

Progress on the global Nursing Now campaign

Catherine Betty Odeke looks at the campaign to date

Nursing now is a three-year global campaign, covering the period 2018-2020, ahead of the 200th anniversary of Florence Nightingale's birth. It is now a year since the celebration for Nurses and Midwives worldwide started. The campaign is run in collaboration with the World Health Organization and the International Council of Nurses. The campaign is also a programme of the Burdett Trust for Nursing and seeks to empower nurses and midwives to take their place at the heart of 21st century health challenges. It further seeks to improve health globally by raising the profile and status of nursing and midwifery services, to enhance the nurses' and midwives' influence and to maximise their contribution to the achievement of the Universal Health Coverage.

Nursing Now also focuses on conducting research that helps determine where nurses and midwives can have the greatest impact, as well as sharing the best nursing and midwifery practices.

The campaign's Florence Nightingale challenge 2020 aims to give the young nurses and midwives the skills they need to play an even more influential role in global health. It will also help with recruitment and demonstrate that nursing and midwifery are exciting professions.

Through the campaign, nurses and midwives will be provided with links that will enable employers to partner with others locally, regionally and globally, sharing ideas and learning from each other. It will also allow young nurses and midwives to create networks and platforms for learning and mutual support, enable them to have a voice at all levels.

Nursing Now will also offer guidance on programmes as required and facilitate access to regional and global leadership and development programmes.

Achievements

Uganda and Singapore were the first countries selected globally to pilot the campaign; many other countries have since joined. Nurses and midwives continue to lead and own the campaign. So far, the following achievements have been realised:

- Commitment from the Permanent Secretary, Uganda Ministry of Health who is the overall leader and champion of the campaign.
- Committees to spearhead the campaign formed and an organogram developed.
- Identified priority action areas to be bridged by each key thematic area (Regulatory, Education, Clinical

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- Practice, Policy and leadership) by 2020.
- Composed Nursing now Campaign anthem.
- Two young Nurses nominated by ICN under the support of WISH attended Pre-74th -World Health Assembly event in Geneva in April 2019.
- Two young Midwives nominated and represented young Midwives globally at International Congress of Midwives (ICM) 2019.
- Nursing now Campaign launched in various nursing and midwifery fora, districts and regions.
- Committed support from other health workers other than Nurses and Midwives, top district and regional leadership.
- Office space offered by Jhpiego Uganda and officially opened by CEO Dr. Leslie Mancuso to enable coordination of the campaign.
- Free screening of Non-Communicable Diseases during the Nursing now Campaign sensitisation and through the team of the young Nurse and Midwives representatives.
- Aga Khan University Uganda supported two days' advocacy & leadership training for 40 Nurses and Midwives leaders.
- Makerere University under the support of HPEPI project developed a draft curriculum on Masters in pediatrics Nursing which is undergoing the process of approval.

Challenges

Nursing Now has experienced some challenges which must be addressed: These include

- Advocacy, lobbying and leadership skills still need support
- Mentoring and development of young Nurses & Midwives not yet sufficient
- Specialisation in nursing and midwifery courses to meet the growing need
- Lack of financial support to implement Nursing now Campaign activities

The way forward is to:

- Continue with sensitisation on Nursing now Campaign in the remaining regions
- Mobilise resources to implement campaign planned activities
- Formation of National Nurses and Midwives Association
- Continue with identification and profiling of Nurses and Midwives involved in innovative activities.
- Involvement in the Florence Nightingale Challenge.