

# Recognizing Canada's Role in Strengthening Midwifery Services in South Sudan

Parliamentary Reception  
Ottawa, Canada  
May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Organized by the Canadian Association of Midwives



Canada 



# Invitations

CAM sent out invitations to:

- All Canadian Ministers
- All Members of Parliament
- All Senators
- Global Affairs Canada (multiple country departments)
- Members of CAN-WaCH (Cuso International, Plan Canada, CARE, MSF, Oxfam, Red Cross, Unicef Canada, IDRC, many more)
- Professional Associations (SOGC, CNA, CAPWHN)
- UNFPA Headquarters NY

Special invitations to participate included:

- Canadian midwife consultants working on SMSII
- 5 Canadian midwife Peers
- Midwife from South Sudan (National UNV and Peer)
- CAM Leadership
- Midwifery client with baby in Ottawa

Logistical support:

- CAM Staff
- National Public Relations

*\*approximately 70 Parliamentarians and Global Affairs Canada employees attended the event.*



## INVITATION

### Recognizing Canada's Role in Strengthening Midwifery Services in South Sudan

Wednesday May 10

3:30-5:00pm

Commonwealth Room – 238-S, Centre Block

To mark the International Day of the Midwife, join us in raising a glass and toasting the contributions that Canadian midwives make across the country and around the world. The Canadian Association of Midwives is the national organization representing over 1,700 practicing midwives in Canada. Canadian midwives provide care during pregnancy, birth and 6 weeks postpartum for over 38,000 families each year. CAM works in partnership with other national midwifery associations, in countries such as South Sudan, Bénin, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Haiti, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, enabling midwives to do life-saving work around the world. The Strengthening Midwifery Services in South Sudan Project, led by UNFPA and supported by the Government of Canada and others, has been instrumental in increasing the number of qualified professional midwives in South Sudan from 8 to over 250 today.

RSVP By May 5th: [midwives@national.ca](mailto:midwives@national.ca)

Parliamentarians, Staff & Stakeholders Welcome

## INVITATION

### Reconnaissance du rôle du Canada dans le renforcement des services de sage-femme au Soudan du Sud

Mercredi 10 mai

15h30 - 17h

À la salle du Commonwealth – 238-S, Édifice du Centre

Pour souligner la Journée internationale de la sage-femme, joignez-vous à nous pour lever un verre en l'honneur des contributions apportées par les sages-femmes canadiennes partout au pays et dans le monde. L'Association canadienne des sages-femmes (ACSF) est l'organisme national qui représente plus de 1 700 sages-femmes au Canada. Les sages-femmes au Canada offrent des soins de santé pendant la grossesse, à la naissance et durant les six semaines qui suivent la naissance, et ce, à plus de 38 000 familles chaque année. L'ACSF travaille en partenariat avec d'autres associations de sages-femmes nationales dans des pays comme le Soudan du Sud, le Bénin, l'Éthiopie, la Tanzanie, Haïti et la République démocratique du Congo afin de favoriser le travail vital des sages-femmes partout au monde. Le projet Renforcement des services de sage-femme du Soudan du Sud, dirigé par le UNFPA et financé majoritairement par Affaires Mondiales Canada, joue un rôle déterminant dans l'augmentation du nombre de sages-femmes professionnelles qualifiées au Soudan du Sud de 8 à plus de 250 aujourd'hui.

RSVP avant le 5 mai : [midwives@national.ca](mailto:midwives@national.ca)

Les parlementaires, le personnel et les intervenants sont bienvenus.



# Speakers

- ✓ **Katrina Kilroy**, CAM President and Master of Ceremony.
- ✓ The Honorable **Jane Philpott**, Minister of Health and Member of Parliament for Markham-Stouffville.
- ✓ **Joel Lightbound**, Member of Parliament for Louis-Hebert and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Health but representing the Minister of International Development, The Honorable Marie-Claude Bibeau.
- ✓ **Anju Dhillon**, Member of Parliament for Dorval-Lachine-LaSalle (Sponsor of the event).
- ✓ **Geeta Lal**, Senior Technical Advisor on Midwifery, UNFPA.
- ✓ **Justine Mangwi Juma Olimpio**, Midwife and National UNV, South Sudan.



Photo: Federal Parliament Building, Ottawa, Canada



Photo: The Honorable Jane Philpott, Minister of Health



# Media

Photo: Published in the Hill Times on May 8, 2017

## The global impact of Canadian midwives

On May 10, just five days after the International Day of the Midwife, the Canadian Association of Midwives will be celebrating its collaborative work in South Sudan at a reception on Parliament Hill.



Katrina Kilroy

Midwives

One well-trained and highly motivated midwife in South Sudan can make a difference in thousands of lives.

South Sudan is about the size of Manitoba, with a population just less than Ontario (12.35 million). However, that is where any similarities to Canada end. South Sudan, which is one of the world's newest countries, is also one of the poorest. It has a 27 per cent literacy rate (40 per cent for males compared to 16 per cent for females), over one-third of its population must walk more than a half-hour to access clean drinking water, and the country's economic and political systems

are still coping with a legacy of more than 50 years of conflict and civil war.

