

St. Luke's International University, Tokyo Asia Africa Midwifery Research Center Newsletter No.25



ECSACON Conference in Kenya By Rika Fukutomi and Kyoko Tada



In September 2018, Rika FUKUTOMI, a faculty member of pediatric nursing, and Kyoko TADA, a midwifery student in St. Luke's master's program, attended the 13th Scientific Conference of the East, Central and Southern Africa College of Nursing (ECSACON) in Nairobi, Kenya.



The conference provided a platform for nurses and midwives to share knowledge, experience, and research findings as well as foster networks and connections to help to the ECSA region. The thrust of the conference was nurses and midwives contributing to a global agenda of Sustainable Development Goals and Universal Health Coverage, bringing together a multidisciplinary group of participants from all over the world including nurses/midwives, policy makers, researchers, educators, partners, and professional associations.

The Japanese contingent presented on research they personally conducted in Tanzania as well as research conducted by Kana SHIMODA, another faculty member, and Beatrice MWILIKE, a Tanzanian PhD graduating from St. Luke's International University. The presentation titles are all shown below:



Rika Fukutomi: *The twelve weeks process after introducing Early Essential Newborn Care (EENC) and practical behavior changes of Midwives in Tanzania.*

Beatrice Mwilike: *An education program for pregnant adolescents using peers in Tanzania: a quasi-experimental study.*

Kana Shimoda: *Prevalence of nurses' and midwives' self-reported disrespect and abuse of women during facility-based childbirth in Tanzania.*

Kyoko Tada: *Breastfeeding perception and behavior among mothers of low-birth-weight baby discharged from Muhimbili National Hospital in urban Tanzania: a longitudinal survey.*



FUKUTOMI promoted a clinical educational program “Early Essential Newborn Care (EENC)” as international best practice established by the World Health Organization. EENC is a system of care developed for newborns and mothers. FUKUTOMI reported on the progress of EENC clinical practice/adoption by Tanzanian midwives. The audience participated a dialogue regarding challenges and progress of EENC adoption.



TADA, who had also worked as a volunteer nurse in her research field at Muhimbili National Hospital in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, had an opportunity to reunite with her colleagues after a year. TADA was able to present her research results and exchanged ideas for improvements in clinical quality care and education. TADA addressed clinical problems in her presentation and, in doing so, she was able to help provide a platform for the on-the-ground professionals and patients included in their research to be heard not only by the audience at large but by representatives from the Tanzanian Ministry of Health who were in attendance.



After the conference ended, a special “NYAMA-CHOMA” party was held to foster closer relationship between the participants. During the meal, Kenyan dancers performed a show of traditional music and dance.



There was a vigorous exchange of ideas regarding common clinical problems in the ECSA region with participants from those countries. The participants from the region were tremendously passionate about improving universal health both locally and globally. The Japanese participants felt it to be a humbling and empowering opportunity for dialogue and fostering professional friendships. The driving message of the conference was self-empowerment and taking the initiative—“even if your invitation is 'lost in the mail' bring your own chair to the table”—and enact the change you want to see in the world.



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