

BRIDGING GAPS WITH SPECIALISED TRAINING

From identified gaps to specialised training: a roadmap for neonatal nursing excellence

L. Dufes¹, M. Hozjan - Gaudin², R. Morante Nabieu¹, S. La Valle¹, L. Ross³, A. De La Osada⁴, M. Clarisse⁵, S. Goossens¹

¹MSF Academy for Healthcare, Brussels, Belgium, ²MSF, OCP, Paris, France, ³MSF, OCA, Amsterdam, Netherlands, ⁴MSF, OCBA, Barcelona, Spain, ⁵MSF, OCG, Geneva, Switzerland

BACKGROUND

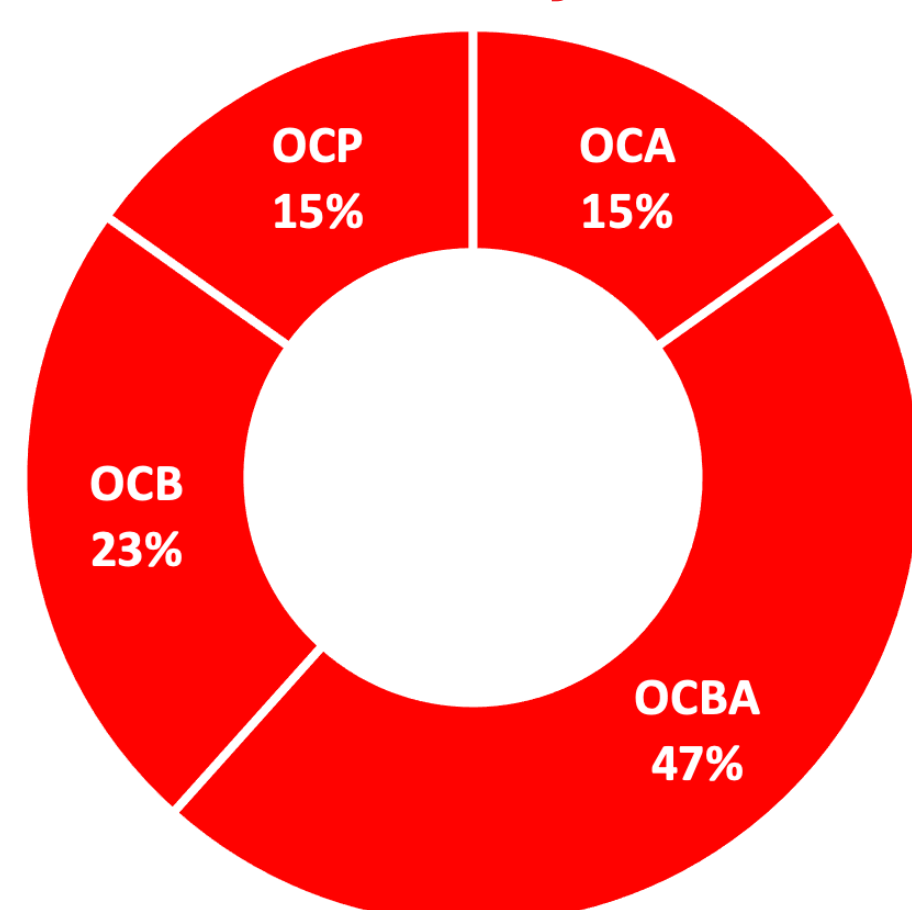
Many MSF projects involve neonates who require specialised clinical and nursing expertise and dedicated neonatal units, often introduced by MSF. Nursing care plays a critical role in neonatal outcomes yet neonatal nursing education remains globally limited or inconsistent.

In response to this growing need, the MSF Nursing Platform and MSF Academy for Healthcare conducted a gap assessment, revealing significant educational and practice gaps across MSF operations and underscoring the urgency for capacity building in neonatal nursing.

