



A total of 450 nurses and midwives from governmental and non-governmental institutions as well as nursing and midwifery students from the 18 states of Sudan gathered for between 19 and 20 December 2017 during the First National Nursing and Midwifery Conference under the theme “Nursing is a life message”

The conference was the first of its kind in Sudan and was coordinated jointly by the Professional Specialist Federation of Sudanese Nursing and WHO under “**the Sudan Free of Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting (FGM/C) Programme**” supported by UKAID under the patronage of Sudan's Health Minister, Mr. Bahar Idris Abu Garda.

The overall goal of the conference was to emphasize the role of the nurses and midwives in strengthening the health and its resilience. With a specific focus on ways around how to support the enforcement and functionality of the accountability framework for nurses and midwives towards the abandonment and de-medicalization of Female Genital Mutilation/ Cutting and better integration and retention of nurses and midwives.

Dr. Naeema Al Gasseer, WHO's Representative in Sudan, called upon nurses and midwives in Sudan to be proactive in contributing to the draft National Health Policy 2030 currently being drafted . She stressed on demonstrating by cumulative evidence in achieving universal health coverage as one of the key pillars of health workforce based on Sudan declaration 2005 on strengthen nursing and midwifery.

Sudan's Health Minister, Mr. Bahar Idris Abu Garda, stated that nursing and midwifery are among the most important, crucial issues in the health sector if we are able to discuss through this conference how to improve through a vision, a message as well as the specific axes and papers presented the issues of midwifery and nursing can improve health services at all levels

A number of papers were presented mainly addressing the role of nurses and midwives in developing and implementing the national health policies as well as the role of midwives in achieving the SDGs. Strengthening nursing and midwifery management and leadership skills have been also discussed in addition to their key role in maternal and child health at the different levels the status, challenges and way forward for nursing and midwifery

The conference has also witnessed great and strong mobilization of nurses and midwives against FGM/C to which they have vocally pledged against. Around 400 nurses and midwives have signed pledges against FGM/C and the medicalization of the practice.

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