# Midwives' Innovation Hackathon on Maternal, Newborn, Child,Sexual and Reproductive Health

**1. Concept Note**

**1.1. Title: Midwives, Innovating Beyond Healthcare: A Multi-Sectoral Midwives' Hackathon for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health Solutions**

**1.2. Background and Rationale:**

Maternal, Newborn, Child, Sexual and Reproductive Health, including its Morbidity and Mortality challenges, extends far beyond the confines of healthcare systems. These complex issues are interconnected with education, gender equality, economic empowerment, social protection, environmental factors, technology access, and community structures. Midwives, as frontline healthcare professionals, possess unique insights into clinical challenges and the broader socio-economic and systemic factors that impact health outcomes.

This hackathon recognizes that sustainable solutions to Maternal, Newborn and Child Health and morbidity and mortality must address root causes that span multiple sectors. By bringing together midwives, practitioners, educators, students, and researchers who have identified specific problems and developed preliminary solutions, we can refine, enhance, and scale innovations that create impact across education, gender equity, economic systems, social services, climate, and beyond.

**Ghana faces significant challenges with maternal mortality, with recent data indicating a maternal mortality ratio of 308 deaths per 100,000 live births, well above the SDG 3.1 target of 70 per 100,000.** However, addressing these statistics requires solutions that go beyond healthcare delivery to tackle underlying determinants such as educational barriers, gender inequities, economic constraints, and social determinants of health. **Competent midwifery care, supported by multi-sectoral interventions, is estimated to prevent up to 83% of maternal deaths, stillbirths, and neonatal deaths.**

This hackathon seeks to harness the collective intelligence of innovators who understand that maternal, newborn and child health solutions must be embedded within broader systems change, aligning with Sustainable Development Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being) while simultaneously advancing other SDGs including Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), and Reduced Inequalities (SDG 10).

**1.3. Objectives:**

* To showcase and refine **pre-existing innovation ideas** developed by midwives, students, and researchers that address maternal, newborn and child health challenges through **multi-sectoral approaches**.
* To enhance solutions that recognize healthcare as part of a broader ecosystem, addressing challenges that originate from or impact **education, gender equality, economic systems, social protection, environmental factors, and community structures**.
* To foster collaboration among innovators who bring **clearly defined problems, proposed solutions, and identified resources** for implementation across multiple sectors.
* To develop comprehensive innovation frameworks that demonstrate how maternal, newborn and child health solutions can simultaneously address challenges in **education (e.g., maternal literacy, health education), gender (e.g., women's empowerment, decision-making autonomy), economics (e.g., financial protection, livelihood), and social systems (e.g., community support, cultural practices)**.
* To refine and scale promising innovations that have **clear implementation pathways** and demonstrate potential for **cross-sectoral impact** contributing to multiple SDGs while strengthening Universal Health Coverage (UHC).
* To build a network of multi-sectoral innovators committed to **systems-thinking approaches** to maternal, newborn and child health advancement.
* To select the **top 20 innovations** based on their multi-sectoral impact potential, innovation readiness, and scalability for exhibition and further development support.

**1.4. Target Participants:**

This hackathon will bring together approximately **20 innovators** who have identified specific problems and developed preliminary solutions. Participants should come as:

**Individual Innovators**: Solo practitioners, educators, students, or researchers with a clearly defined innovative idea.

**Innovation Teams**: 2-5 or more member groups who have been collaborating on a specific solution (teams count as single applications but may have multiple representatives).

**Organizational Representatives**: Individuals representing institutions, NGOs, or community organizations with developed innovative concepts.

**Participant Categories:**

* **Midwives in Clinical Practice**: With innovations addressing systemic challenges beyond clinical care
* **Midwives in Education**: Developing educational innovations with broader social impact
* **Midwives in Leadership/Management**: Creating policy and systems innovations
* **Midwifery Students**: Bringing fresh perspectives with preliminary solution frameworks
* **Researchers**: With evidence-based innovations ready for implementation testing
* **Community Health Advocates**: With community-based solutions that integrate midwifery expertise

**1.5. Theme:**

**"Beyond Boundaries: Multi-Sectoral Innovations for Maternal, Newborn and Child Health"** *Where Healthcare Meets Education, Gender Equality, and Community Transformation*

Alternative themes:

1. **"Systems Solutions: Midwives Leading Multi-Sectoral Innovation for MNCH"**
2. **"Beyond Healthcare: Midwives Innovating Across Sectors for Lasting Impact"**
3. **"Interconnected Impact: Multi-Sectoral Approaches to Maternal, Newborn and Child Health"**

**1.6. Hackathon Structure (2 Days):**

This **2-day intensive innovation refinement and scaling event** will be held in Accra:

**Day 1: Innovation Presentation, Multi-Sectoral Mapping, and Cross-Sectoral Analysis**

**Morning Session:**

* Welcome and introduction to multi-sectoral innovation frameworks
* **Innovation Showcase**: Each participant/team presents their existing innovation (problem statement, proposed solution, available resources and tools, implementation plan)
* **Multi-sectoral impact assessment**: Mapping how each innovation addresses challenges across healthcare, education, gender, economics, social systems, and other relevant sectors