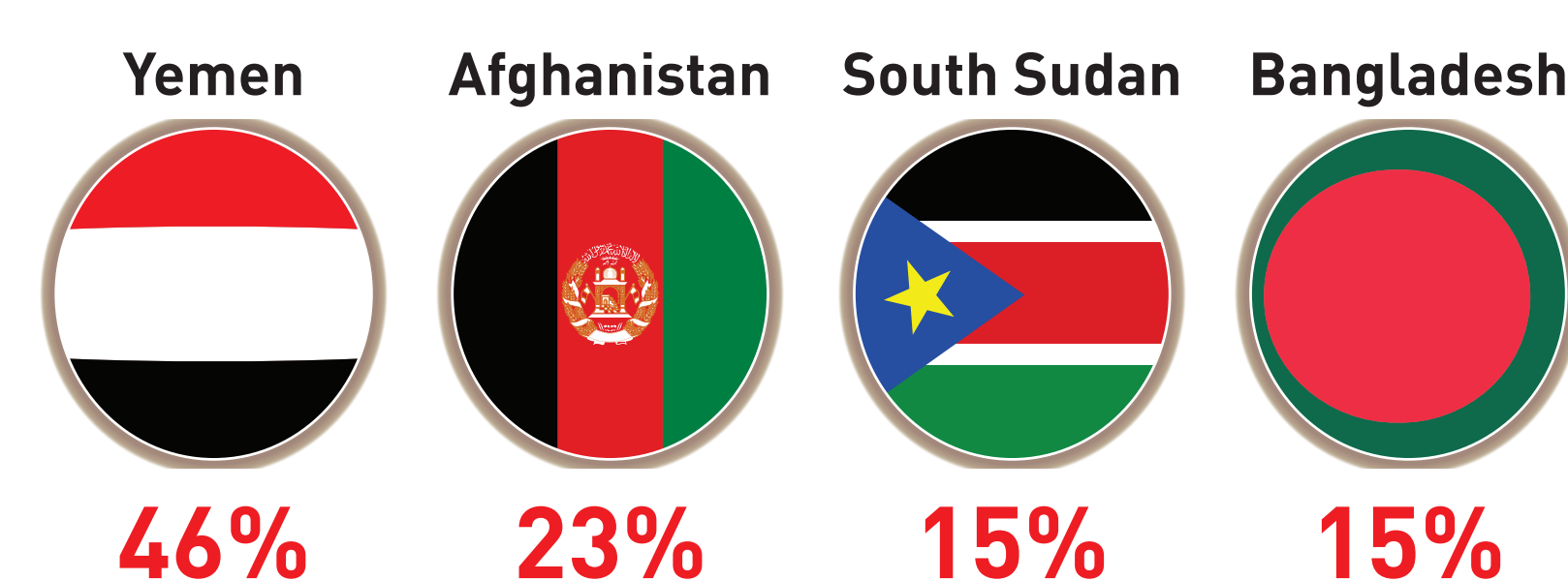
METHODS

A total of 13 participants - including nursing, nursing assistant, and supervising staff - were interviewed by 2 MSF academy staff using a semi-structured format to explore clinical nursing practices and learning needs across neonatal units in 5 MSF projects.

