

Voices OF HOPE

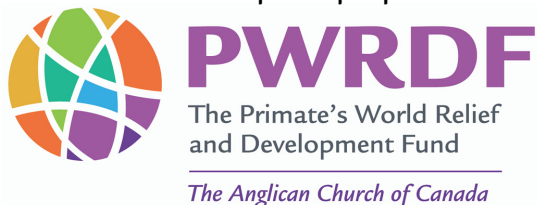
Canada, Mexico and Peru


In many of the world's Indigenous communities, women do not have access to midwives and must travel far from home, sometimes alone, to give birth in a hospital. The isolation from family and community can cause stress and fear, or worse, lead to an increase in maternal or infant mortality.

Since 2017, PWRDF has been nurturing a partnership of Indigenous midwives from Ryerson University's Aboriginal Initiatives (Canada), Kinal Antzetik (Mexico) and CHIRAPAQ (Peru) to provide midwives an opportunity to share best practices, develop curriculum and learn from each other.

The partners have attended two sessions of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. In 2018, Cheryllée Bourgeois, a Métis midwife and professor at Ryerson, addressed the session and pleaded with member nations to tackle the oppression facing Indigenous midwives around the world. In April 2019, almost 100 Indigenous midwives gathered in Peru for the First International Gathering of Indigenous Midwives of the Americas. Then in August, they met again in Mexico.

"I think that Indigenous people connecting across countries internationally is actually critical to the learning and building of Indigenous midwifery," said Bourgeois. "There are pieces of knowledge that midwives hold that are so different or don't exist in Canada. It is a rich exchange in terms of ways to move forward, how people come together, and the relationship that people have with their communities."



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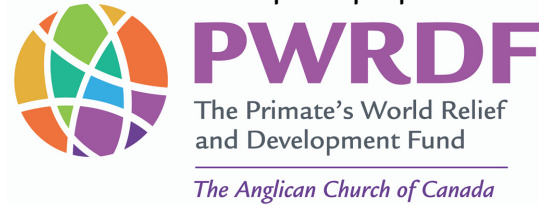
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