



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
5 December 2022

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-seventh session

6–17 March 2023

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to
the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and
peace for the twenty-first century”**

Statement submitted by Prosami, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Prosami (Promotion of Maternal and Infant Health) was established in 2008 and registered in 2009. The headquarters reside in Staunton, Virginia, United States of America but the organization is active in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Prosami's mission is to guarantee a good start in life for the Congolese infant and a healthy reproductive life for the Congolese mother by assuring them consistent and easy access to maternal health services; infant health care centers, where high quality care is rendered by well-trained and skilled Congolese nurse midwives.

In relation to the Sustainable Development Goals, Prosami aims to contribute to the decrease of maternal, neonatal, and infant mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo by increasing the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel. We focus on midwifery training, infrastructure, and equipment. Midwifery education and training provides advanced midwifery and neonatal training to Congolese nurses to equip them with knowledge and skills so they can deliver safe and efficient care in the presence of scarce resources.

As per the priority theme on innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, Prosami has, over the last 11 years with support from the University of Virginia in the United States of America, implemented an innovative approach to the training of midwives named tele-midwifery. This approach is using telemedicine technology to provide continuous education to practicing midwives, for them to meet and maintain international standards.

Building of virtual teaching platform commenced in May 2019 in Staunton, Virginia in United States of America and is in full use at the pilot centre in Mbujimayi. Prosami is planning and preparing for the expansion of Telemedicine throughout the twenty-six provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo comprising: recruitment of focal points in the twenty-six provinces for virtual teaching; recruitment of provincial technicians to achieve telemedicine rollout readiness in provinces; and training of Democratic Republic of Congo/ Prosami digital team to establish super trainers. The virtual teaching sessions are conducted on a regular basis yearly to train new midwives and conduct refresher training for existing midwives. Education materials are prepared by speakers and translated in the local French language. Interpreters are also available to assist with language barriers. Our work is ongoing.

As per the review theme on challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls, Prosami reviewed the agreed conclusions of the sixty-second session of the Commission on the Status of Women that took place at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 12 to 23 March 2018.

The Democratic Republic of Congo has a high maternal mortality ratio of 378 in 2017 with disparities in key maternal and newborn health interventions between urban and rural areas as per a UNICEF document on Maternal and Newborn Health Disparities in the Democratic Republic of Congo up to 2015 data. Prosami opened a center by excellence, the Prosami Pilot Center in Mbujimayi, Democratic Republic of Congo, in 2018 in a rural area. The skilled Prosami trained midwives deliver high quality health care to both mother and child in Mbujimayi and surrounding areas: preconception care, family planning, prenatal, labor and delivery, management of obstetric emergencies, postnatal care, well-baby assessment, immunization, growth monitoring, and treatment of minor childhood ailments to children under the age of five. Prosami aims to create affordable community-based health care centres for childbearing women, in areas geographically accessible to the communities to be served in the twenty-six provinces of the Democratic Republic of Congo. Since the

launch of the pilot centre on the 9 July 2018 to 30 September 2022, Prosami reports over 1000 live births, no maternal deaths and fewer than five neonatal deaths.