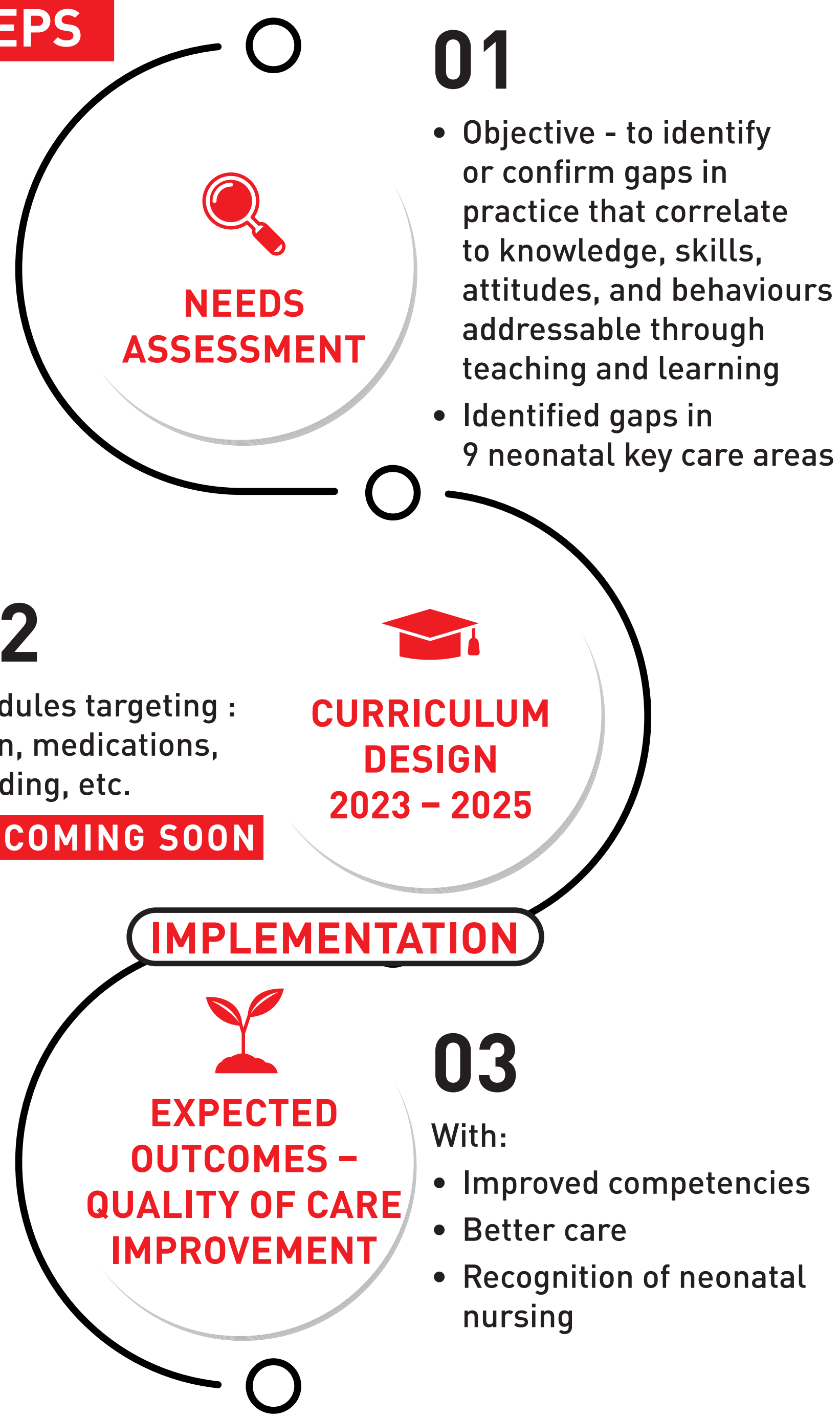
Interviewees % by MSF section



Interviewees % by country



STEPS



KEY FINDINGS

INCONSISTENT KNOWLEDGE APPLICATION

 VITAL SIGNS Unclear monitoring	 DANGER SIGN Inconsistent response	 RESUSCITATION Variable effectiveness	 IPC Gaps despite training
 PAIN MANAGEMENT No pain scales used, reliance on meds	 MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION Inconsistent adherence to "5 Rights"	 FEEDING PRACTICES Limited maternal access	 DEVELOPMENTAL CARE Noise/sleep policies lacking
 FAMILY-CENTERED CARE/ZERO SEPARATION Restricted access			

