and justice. Many different people and organizations joined in on these important conversations including high level politicians, funders and policy makers, allied health professionals and, of course, midwives. All were interested in our unique model of association to association partnership to improve the health and wellbeing of all pregnant people and their families. The importance of the CAM/NACM relationship in supporting sexual and reproductive health and rights was also highlighted

at a gathering of parliamentarians from around the globe who joined CAM, NACM and our partners to learn about the important work of midwives in increasing access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.



Our national conference opened with the important words of Dr. Onye Nnorom and Louise McDonald to engage our members in tackling the critical issues of systemic racism in midwifery and Canadian healthcare in general. They spoke to confronting the uncomfortable questions, exposing the legacy of colonization and oppression that surround us, and moving from theory to creating real life change in a system, all while being within the system ourselves.

Our NACM gathering was in Kitigan Zibi. Every year the gathering is an important time for Indigenous midwives and students to support and gain strength from each other. This year was particularly special as we gathered in Mandy Commonda's territory where she has returned hoping to serve her community. We also discussed the work NACM is doing on our Indigenous Core Competencies framework and the exciting education opportunities that could come from that. **Anushiik** to NACM member Mandy, her family, and community for hosting us for a wonderful gathering.

*Waapan*- it's a new dawn- for CAM and NACM and what unites our members is our diversity and this is our strength. We hope that your national association is a place where you feel welcome, safe, represented and included. At CAM and NACM we recognize that midwives are as diverse in their practice as they are in their cultures and the communities they serve. What unites us all is our commitment to the health and well-being of our clients, their families, and communities.

Nathalie Pambrun, CAM President  
Claire Dion Fletcher, NACM Junior Co-Chair



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# MIDWIFERY GETS SOME HIGH-LEVEL ATTENTION AT CAM CONFERENCE

Sophie Grégoire Trudeau and Minister Karina Gould both addressed this year's CAM conference, giving CAM and NACM's leadership two great high-level advocacy opportunities.

Opening night remarks were delivered by the Honourable Karina Gould, MP for Burlington and Minister of Democratic Institutions, who gave a shout out to the midwives at Burlington Midwives who recently helped her deliver her son, outlined her government's actions towards creating gender equality, and spoke movingly about becoming a parent while a member of the House of Commons.

The opening address on the first day of the conference was by Sophie Grégoire Trudeau, an engaged advocate for gender equality and recipient of the 2013 UN Women National Committee Canada Recognition Award for her contribution to human rights. She honoured Indigenous midwives, spoke about the power of female relationships, and the importance of Canada and its allies continuing to pursue evidence-based policies for sexual and reproductive health.



## ABOUT MIDWIVES

*I can tell you from experience that bringing a baby into this world has a plethora of different emotions that accompany it. And midwives are there to guide you through it every step of the way, without judgment, and with an enormous amount of support.*

## ON BREASTFEEDING IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS:

*For me, [Gender Equality Week in Canada] was an opportunity to reflect on the last few months being a new mom and being back on Parliament Hill. For instance, imagine my surprise when breastfeeding in the House of Commons became a national and international news story.*

*It lends new meaning to the old phrase, "a woman's place is in the house."*

*...Looking back, I am glad the story made headlines. This story turned into an opportunity to normalize breastfeeding; something I was surprised still generated commentary. It may need to be done anywhere, at any time. No one should ever feel pressure not to feed their baby or be ashamed*

- Karina Gould

## ON INDIGENOUS MIDWIVES

*I want to pay respect and honour the Indigenous midwives, who were on this land before us and whose wisdom we can all acknowledge and forever be inspired by. It's so important that the traditional Indigenous midwives are beginning to re-emerge and integrate as a critical part of how and what it means to become a mother in this part of the world. Thank you to the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives and all the others past, present and future who support this integral and essential tradition.*



## ON KNOWING OUR STRENGTH

*Everywhere on this planet the implications of an empowered mother extend way beyond the first moments of motherhood. When a woman knows or is taught to feel how strong she naturally is, she realizes her potential and the value to her own family and to society. And this is the basis for a prosperous and equal society.*

- SOPHIE GRÉGOIRE TRUDEAU

# FIRST GLOBAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM A SUCCESS

## CAM GLOBAL HEALTH SYMPOSIUM

CAM hosted its first Global Symposium on Reproductive Health and Rights in October. Over 200 attendees, including CAM member midwives, midwives from the Global South, and interested international development practitioners listened to more than twenty speakers from Canadian and international NGOs, and fellow midwifery associations from around the world. Conversations throughout the day revolved around two anchoring themes: that everyone should have the right to full sexual and reproductive health services, wherever they are in the world, and that midwives play a vital role in ensuring that people, especially women and girls, can access reproductive and sexual health and rights.



## WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER: NORTH-SOUTH COLLABORATION & THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUITY

Dr. Sebalda Leshabari, General Secretary of the Tanzania Midwives Association, reminded the audience that, “We need well-educated midwives who are able to question the systems they work in – that’s what will save lives.” Throughout the day, this message resonated: when fully trained, and when supported by a strong association that can amplify individual voices into collective power, midwives can be powerful advocates fighting for transformation in their contexts.



Dr. Karline Wilson-Mitchell, Director of Midwifery at Ryerson University, who has worked in multiple contexts in the Global South, spoke of the transformative power of equitable partnerships. The midwifery model of collaboration, of working together as equals, can be a model for development practice everywhere. Speaking from her own personal experience of collaboration for sustainable change, she pointed out that “We need to learn **with, from, and about** all the partners sitting at the table. That way, we co-create knowledge and build equality.”

## LEADING THE WAY FOR INTER-



## PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION

The keynote speaker, Dr. Peter Johnson, Director of Nursing and Midwifery at Jhpiego and a midwife, began by noting that, “to be a midwife is to be **a mentor, an advocate, and a leader.**” He reflected on the successes of Jhpiego’s work with midwives, work that begins from the premise that when you work with midwives, you work for mothers, you work for babies, and you work for communities – in all of these areas, midwives are vital forces for change. He reminded Canadian midwives of their expert knowledge about the challenges and possibilities of supporting women and families in rural areas – Canada is a rural nation, and despite our many differences with countries in the Global South, we face similar challenges about access to healthcare for rural and remote communities. Dr. Johnson ended with an inspiring call to action: midwives can make stronger contributions to building sustainable and healthy communities and families, when they collaborate with other professions and lift those professions up.

The panel discussions that followed included: the challenges of providing access to full-spectrum reproductive healthcare and rights; models for best practice in monitoring rights-based sexual and reproductive health programming; the complexities of engaging various groups in questioning and challenging gendered power relationships; and some of the ways Indigenous midwives are making their voices heard and enabling change. Finally, Ambroccka Kabeya, President of the Congolese Midwives Association, and Siamia Lako Lado, South Sudan Midwife Analyst at UNFPA, spoke to the group about the power of partnerships.

Please look for a more detailed summary of the panel discussions on the CAM Global Website at <https://cam-global.org/stories/>.

# NACM GATHERING IS ALL ABOUT EDUCATION

On the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its official establishment, over 30 NACM members gathered at Kitigan Zibi on October 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. The NACM Gathering is a time for NACM members to connect, share about their work and communities, learn, and plan for the future of Indigenous midwifery in Canada.

During the Gathering, NACM members took time to honour Elder midwives Lesley Paulette, Darlene Birch, Akinisie Qumulak and Leah Qinuajuak. They also learned about NACM member Mandy Commonda's work to bring midwifery to her home community of Kitigan Zibi.

The theme of this year's event was *Where there are services, there will be education*, so members spent much of their time discussing the Core Competencies Project and discussing their vision around NACM's education strategy.

Members thanked Melissa Brown for her work as Co-Chair for the past two years and welcomed Claire Dion Fletcher as the new Co-Chair working with Carol Couchie. Claire practices midwifery at Seventh Generation Midwives in Toronto and is a lecturer and the Aboriginal Student Coordinator at the Ryerson Midwifery Education Program.



## NACM'S CORE COMPETENCIES IN INDIGENOUS MIDWIFERY PROJECT

NACM's vision for education, *Where there are services, there will be education*, inspired it to begin to articulate the core competencies of Indigenous midwifery. The Core Competencies Project aims to increase the pathways to education, decolonize training experiences and support retention. The project will build a National Indigenous Midwifery Competency Framework to serve as a national occupational standard and conduct an occupational survey to ascertain the size and profile of the Indigenous midwifery sector, expected attrition and anticipated employment patterns in the future. The final component of the project is to undertake a public engagement strategy with government, midwifery associations, midwifery education programs, and stakeholders in Canada.

