

## Addressing Two Problems at Par: Human Resources for Health Crisis and Inability to Pay School Fees for Nursing Candidates in Tanzania

Pius Stephen Chaya\* and Rita Noronha

Amref Health Africa, Upanga, Dar es Salaam, 255, Tanzania

\*Corresponding author: Pius Stephen Chaya, Program Manager, Amref Health Africa, Upanga, Dar es Salaam, 255, Tanzania, Tel: 255757451032; E-mail: [pius.chaya@amref.org](mailto:pius.chaya@amref.org)

Received date: November 23, 2016; Accepted date: December 06, 2016; Published date: December 13, 2016

Copyright: © 2016 Chaya PS, et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Citation: Chaya PS, Noronha R (2017) Addressing Two Problems at Par: Human Resources for Health Crisis and Inability to Pay School Fees for Nursing Candidates in Tanzania. J Comm Pub Health Nurs 3: 147. doi:[10.4172/2471-9846.1000147](https://doi.org/10.4172/2471-9846.1000147)

**Keywords:** eLearning; Scholarship; Nurse midwives; Amref

### Problem

Tanzania is currently experiencing a critical shortage of Human Resources for Health of about 49% [1]. On Average, there are only 14.5 health professionals per 10,000 population, which is far below the agreed WHO standard of 23 per 10,000 population. Of great interest, and out of this, the density of Nurse Midwives (NMs) to population is at 3 per 10,000 population (same to 0.35NM per 1000 population) of which it is far below the WHO recommended standards of 3 Nurse Midwives (NM) per 1000 population. Numerically, the current shortage of Nurse Midwives (NM) stands at least 12,525 [2]. There is equilibrium mismatch between the supply of Nurse Midwives and Demand for in the health facility as well as in the community health systems. Facilities in urban areas are in better chance to receive a good number of NMs compared to those in rural areas- factors like remoteness, poor living environment and working environments, and drop out and retiring exacerbate the shortage.

### Description

In 2012, Amref Health Africa, launched a campaign called Stand Up for African Mothers- whose goal was to support the implementation of Millennium Development Goals (MDG) 5 and 4 on reduction of Maternal and Infant mortality in Tanzania. The Campaign since then has received significant support and gained popularity. The aim of the campaign is to raise funds from the Corporate Sector to support training of 3800 Nurse Midwives -NMs by 2018 [3]. We use two innovative training models/approaches 1) Support the upgrading of the Nurse Midwives- NM from Certificate to Diploma level through eLearning 2) Support needy students who wish to pursue Certificate in nursing and midwifery with full scholarship. The Ministry of Health, Local Government Authorities and Training institutions have been

fully engaged in the implementation of each approach. For the scholarship scheme, screening of needy students is done jointly with the Local Authorities. The students who receive scholarship do sign a bond with the local Government Authority that requires them to work for not less than 5 years in areas that have been pre identified by the Ministry of Health and the Local authorities that have serious shortage of Nurse Midwives- NMs. Failure to comply with this bond, Nurse Midwives -NMs have to repay the whole amount equivalent to the current value for training a Nurse Midwife.

### Lessons Learnt

Todate, Amref has supported more than 847 Nurse Midwives -NMs to pursue diploma in Nursing and Midwifery in 26 schools in Tanzania through eLearning approach. Likewise, More than 326 students have received full scholarship to pursue certificate course in Nursing and Midwifery from Tanga, Mtwara, Coastal, Geita, Simiyu, Kigoma, Tabora, Mara, Shinyanga. Also, more than 154 Nurse Midwives -NMs have graduated, 10 have already been recruited and 144 are awaiting recruitment.

### Recommendations

In order for the government to bridge the shortage of Nurse Midwives -NMs in the country, innovative approaches such Public - Private Partnership that leverage private sector resources should be considered. There is no maternal health without a midwife.

### References

1. Ministry of Health and Social welfare Tanzania (2014) HSSP IV, Dar es Salaam.
2. Ibid.
3. Amref Transitional Business Plan (2014) Tanzania.