BARRIERS IN NEONATAL-ADAPTED RESOURCES/ENVIRONMENT

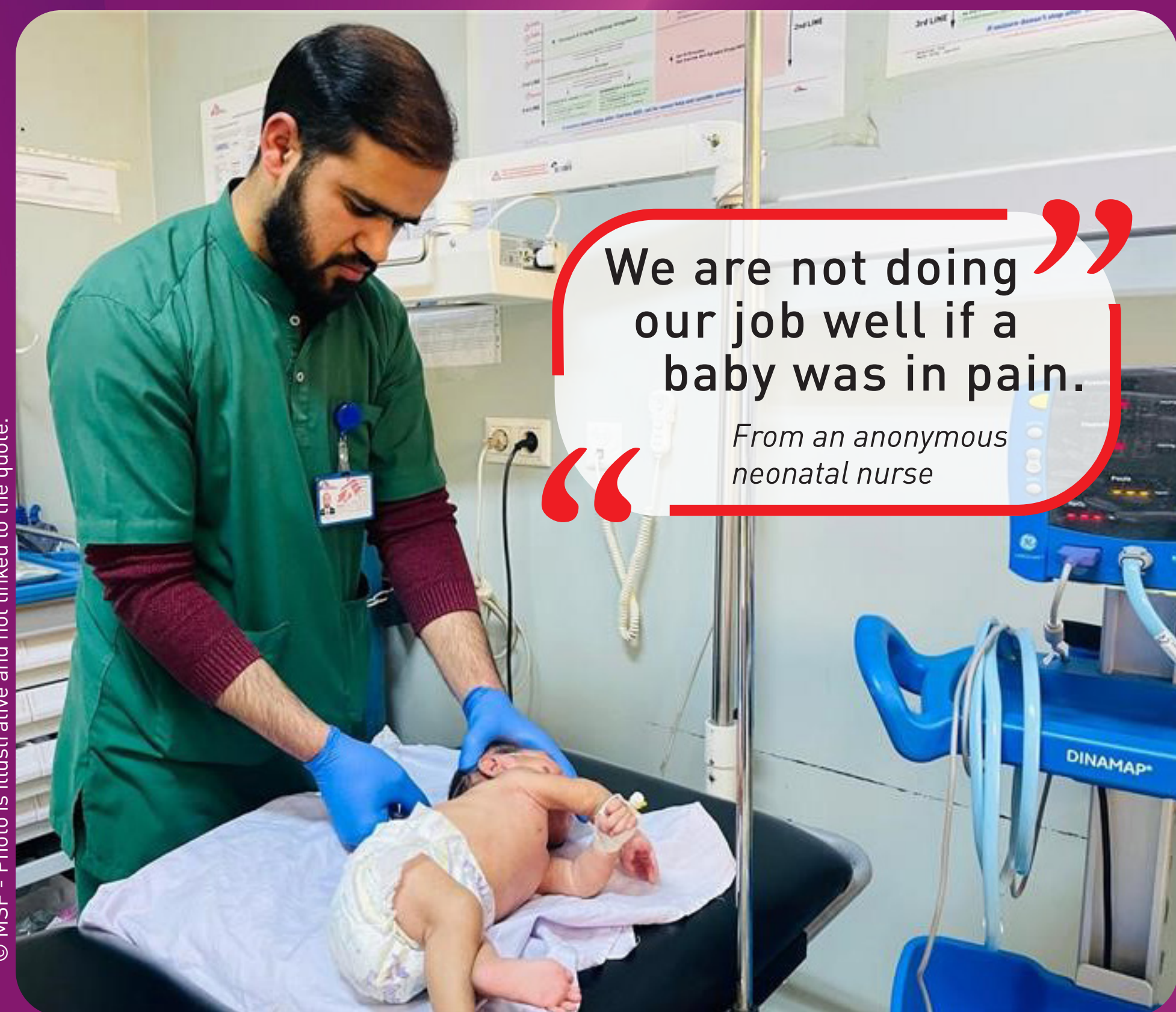
CONCLUSION

The training needs assessment revealed critical gaps in neonatal nursing practice driven by inconsistent knowledge application, limited access to neonatal-adapted resources, and hierarchical workplace dynamics affecting autonomous nursing practice.

To address these challenges, a competency-based neonatal nursing curriculum has been developed, integrating evidence-based content, multidisciplinary learning, and context-specific mentoring. It aims to strengthen clinical judgment, reflective practice, and foster safer, more consistent care delivery - supporting MSF's quality of care pillars, improving neonatal outcomes through elevating the role of nurses within the care team.

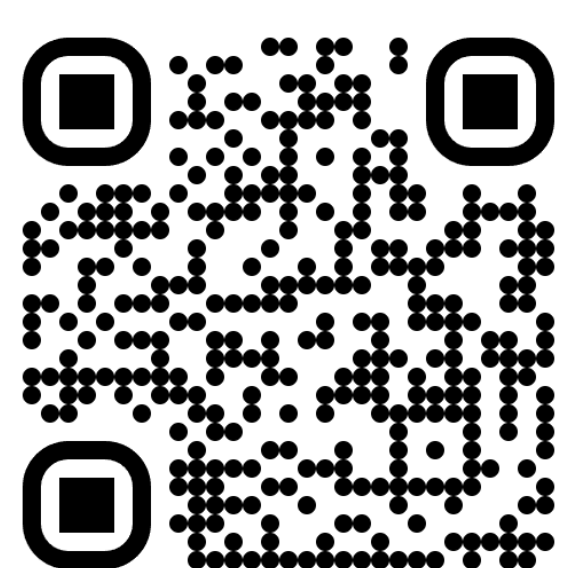
ETHICAL STATEMENT

Formal MSF ERB exemption was not sought. Ethical issues were addressed by the Director of MSF Academy for Healthcare, who has approved this abstract for submission to the Paediatric Days 2025 event.



"We are not doing our job well if a baby was in pain."

From an anonymous neonatal nurse



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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