

The Safe Delivery App in Afghanistan

Empowering midwives through technology

In the most remote corners of Afghanistan, midwives are using digital tools to save lives. Since the introduction of the Dari-language Safe Delivery App (SDA) in May 2022, midwives have increasingly turned to this mobile platform as a trusted companion in their daily work. With its clinical guidelines, step-by-step videos, and interactive resources, the App is helping them provide safer care for mothers and newborns even in the most resource-constrained settings.

In a country where many women still give birth at home or in small community clinics, and where maternal mortality remains among the highest in the world, SDA is more than just an app, it is a lifeline. By putting evidence-based guidance in the hands of midwives, it bridges critical gaps in training, mentorship, and decision-making.

The following stories illustrate how technology can transform maternal and newborn health in Afghanistan. By empowering midwives with the tools they need, the SDA is helping to prevent deaths, reduce complications, and ensure that every woman and newborn has a safer start to life.

A midwife's lifeline in Kandahar

At a UNFPA-supported Family Health House in Maiwand district, Kandahar, midwife Freshta was caring for Kafia, a 35-year-old expectant mother. With five previous births and a history of heavy bleeding, Kafia's labour carried serious risks.

"I reviewed the treatment for postpartum hemorrhage using the App," Freshta explained. "It reminded me how to manage the condition and to prepare the necessary medicines before delivery."

When Kafia delivered her baby boy, weighing three kilograms, Freshta was ready. Both mother and child remained healthy, and a potentially life-threatening complication was averted.



Guiding families in Kapisa

In the Kapisa province, midwifery mentor Parween faced another critical moment when a mother arrived with a premature newborn weighing just 1.1 kilograms. Recognizing the urgency, Parween consulted the SDA to review guidance on Kangaroo Mother Care. She showed the family videos from the App, demonstrating how such fragile babies can be safely cared for.

“At first the family resisted transferring the baby to a hospital,” she recalled. “But the App’s videos convinced them.”

Later, at the provincial hospital, Parween was reunited with the family. The baby had gained weight, stabilised, and was thriving. “They told me that the advice saved their child’s life,” she said. “The SDA is like a reliable friend, always there when I need it.”



Knowledge, confidence, and connection

Beyond individual cases, the SDA is reshaping how midwives across Afghanistan learn and support each other. With its educational library, interactive features, and communication tools, the App allows midwives to exchange experiences and build confidence in their practice.

“The Safe Delivery App has proven extremely beneficial,” said Benish Raihan, a mentor with the Afghanistan Midwifery Association in Kapisa. “Even in remote areas, it helps midwives save the lives of both mothers and infants.”

For Shabnam, a midwife in the Parwan province, the App has become an indispensable part of her work. “It introduces us to topics we never knew about and helps us handle emergencies with confidence,” she said.

