

Pre-Service Strengthening

Integrated Pre-Service Strengthening

Strong basic clinical education systems are akin to preventive medicine, saving precious time and resources by producing qualified, competent graduates. In-service trainings can then be used judiciously to focus on clinical updates or expanding skills beyond basic competencies rather than on the foundations of clinical practice. Worldwide there has been a historic focus on in-service training to the detriment of adequate pre-service training. This creates a vicious cycle whereby ever more in-service training is needed as new graduates are not prepared to carry out core competencies. MDG #5 has helped move attention towards pre-service, but the pressure to increase the number of skilled attendants for birth has led to an initial concentration on the number, not quality of graduates. This only serves to further perpetuate the problem. Schools often admit more students than they have the capacity to train; there is little incentive to become a tutor; school infrastructure and equipment is often lacking; curricula, learning guides and teaching styles are out of date and students have limited supervision and ability to practice skills during their clinical rotations.

Strengthening pre-service education involves addressing both the underlying national supporting architecture and site specific needs. The supporting architecture includes things which affect the entire system: development of tutors; recruitment and retention strategies; school accreditation systems; funding and procurement mechanisms; and national curricula. Usually these components form the base of the system and push change down and out to the individual schools. However, depending on the context, change can also push upwards from the schools to inform the broader system.

The Department of Global Outreach at ACNM works to strengthen pre-service

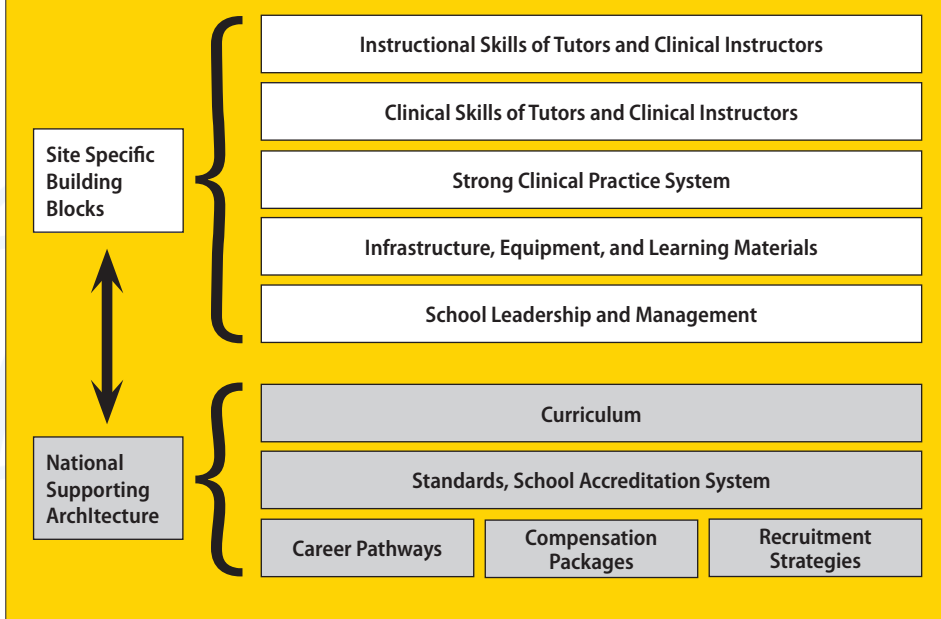
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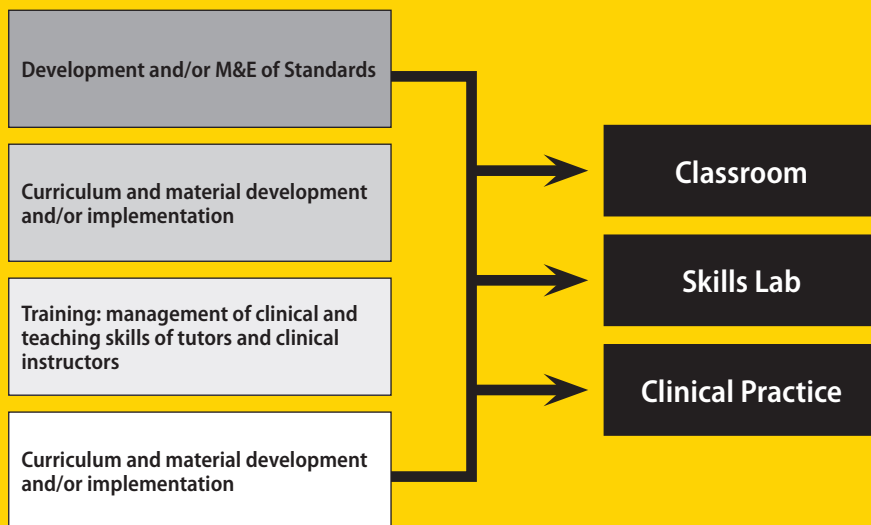


Architecture of a Pre-Service System



Improving the health and well-being of women and infants worldwide through strengthening the profession of midwifery.

Integrated Midwifery Pre-Service Site Strengthening



midwifery education programs through an integrated approach that focuses on fully enabling and creating continuity between the three main learning environments: 1) the classroom 2) skills lab and 3) clinical practice area. For each environment, standards, curricula, and teaching materials are reviewed, created, and/or implemented; the teaching and management skills of faculty and preceptors are improved; and adequate infrastructure, equipment, and supplies are procured. ACNM is currently evaluating specific components and activities within this integrated approach in a program in Ghana to identify those with the highest transformative potential. If full-scope programs are not feasible, ACNM works with schools, nursing and midwifery councils, ministries of health, health development partners and donors to identify priority needs. Under the USAID funded ACCESS program, ACNM provided technical assistance to develop a Basic Emergency Obstetric Care (BEmOC) curriculum and implement faculty training in Ghana, Ethiopia, Malawi, and Tanzania; whereas in a current USAID funded project in Zambia,



pre-service strengthening will focus solely on the skills labs and implementing high fidelity simulations.

As with all its work, ACNM places a premium on optimizing the capacity building potential of each activity. Teachers and preceptors/clinical instructors are engaged in the development and monitoring and evaluation of all standards, teaching materials, and management plans. Teachers are also prepared as trainers to carry out teaching and clinical updates for preceptors/clinical instructors.

Overview of ACNM's Global Expertise

As the professional organization of certified nurse-midwives and certified midwives in the U.S., ACNM and its Department of Global Outreach are uniquely positioned to lead efforts in strengthening the profession of midwives and other health care workers around the world. Over the past three decades through working in more than 30 countries, DGO has developed invaluable institutional knowledge of the components required to build a profession that creates competent and qualified providers. By calling on the programmatic and technical expertise of its staff and membership, ACNM can provide support for the full range of clinical maternal and newborn health topics.

The following are areas of expertise:

- Development and implementation of in-service training systems
- Integrated pre-service strengthening
- Strengthening of midwifery and other health professions
- Community education and mobilization

ACNM emphasizes partnership and capacity building with both individuals and organizations and incorporates flexibility and creativity with evidence-based best practices. A systems approach which improves accountability is employed to support quality of care. Leadership from ACNM staff is initially provided while simultaneously strengthening the locus of control and ownership of projects within countries.

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