The project kicked off last July, when a representative group of Indigenous midwives from different geographic regions, registered and exemption midwives, First Nations, Inuit and Metis midwives, with different levels of experience, met in Toronto. The meeting was facilitated by the Competency Group, and the midwives spent two days mapping out the unique roles of Indigenous midwives and the aspects of care that they provide.

The reality for too many Indigenous people of having to travel hundreds of kilometres to give birth is also true for Indigenous peoples accessing education programs. This project aims to create multiple routes of entry for aspiring Indigenous midwives while concurrently supporting Indigenous midwives to establish practices in their home communities in order to bring birth closer to home.

NACM member Cherylee Bourgeois is the Project Lead to support the development of the Framework and NACM member Evelyn George is working as the Partnership Development Coordinator to support the public engagement strategy. The project being conducted in partnership with SCC, is funded by Johnson & Johnson, and concludes in July 2019.

# CAM'S 17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

This year's conference was held in Gatineau, Quebec and welcomed more than 370 delegates. Highlights included:

- Dr. Onye Nnorom on the effects of systemic racism on maternal health
- Louise McDonald on the impacts of the residential school system on Indigenous family life and how to move forward with the help of Indigenous midwives and traditional ceremony
- Dr. Ariel Dalfen on common mental health issues in pregnancy and post-partum
- Sophie Grégoire Trudeau on the importance of midwives: "Midwives are feisty visionaries!"



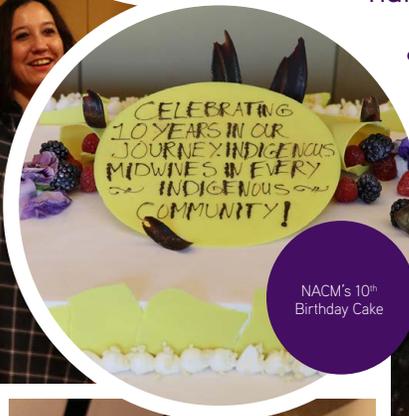
Nathalie Pambrun, Katrina Kilroy, Dr. Onye Nnorom, and Tonia Occhionero after opening Keynote address



Dr. Karline Wilson-Mitchell



Joyce Leaf, Louise McDonald, Carol Couchie, Ellen Blais and Julie Wilson after first morning keynote



NACM's 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday Cake



The Honourable Karina Gould with Tanzanian midwife Dr. Sebalda Leshabari and Ethiopian midwife Azeb Zeleke



Teresa Banderowska



Benin midwife Marcelle Totchenou with Canadian midwife Isabelle Brabant

# CONFERENCE AND EXHIBIT



Dr. Peter Johnson and Maria Christina Johnson with Haitian artwork



Outgoing CAM President, Katrina Kilroy, after saying good-bye at conference



Partner HIROC had a comfortable spot for midwives to connect



Kirsty Bourret and Bev O'Brien



Candy, games and lots of dancing at the Social



Indigenous Panel - Midwifery in the Atlantic, Moderator Gisela Becker, FNIHB Atlantic Region, Maternal Health Nurse, Tracy Lovett, First Nations Midwife Alisha Julien Reid, and NACM Co-Chair Carol Couchie



The Necessity of Vitamin D Adequacy during Pregnancy: Results of Clinical Trials and An Ongoing Field Study

Carol L. Wagner<sup>1</sup>, John E. Baatz<sup>2</sup>, Danforth Newton<sup>1</sup>, Judy R. Shary<sup>1</sup>, Martin Hewison<sup>3</sup>, Wei Wei<sup>4</sup>, Carole A. Baggerly<sup>4</sup>, and Bruce W. Hollis<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Dept of Pediatrics, Medical University of SC, Charleston, SC;  
<sup>2</sup>Institute of Metabolism & Systems Research, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, UK  
<sup>3</sup>BioStatistics, Yale University, New Haven, CT  
<sup>4</sup>Grassroots Health, Encinitas, CA



Dr. Carol Wagner presents "The Benefits of Vitamin D Supplementation During Pregnancy" on behalf of sponsor Natural Factors