**Afternoon Session:**

* **Cross-sectoral challenge mapping**: Interactive sessions identifying how maternal, newborn, and child health issues intersect with education barriers, gender inequities, economic constraints, environmental factors, and social determinants
* **Resource and partnership mapping**: Identifying existing tools, technologies, partnerships, and resources participants have access to
* **Innovation clustering**: Grouping innovations by sector synergies and collaboration potential
* **Systems thinking workshops**: Understanding how to strengthen solutions by addressing root causes across multiple sectors

**Day 2: [Exhibition Day] Solution Enhancement, Cross-Sectoral Integration, and Scaling Strategies**

**Morning Session:**

* **Expert panel discussion on multi-sectoral innovation**: Speakers from education, gender advocacy, economic development, technology, and policy sectors
* **Innovation refinement workshops**: Intensive work sessions to enhance existing solutions with cross-sectoral elements
* **Implementation pathway development**: Creating detailed plans that show how innovations will create impact across multiple sectors

**Afternoon Session:**

* **Mentorship sessions**: One-on-one guidance with experts from various sectors (healthcare, education, technology, policy, gender advocacy, economic development)
* **Scaling strategy development**: Creating frameworks for how innovations can be replicated and adapted across different contexts and sectors
* **Partnership identification**: Connecting innovators with potential implementation partners from various sectors
* **Final pitch preparation**: Developing presentations that clearly articulate multi-sectoral impact and implementation readiness with identified tools and resources for the exhibition.

**Evening Session [after lunch]:**

* **Innovation Pitch Presentations**: Teams present refined innovations to a multi-sectoral panel of judges
* **Evaluation and feedback**: Assessment based on innovation readiness, multi-sectoral impact potential, and scalability
* **Selection of the top 10 innovations** for exhibition and continued support
* **Next steps**: Connecting selected innovations with resources, mentors, and implementation pathways
* **Audience Voting**: The Audience will have the opportunity to vote for their favorite innovation by dropping the assigned numbers in a provided box, which will represent a percentage, including the expert judges' scores.

**1.7. Expected Outcomes:**

* **10 refined, implementation-ready innovations** that address maternal, newborn, and child health challenges through multi-sectoral approaches, with clear plans for impact across education, gender equality, economic systems, and social structures.
* **Enhanced innovation frameworks** that demonstrate how healthcare solutions can simultaneously advance multiple SDGs and create systemic change beyond health outcomes.
* **Strengthened multi-sectoral partnerships** connecting healthcare innovators with educators, gender advocates, economic development specialists, technology experts, and policy makers.
* **Clear implementation pathways** for innovations show how they will create a measurable impact across multiple sectors while advancing UHC and reducing maternal mortality.
* **Resource mobilization strategies** connecting innovations with appropriate funding, technical assistance, and partnership opportunities across various sectors.
* **Documentation of best practices** for developing multi-sectoral health innovations that can be replicated and adapted globally.
* **Network of systems-thinking innovators** committed to addressing health challenges through comprehensive, cross-sectoral approaches.

**1.8. Budget Considerations (for approximately 20 Innovators with 10 exhibitions):**

Budget will cover:

* **Venue rental and setup** in Accra for 2 days with spaces for innovative showcases and cross-sectoral workshops
* **Catering** (meals, snacks, beverages) for the duration of the hackathon
* **Materials and technology** for innovation refinement, prototyping, and presentation development
* **Multi-sectoral expert honoraria** for speakers and mentors from healthcare, education, gender advocacy, economic development, technology, and policy sectors
* **Travel and accommodation support** for selected participants, prioritizing geographic and sectoral diversity
* **Innovation development resources,** including access to design tools, technology platforms, and resource libraries
* **Exhibition setup and materials** for the final 20 selected innovations with interactive displays
* **Documentation and communication,** including professional photography, videography, and digital content creation
* **Post-hackathon support coordination,** including mentor matching and resource connection facilitation

**1.9. Pre-Application Requirements:**

All applicants must submit:

**Problem Statement**: Clear description of the specific maternal, newborn, and child health challenge they are addressing, including how it connects to broader sectoral issues (300 words maximum)

**Multi-Sectoral Solution Framework**: Detailed explanation of their proposed innovation, including how it addresses challenges across healthcare and at least two other sectors (education, gender, economics, social systems, environment, technology, etc.) (500 words maximum)

**Resource Inventory**: List of available tools, technologies, partnerships, funding, expertise, and other resources they currently have access to for implementation (200 words maximum)

**Implementation Plan**: Specific steps for bringing their innovation to scale, including timeline, target beneficiaries, measurement framework, and partnership strategy (400 words maximum)

**Cross-Sectoral Impact Assessment**: Description of expected outcomes across multiple sectors and how these will be measured (300 words maximum)

**1.10. Selection Criteria:**

**Innovation Readiness**: Solutions that are beyond the conceptual stage with clear development and implementation plans. **Multi-Sectoral Impact**: Innovations that demonstrably address challenges across healthcare and at least two other sectors, or have intersectoral solutions.

**Resource Availability**: Applicants with identified ideas, tools, partnerships, and resources for implementation **Scalability Potential**: Solutions that can be adapted and replicated across different contexts **Systems Thinking**: Approaches that address root causes rather than symptoms **Implementation Feasibility**: Realistic timelines and resource requirements with identified pathways to impact **Evidence Base**: Solutions grounded in research, community needs assessment, or practical experience **Partnership Potential**: Innovations that can leverage existing networks and build new cross-sectoral collaborations e.g. Tech, Innovation company’s etc.