

## **Strengthening health systems to reach the underserved and marginalized young girls and women**

Health systems that serve women and children need to be strengthened to ensure underserved populations in under prioritized areas are reached. Nevertheless health system weaknesses often remain despite numerous intervention programs attempting to improve care for young girls and women illustrating a major implementation gap. In this symposium we will present some ongoing studies that try to address this gap. The underserved groups we focus on are minors, rural poor and migrants. They may be served within the existing programs, but our evidence shows that this is not enough. Prof. Dr. Johanne Sundby (University of Oslo) will start the symposium with a brief introduction to the theme and related topics.

### **1. Opportunities for improvement in providing quality of care during pregnancy and birth in rural Tanzania** (Presenter: Andrea Solnes Miltenburg, PhD Student University of Oslo, NRC project)

We present findings from three years of observations and participation in care provision at antenatal clinics and maternity wards in rural and semi-urban health facilities in the Lake Zone in Tanzania. Grave health system shortcomings deter quality of care provision, both during antenatal care and birth. Despite these constraints there are several opportunities to improve quality of care for all.

### **2. The MIPREG Project: Closing the Gaps in Maternity Care to Migrant Women in Norway.** (Presenter: Ingvil K. Sørbye, National Advisory Unit on Women's Health, Oslo University Hospital. NRC project)

We present the objectives and plans of the *MIPREG Project*, which aims to identify the health-care related factors that contribute to inequality in maternal and infant outcomes among recent migrants living in Oslo. Stage 1 of the study will map the quantitative and qualitative gaps in maternity care from the migrants' own perspective, whilst stage 2 will develop and pilot effective interventions to improve service delivery and uptake.

### **3. Youth rape victims, care provision and legal access in Kenya** (Presenter Cynthia Wangamati, PhD Research Fellow University of Oslo, NRC project)

Child sexual abuse (CSA) is prevalent in Kenya. Extant literature indicates an increasing number of survivors of CSA seeking health and legal services. However, little is known about their experiences as they interact with the health and legal services and therefore the aim of this study is to highlight these experiences through a human rights approach lens.

### **4. Migrant women and health care needs. Health care for Thai migrants to Norway.** (Presenter: Naomi Tschirhart, Scientia fellow post doc, University of Oslo)

Most of the Thai women who move to Norway arrive as marriage migrants and receive the same entitlements to public healthcare as Norwegian citizens. However, it is unknown whether these entitlements translate into access. Here we report on findings of a qualitative study identifying Thai migrants' strategies for accessing care.