Indigenous Midwifery Students Rachel Bach and Alyssa Gagnon present "Learning from Students - Indigenizing Midwifery Education Programs" with Indigenous midwife Claire Dion Fletcher

# HAVINGABABY.CO MAKES ITS DEBUT AT CAM CONFERENCE

CAM has been working hard this year on public engagement, most notably a public-facing website and resources focused on evidence-based, respectful and consensual care. The site has been created by CAM in partnership with midwife consultants from across the country and was beta launched to our members at the 2018 CAM Conference in Gatineau, QC. The beta launch was an important step for CAM to further consult members on the needs of their diverse clients, diverse practice models and locations. Response was excellent, and we received invaluable information from attendees to further focus the site content.

This website was officially launched on December 12<sup>th</sup>, 2018. You can visit the site and direct your clients here: <https://havingababy.co/>

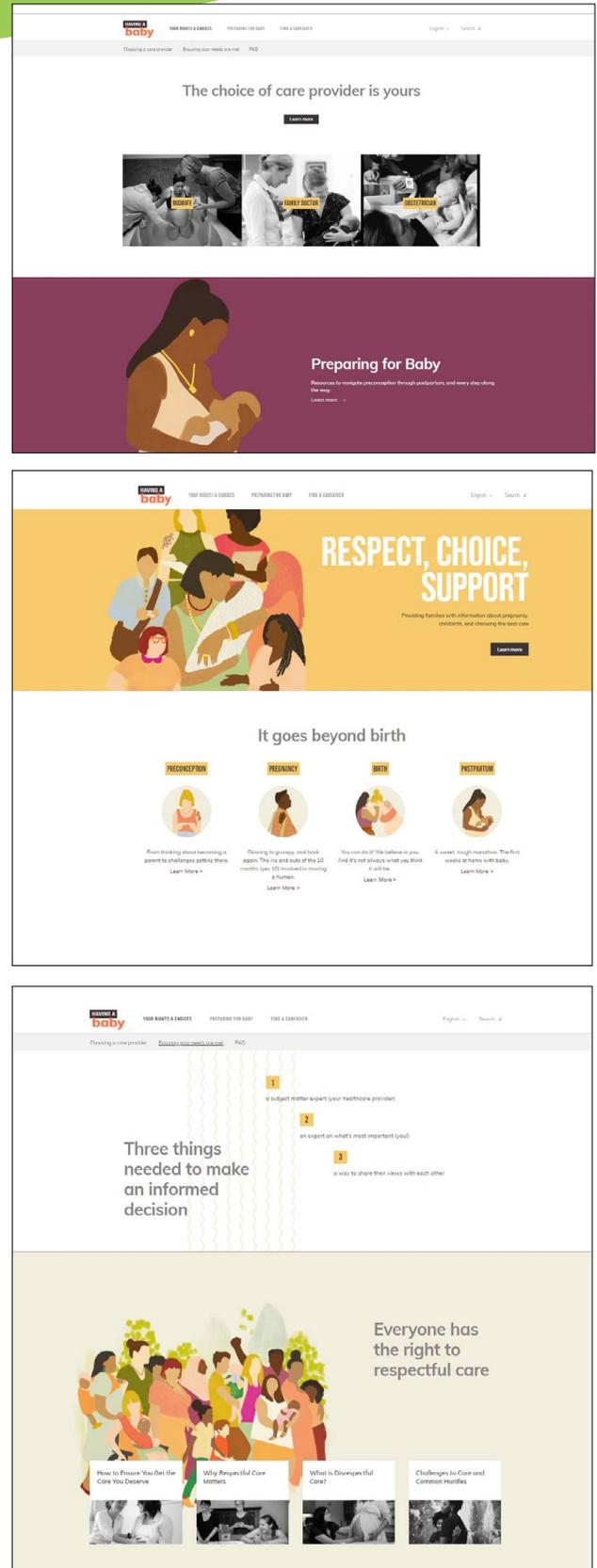
Plans for the future of the site include:

- Expanding the reach of the public website via promotion, connections with partner organizations, and new material for new audiences;
- Ensuring that the website becomes and remains interactive and relevant for people giving birth, through video content, possible live-chat features, and up-to-date and evolving content.

In the coming months the public engagement team will be working with the National Aboriginal Council of Midwives to review and add content to the website to ensure that content is relevant for Indigenous audiences.

