In response to the complexities of health services delivery within the context of cultures, world events, medical technologies, and natural and manmade disasters, WHO recognized the need for external resources to assist it to meet its goals. In line with WHO’s policy that research in the field of health is best advanced by assisting, coordinating and utilizing the activities of existing institutions, WHO Collaborating Centres were developed to support WHO with external expertise at the local, country and international levels. Of the 1,000 Collaborating Centres worldwide representing all the major health disciplines, 36, in 19 different countries, are dedicated to nursing and midwifery services, education, research and policy. These 36 Centres have joined forces as the Global Network of WHO Collaborating Centres for Nursing and Midwifery Development. Since its inception in 1987, the Global Network has developed into a significant force in international nursing leadership. Its far-reaching sphere of influence, its communications technology and its ability to develop collaborative projects, enable it to have a significant impact on the health of the people of the world.

Keywords
World health organization, who, nursing, health policy, health administration, leadership, organization, collaboration, planning.