



# CLASSROOM TO CARE - C2C

Strengthening the initial training of midwives and nurses to improve maternal and child health care in West Africa

## CONTEXT

Sub-Saharan Africa faces a critical shortage of qualified health workers, especially affecting maternal and child health care. In Mali, Niger, and Senegal, health worker availability is well below international standards, with **6.1 nurses, midwives, and doctors per 10,000 in Mali, 3.9 in Niger, and 4.3 in Senegal**. This shortage is acute in rural areas, severely limiting access to quality health care. Maternal and child health indicators are alarming, with maternal mortality rates **over 500 deaths per 100,000 live births in Mali and Niger, and 315 in Senegal**. Child mortality rates are also high.

Health professional training institutions often lack resources, qualified instructors, and modern equipment, which directly impacts the quality of education and health services. Women face additional barriers to completing health education, including family responsibilities and systemic inequities. Gender disparities hinder health workforce diversity, keep women health workers from rising to health leadership positions, and limit equitable health services. To address these gaps, the **West African Health Organization (WAHO)** has promoted competency-based training and set regional accreditation standards to improve nurse and midwife education across **ECOWAS** since 2006.

## OUR RESPONSE (1/2)

**IntraHealth International** is a nongovernmental organization that partners with governments and local organizations to improve the performance of health workers and strengthen the systems in which they work. IntraHealth is a subsidiary of **Global Communities**, integrating a broad range of international health expertise across the humanitarian and sustainable development sectors. Together, we envision a world where crises give way to resilience and all people have the health care they need to thrive.

As part of its 2021-2026 strategy, IntraHealth draws on decades of experience **to support the nine Ouagadougou Partnership countries** in enhancing health professional education. For many years, IntraHealth has worked closely with national governments and regional partners to improve training quality and strengthen health workforce capacity. This sustained commitment has laid a solid foundation for lasting progress in the quality and availability of skilled health professionals, particularly in maternal and child health.

## OUR RESPONSE (2/2)

This includes promoting standardized curricula, working with WAHO's accreditation system, and strengthening public-private partnerships to improve training quality.

**The Classroom to Care (C2C) project**, a cornerstone of this strategy funded by Takeda Pharmaceutical Company Limited, is transforming the initial training of nurses and midwives in West Africa. Running from 2022 to 2026, the project aims to improve health worker skills through **competency-based education**. IntraHealth collaborates with both private and public health schools in **Mali, Niger, and Senegal**, ensuring programs meet international standards and prepare graduates for field realities.

Through public-private partnerships, modernized curricula, and essential resources, C2C is developing a new generation of health professionals equipped to provide high-quality care in underserved communities. The project also fosters an inclusive environment that prioritizes **diversity, equity, and access to education for marginalized groups**.

## EXPECTED RESULTS



All **12** partner private health schools achieve accreditation.



**580 teachers and clinical supervisors** applying competency-based approaches.



**4,316 current health professionals** have strengthened clinical skills and are providing services according to recommended WAHO standards.



**9,720 students** trained in quality health care following recommended WAHO standards.

## KEY RESULTS

- ▶ **Conducted a comprehensive analysis across Mali, Niger, and Senegal**, which highlighted key needs related to accreditation; digital learning; capacity building; and diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) practices in health training institutions.
  - ▶ **Established three National Accreditation and Quality Committees** in Mali, Niger, and Senegal, with **three Technical Working Groups** supporting the process.
  - ▶ Helped develop **capacity-building plans for all 12 partner private schools**, and each school is now supported in applying and preparing for accreditation evaluations.
  - ▶ As part of capacity building, **created annual action plans for each partner school**. By the end of Year 3, schools have trained **347 teachers and clinical supervisors**, who helped train **5,614 students**, reaching 89% of the initial target of 6,333.
  - ▶ Developed a full six-semester eLearning curriculum, with **104 digitized modules**, focusing on maternal and child health.
  - ▶ By mid-2024, **533 nurses and midwives** have accessed the training. Next, C2C will promote mobile-friendly learning.
  - ▶ **Conducted a DEI situational analysis in all 12 schools** and held workshops to disseminate findings and develop action plans. Upcoming advocacy and sensitization sessions will further engage government, partners, students, and staff in DEI principles across all institutions.
  - ▶ **Equipped twelve skills labs** in partner private schools with modern tools for high-quality, hands-on training. Trained teachers and clinical supervisors use these labs, enabling realistic clinical simulations that enhance initial training.
  - ▶ **Equipped nine clinical practicum sites** with high-tech simulation equipment that recreates a range of clinical scenarios, from childbirth to neonatal emergencies.
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**CLASSROOM  
TO CARE**  
Learning to Expand Access to Maternal and Child Health

**IntraHealth**  
INTERNATIONAL  
Because Health Workers Save Lives.