The goal of this project is to position CAM as a leader in public health information about pregnancy and birth and we are looking forward to additional projects with other funders in this vein.

We appreciate your interest and comments. Please send your feedback on the website by contacting Jo Muise, Public Engagement and Research Coordinator, at [jmuise@canadianmidwives.org](mailto:jmuise@canadianmidwives.org).



# CAM HOSTS PARLEMENTARIANS PROMOTING REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH AND RIGHTS



On October 22, CAM showcased midwives' efforts to save lives and speak up for the rights of women and girls around the world and in South Sudan in particular. More than 200 international parliamentarians were in Ottawa to attend a high-level conference on population and development. CAM, in partnership with UNFPA South Sudan and Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights, celebrated the accomplishments of the Global Affairs Canada-funded *Strengthening Midwifery Services in South Sudan* Project. As well as international delegates, Canadian parliamentarians took an active interest in the event – notable attendees included: Minister of Global Affairs and La Francophonie, Marie-Claude Bibeau; Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Carolyn Bennett; Minister of Democratic Institutions, Karina Gould; MP for Pontiac (QC), William Amos; MP for Vaughan-Woodbridge (ON), Francesco Sorbara; MP for London-Fanshawe (ON), Irene Mathysen; MP for Sarnia-Lambton (ON), Marilyn Gladu; and Senator Marilou McPhedran.

## GLOBAL DELEGATES LEARN ABOUT CAM'S WORK

CAM's reception aimed to be interactive, with learning stations where parliamentarians could practice delivering babies using emergency skills models, documentaries produced about the SMSII project, and information booths. Hands on learning opportunities for delegates reflected the key components of the SMSII project and emphasized the power of partnership and mutual capacity building. Canadian midwives involved with the SMSII project, as well international midwives from CAM Global's other projects, and Canadian and NACM midwives, engaged with parliamentarians through conversations throughout the evening on the role of midwives in promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.

## WHY WERE 200 INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARIANS IN OTTAWA?

IPCI stands for the International Parliamentarians' Conference on the Implementation of the ICPD Program of Action. The 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo articulated a bold new vision about the relationships between population, development and individual well-being. At the ICPD, 179 countries adopted a forward-looking, 20-year Program of Action that built on the success of the population, maternal health and family planning program of the previous decades while also bringing a rights-based perspective to population work for the first time. Instead of just focusing on controlling population growth, as previous conferences on population had done – an agenda that many in the global south perceived as racist – the Cairo Consensus acknowledged for the first time that women's empowerment and gender equality are cornerstones of population and development program.

Women's rights and gender equality worldwide continue to be fraught topics, and building consensus is hard, making IPCI more vital than ever. IPCI conferences gather motivated parliamentarians, many of them young women, from around the world, every two years to reassert the need for the ICPD agenda, and to keep resources focused on achieving equality for women, and access to reproductive health and rights for women, girls, and families around the world. The first ever IPCI meeting was held in Ottawa in 2002, and it is a mark of Canada's leading role in women's rights worldwide that Canada again held this important meeting in 2018.

Watch: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NubSerOC40s>



Dr. Jan Christilaw; Hon. Senator Marilou McPhedran; NACM Co-Chair, Claire Dion Fletcher; NACM Partnership Development Coordinator, Evelyn George; Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations, Carolyn Bennett; CAM Treasurer and NACM member Sara Wolfe; NACM Co-Chair, Carol Couchie; NACM Core Leader, Cherylee Bourgeois.



Global Affairs Minister Marie-Claire Bibeau observes a demonstration of Midwifery Emergency Skills Training by midwives Ambrocckha Kabeya and Aurelie Thethe Lukasa from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

# SAJ FANM POU FANM SENDS DELEGATES TO CAM CONFERENCE



UNFPA Midwife Vardine Jean-Baptiste, SFPF Project Officer Véronique Plouffe, and Midwives Marthe-Elvire Fenelon and Nadia Jeanty

The objective of the Saj Fanm Pou Fanm (SFPF) Project is to help build the Haitian government’s capacity to train, recruit, hire and support midwives. The five-year project is funded by Global Affairs Canada (GAC) and led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The aim is to reduce maternal and infant mortality by improving women and girls’ sexual and reproductive health by strengthening the role of midwifery. CAM is currently assisting with the drafting of legislation to regulate the profession in Haiti and supporting training of midwives.

