



Midwives in Kutum, North Darfur during a maternal death review workshop. To address the challenges of maternal health services and the high maternal mortality rate (MMR) in Darfur, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, World Health Organization and the United Nations Population Fund will launch the Midwife Training Centre in Kutum, North Darfur (ND) in January 2014. This project is also in line with the Ministry of Health's strategic direction in building capacities to address the severe human resource shortage.

The project covers the establishment of a fully furnished and equipped midwifery training centre with a capacity of training 80 students at a time, and the training of the first batch of midwives.

Darfur has been challenged by the shortage and inequitable distribution of human resource for health including midwives. The average coverage of midwifery services in ND is 34.6% with a range of 5.8% (Dar Selam) to 96.7% (Umkadada).

The shortage of midwives who can timely detect high risk pregnancies is a key factor that contributes to high MMR, particularly in rural areas, where there are no easily accessible means of transportation . According to SMoH figures in 2012, Kutum locality accounted for 25% of obstructed labor cases reported from rural hospitals.

Taking into consideration the magnitude of the MRR and the recovery efforts, strengthening the health delivery system and particularly the human resource for health component by establishing a midwifery training center is a much needed intervention that can have a high

impact.

After completion of the midwifery course, the midwives will be deployed to rural villages in North Darfur to address the unmet needs in maternal health interventions such as family planning, antenatal care, and delivery by a skilled attendant. The establishment of the midwifery school will support the MoH target to assign at least one midwife per village.

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