

# TELEMEDICINE ONLINE SERVICES TO SOMALIA

ADDRESSING THE HEALTH SECTOR GAPS AND EXPERT-TO-EXPERT KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER



## MIDA FINNSOM—REBUILDING SOMALIA WITH DIASPORA EXPERTISE

The aim of MIDA FINNSOM projects are to support Somalia to develop its health and education sectors. This is done by diaspora experts of Somali origin, residing abroad and returning to Somalia for months or even years with the support of IOM, to transfer their knowledge to the local staff and institutions. The project has a strong focus on maternal and child health.

The MIDA FINNSOM Health project started in 2008 in Somaliland and aims at the development of a well-functioning health system in Somaliland. Hargeisa Group Hospital has been one of the main beneficiaries of the project. Project participants have been vital for example in starting the neonatal unit at the hospital. As a result, neonatal mortality at the hospital has dropped from 24 % down to 5 %.

*Photo: Nurse Ifrah Ahmed holds a premature baby at Hargeisa Group Hospital Neonatal Unit.*

Suomen Kotilääkäripalvelu (SKP) provides technological and human resources in form of telemedicine consultations and services in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to Somaliland. The collaboration started in 2015 and the main objective is to provide support to increase the quality of maternal and dental health care provision in targeted public health institutions in Somaliland.

### Maternal and Child Health Care

SKP has developed a mobile application, guiding health care personnel to provide standardized antenatal check-ups for expecting mothers. The application is developed in alignment with WHO's antenatal guidelines from 2016 and tailored to fit to Somaliland's context. The application can also be used for data collection on antenatal issues which again can be used in planning the treatment and prevention of pregnancy related complications in Somaliland. Regular antenatal visits and continuous use of health care services during the pregnancy ensures monitoring and addressing early warning signs timely.

SKP works closely together with the National Institute for Health and Welfare in Finland (THL) who supports the adaptation and development of the WHO's antenatal guidelines into the Somaliland context. This support is set to lay out groundwork for further development of a standardized maternal care scheme in Somaliland. Furthermore SKP has a large pool of experts available who may be upon request provide professional consultation and trainings to health care experts in Somaliland using the online telemedicine concept. A midwife and a general doctor has been assigned to work on the antenatal health care services and activities in Somaliland.

### Dental Care

Currently SKP is in a process of conducting a situation analysis on the available dental care equipment, methods and dental health personnel in Somaliland. Particularly the focus is on pregnant women who need to be monitored to gain knowledge for decreasing the maternal mortality caused by oral infections.

SKP has developed a QAdental portal, which is going to be used in Somaliland among dental care professionals. It is a web-based portal, where Somali healthcare professionals can receive online clinical consultations from Nuovo Nordic dental professionals. QAdental brings the knowledge of various specialties to areas where it does not exist, having an archive of the different case scenarios for easy access to support experts in their daily work.

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