CAM has worked with the Haitian Nurses and Midwives Association (AISFH) since 2009 to support a long-term plan aimed at strengthening the three pillars of quality maternal and newborn health care in the country – education, regulation and association.

This year, the AISFH sent two midwives, Marthe-Elvire Fenelon and Nadia Jeanty, to attend the CAM conference. They were joined by Vardine Jean-Baptiste who works for UNFPA in Haiti. Highlights of the experience for the Haitian midwives included observing the CAM Annual General Meeting, the Indigenous content, and visiting the Ottawa and Gatineau birth centres.

The Haitian midwives also participated in the South-South side meeting, which gathered together the delegates from all the countries where CAM Global operates, to share about the successes and challenges they face in strengthening their associations and the profession their countries.

Marthe-Elvire Fenelon mentioned in her presentation to the South-South meeting that SFPF will allow the AISFH to address the lack of legislation and a professional order, problems of access to nursing and midwifery care, and difficult working conditions with respect to salary and working hours.



Haitian midwives at CAM Annual General Meeting



Commenting at the South-South Meeting

# PROVIDING RESPECTFUL MATERNITY CARE TRAINING IN SOUTH SUDAN

"I think every midwife ought to step out of their comfort zone – whether just out of their own community or to another country," said midwife Bev Langlois, after her first trip to South Sudan. "It's important to see that people are just people and appreciate what other people experience and how they live." She decided to apply to go to South Sudan to participate in the Strengthening Midwifery Services in South Sudan project as a midwife consultant to share her knowledge and skills and see how midwifery is practiced in another country.



Bev Langlois and Barb Leggett meet with Doris Lamumu, Capacity Building Officer for South Sudan Nurses and Midwives Association (SSNAMA), Judith Draluru, International United Nations Volunteer Midwife working at the Juba College for Nursing and Midwifery and Daniel Lavigueur, CAM Field Officer in South Sudan.

She travelled with nurse Barb Leggett and gave a workshop on Respectful Maternity Care (RMC). Bev and Barb offered the 3-day workshop to 30 people from around the country, mostly midwives and some nurses. They spent two and a half days teaching the respectful maternity care material, reserving the last half day for the participants to take the material they'd just learned and practice teaching it to each other. She said that the South Sudanese seemed to love the group exercises and opportunities to act out scenarios. They brought up many experiences from their own lives, and even though many participated in Arabic, she could see they were getting a lot out of the material. Still, it was a reality check when they were asked what might stop them from spreading the word about midwifery care, and the response was often, the fear for their lives and that of their family.

Bev emphasized that women need to trust midwives and health care workers to want to give birth in health centres. In the past, if a woman was unable to pay for the care she received, they would keep the baby until she could. There was little privacy for visits, midwives receiving women in groups, and the treatment was different for women depending on who they were.

One of the most gratifying experiences for Bev occurred when she was visiting maternity centres in Juba just days after delivering the workshop. The visits were unannounced, but nonetheless when she visited she saw them already implementing some aspects of the RMC, for example, they were looking for ways to be able to see clients one at a time in private spaces.

Bev said that disrespectful care and abuse can be from midwives, traditional birth attendants, nurses, doctors and administrators, but the focus of the RMC workshop is teaching nurses and midwives, so they can influence their facility and everyone at it in a safe way. "They need to share what they learned but say it in ways that people don't get angry with them," she said, noting that they can't make these changes by themselves; they need to go back to their communities and get their feedback and participation.



Group stretch at the RMC Workshop



This year's Annual Report is available in English and French as a **CALENDAR!**

Order your calendar at the CAM Shop online, at <https://canadianmidwives.org/cam-shop/>

**NOT INTERESTED IN THE CALENDAR?**

You can read a summary of the Annual Report on the CAM website at <https://canadianmidwives.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Annual-Report-2017-2018.pdf>

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Provincial and Territorial Updates are **NOW ONLINE**



## NACM SUPPORTIVE MEMBERSHIPS

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<https://canadianmidwives.org/product/nacm-supportive-membership/>



**NACM**  
NATIONAL ABORIGINAL  
COUNCIL OF MIDWIVES