Additionally, South Sudan has among the world's highest maternal, newborn and child mortality rates. The numbers are staggering, particularly when compared to Canada and other high-resource countries. The infant mortality rate in South Sudan is 105 per 1,000 live births (more than 20 times the number in Canada), and the maternal mortality rate is 2,054 per 100,000 live births (Canada's rate is 11). One significant reason for these deaths is a critical shortage of skilled maternal and newborn health-care providers.

It is in this context that the Canadian Association of Midwives (CAM)—the national organization representing more than 1,700 midwives across Canada—was approached by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to make a difference. With support from Global Affairs Canada, the UNFPA, in partnership with South Sudan's Ministry of Health and the Canadian Association of Midwives, is working to

strengthen midwifery services in South Sudan. Led by experienced Canadian midwives and based on similar collaborations in five other under-resourced countries, our role has been to assist capacity building for local midwives and other health care providers. To date, 25 Canadian midwives have provided direct peer-to-peer mentoring support and technical support, either remotely or in-country.

CAM's approach to international work is based on reciprocity, respect and sustainability. Midwife Kelly Chisolm, from Halifax, who has traveled to Juba in South Sudan to support the project has said: "This is a project that isn't just going into a country and slapping a bandage on the problem and walking away. This has a level of sustainability which I'm hopeful will make difference to the South Sudanese people." Our unique peer-to-peer model emphasizes reciprocal capacity building between health care professionals. Not only does this approach better serve the people we are supporting, it also motivates the Canadian midwives who participate. They return with new skills and a broadened perspective on their profession that helps them work with a diversity of Canadian mothers and families.

With the project entering its second year, we have already seen results that have gone beyond the scope of improving maternal and child health. The



Marie-Claude Bibeau, minister of International Development and La Francophonie, and Global Affairs Canada, pictured in this file photo. *The Hill Times* photograph by Sam Garcia

midwives in South Sudan that we have worked with have emerged as leaders within their local communities and agents for change. They are advocates for sexual and reproductive health and rights for women and girls, as well as education rights for midwives and other health and education rights for women and girls.

We are grateful for the support from Marie-Claude Bibeau, minister of International Development and La Francophonie, and Global Affairs Canada. At a time when forward-thinking countries are looking for innovative approaches to international development, such as Sweden's introduction of a 'feminist foreign policy,' we see this project in South Sudan as a

perfect example of how a focus on women and girls can support an entire village, region and country.

On May 10, just five days after the International Day of the Midwife, the Canadian Association of Midwives will be celebrating its collaborative work in South Sudan at a reception on Parliament Hill (3:30 p.m.-5 p.m., Commonwealth Room, RSVP to [midwives@national.ca](mailto:midwives@national.ca)). We look forward to sharing with parliamentarians, the Government of Canada and the diplomatic community the successes of midwives in Canada and around the world.

Katrina Kilroy is president of the Canadian Association of Midwives.

*The Hill Times*



Photo: Interview with the Lobby Monitor





**Photo:** Geeta Lal (UNFPA), Justine Mangwi Juma Olimpio (Midwife NUNV South Sudan) , Anju Dhillon (Member of Parliament), Katrina Kilroy (CAM President), Tonia Occhionero (CAM Executive Director), Nathalie Pambrun (CAM Vice President)



**Photo:** Nathalie Pambrun (CAM Vice President), Justine Mangwi Juma Olimpio (Midwife NUNV South Sudan) , Angela Mione (Global Affairs Canada, Senior Program Manager, South Sudan), Susan Green (Global Affairs Canada, Director, South Sudan Division)



**Photo:** Commonwealth Room, Centre Block, Parliament Building  
(in the background Celina Caesar-Chavannes, Parliamentary  
Secretary to the Minister of International Development)



**Photo:** Honorable Jane Philpott (Minister of Health),  
Justine Mangwi Juma Olimpio (Midwife NUNV South Sudan),  
Nicole McCloud (SMSII Peer), Katrina Kilroy (CAM President)



**Photo:** Joyce Murray (Member of Parliament),  
Alix Bacon (SMSII Association Lead)





**Photo:** Joel Lightbound (Parliamentary Secretary Minister of Health), Justine Mangwi Juma Olimpio (Midwife NUNV South Sudan) ,



**Photo:** Canadian Peers SMSII with Alix Bacon and Tonia Occhionero



**Photo:** Deborah Bonser (Peer Lead SMSII), Anju Dhillon (Member of Parliament)





**Photo:** Justine Mangwi Juma Olimpio (Midwife NUNV South Sudan), Deborah Bonser (Peer Lead SMSII)

**Photo:** Tonia Occhionero (CAM Executive Director), Helene Laverdière (Member of Parliament and Critic for International Development), Emmanuelle Hébert (CAM Director Global Operations)



**Photo:** South Sudan and Canadian Midwife Peers Justine and Nicole demonstrating a birth to Member of Parliament Eva Nassif



- To read more about the event, visit:

<http://canadianmidwives.org/2017/05/10/parliament-hill-reception/>

*“[...] I want to say thank you to all of you who are investing of your time and energy, your skills and expertise to be able to support healthy birthing around the world, and it will be an honor to continue to partner with you.”*

*The Honorable Jane Philpott, May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017*

<http://canadianmidwives.org/>

<http://cam-global.org/>