

# Strategies to Increase Nursing Educational Capacity in Sub- Saharan Africa

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## **Abstract:**

There is a critical shortage of nurses in the developing world with an average of only 11 nurse per 10,000 population. Efforts to increase the number of nurses are hampered in part because of a lack of facility, material, electronic and human resources in Sub-Saharan Africa. In order to gain a better understanding of the problems and issues in Africa, a focus group with 25 senior African nurse educators was conducted at the biennial conference of the African Midwives Research Network (AMRN) held in Dar Es Salaam in December 2009. These nurse educators identified what they believed needed to be strengthened related to nursing and midwifery education. Areas identified included: Internet Accessibility and Information Technology; Educational materials such as data bases, journals, texts; Resources such as improved skills labs, computer rooms, libraries, clinical facilities; Transportation for community experiences; Quality standards; Faculty and faculty development. Proposed solutions included: Virtual and satellite colleges; Student learning outcomes focused curriculum; Standardized and appropriate leveling of curriculum; Visiting professors from established programs; Enhanced career pathways (e.g., RN to BSN). Although large international groups such as the World Health Organization are developing policy briefs related to solving this crisis and others are funding some solutions, it is essential to have dialogues about nurse shortages and nurse faculty shortages between nurse educators both in-country and internationally. There is much nurses educators from developed countries can do working side by side with those from developing countries to address the nurse and nurse faculty shortages.