



# St. Luke's International University, Tokyo Asia Africa Midwifery Research Center



## Newsletter 13 Activities between 2015-2016

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This newsletter reports our activities between July 2015 and January 2016. We held an information exchange meeting on July 20 at the ICM Asia Pacific Regional Conference 2015. In August, **Miyuki Oka** completed her data collection in Muheza. **Dr. Yoko Shimpuku** held discussion with Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs). In November, **Kana Shimoda** attended a colloquium in Morocco to present her study on respectful childbirth. **Dr. Shimpuku** presented our study on reproductive health awareness program at the Pfizer Health Research Forum on November 28<sup>th</sup>. In January 2016, **Dr. William Holzemer, Dr. Shigeko Horiuchi, and Dr. Shimpuku** came to Tanzania to have a seminar for Master's students in Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences.

### At ICM Yokohama



On July 20<sup>th</sup>, we held an information exchange meeting at the ICM Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Yokohama. As the room capacity was for 115 people, we expected to have around 100 people. But thankfully, the audience kept coming and coming... In the end, there were more than 200 people in the room.

The title of the meeting was **"How can we improve maternal child health in Asia and Africa?"**

In the meeting, **Beatrice Mwilike** from Tanzania and **Dr. Yenita Agus** from Indonesia talked about situations of maternal child health in their own countries. It was convincing to hear from them, who grew up and worked as a nurse in their own countries. Then, **Eri Shishido** and **Kyoko Tada**, the Master's students of St. Luke's presented their experiences in Tanzania. As reported in the newsletter 12, they visited Tanzania just before this meeting. One of the audience passionately said, "I was so inspired by St. Luke's activities!!"



## Miyuki's completion of her data collection



As it was also reported in the newsletter 12, **Miyuki Oka** was conducting her data collection at the Muheza Hospital after her educational program called "Let's talk!". She was trying to see the changes of midwives before and after the education. Her data collection went very well

because of her hardwork and Frida's effective support. **Frida Madeni** is our Master's graduate, supporting our research activities in Tanzania.

Look at how she looked happy about completion of her study!



## Discussion with TBAs



To learn more about the situations in the communities in rural areas, we interviewed individually and as a group of Traditional Birth Attendants (TBAs). They were trained to support birthing women in villages in 1990s', but as TBA training became "not trend" in global health policy, their training stopped with the notion that we should spend more time and financial resources for Skilled Birth Attendants (SBAs). But TBAs have been delivering babies

anyway because there are birthing women in villages who cannot go to health facilities due to a variety of reasons.

While waiting for individual interviews, they were provided a book called "**Nne na Tano**," the story to teach danger signs and birth preparation for pregnant women and their families. They were reading seriously.



They all liked the book and had a fruitful discussion to prevent maternal deaths in villages. Although they were not getting paid much for what they are doing (saving mothers and babies without medical support), they said they liked their job as it is related to the happiness of welcoming new lives. We need to think plausible ways to improve childbirth situations in villages.

## Presentations at Conferences



**Kana Shimoda**, the doctoral student of St. Luke's attended the 57<sup>th</sup> ITM (the Institute of Tropical Medicine)-ENSP (the Moroccan École Nationale de Santé Publique) 2015 colloquium to present her observational study, **"Respectful and disrespectful midwifery care practice within urban Tanzanian labor wards."** The audiences responded well in the findings which described actual situation of Tanzanian midwives' childbirth care. Findings related to disrespectful childbirth care were also presented from other participants and it was a great opportunity to share and discuss participant's each views of respectful childbirth.

**Dr. Yoko Shimpuku** presented **"Reproductive Health Promotion among Adolescents in Africa"** at the Pfizer Health Research Forum in Tokyo as we received the grant from Pfizer Health Research Foundation in 2013. We have conducted the reproductive health awareness program in rural areas and found it was not as effective as urban areas. The article of this research was accepted and soon to be published in African Journal of Midwifery and Women's Health.



## Seminar for Midwifery Master's students



On January 5&6, we had a workshop for Master's students in Muhimbili University. We invited a special guest speaker, **Dr. William Holzemer**, to share his expertise in HIV/AIDS research and leadership. The 17 second-year students attended and were impressed that how he had conducted the large and long-term projects with 5 African countries including Tanzania. His leadership talk also encouraged them to step up their career in academics.



**Dr. Shigeko Horiuchi** presented women-centered care (WCC) using her experiences in midwifery-led clinic in Japan. Students discussed their experiences based on the attributes of WCC: Respect, Safety, Holism, and Partnership. One student reported that they observed 15 physicians and medical students went together to conduct

vaginal examination to a woman without any consent. It was difficult for her to stop this kind of mistreatment as they would be angry and even yell at her. But we discussed that it would be the role of our profession, especially for midwives with higher qualification, to stop such mistreatment. We talked how we could overcome this kind of difficulties and would change the childbirth care to be women-centered.



The next day, **Dr. Shimpuku** presented the global policy of Human Resource for Health and her experiences in clinical practicum for nursing students. She used a case from Shimoda's observational study presented in Morocco. Triggered by the case, students talked passionately how disrespectful care occurred in their practice. From their points of view, we came to realize that the issue was related to management. After 5 continuous night shifts, which could be assigned

regularly in this area, a nurse/midwife must be exhausted and could be easily overwhelmed by their crowded work place. We believe it is necessary to think about training for management level.



The following days, we conducted student presentations about their Master's projects. Dr. Holzemer, Dr. Horiuchi, and Dr. Shimpuku provided feedback for them to improve scientific integrity and outcome of midwifery practice. We are very happy to learn that our midwifery Master's students are progressing well and trying to solve the issues of midwifery care in their own context. We are sure that these midwifery leaders will be change-makers and improve maternal child health in Tanzania.



With **Dr. Sebalda Leshabari (Former Dean)**, **Dr. Columba Mbekenga (Associate Dean)**, and **Dr. Anna Outwater (Department Head)**

We thank all of the people who joined and helped our activities in Tanzania. We look forward to seeing you all again!

Asia Africa Midwifery Research Center  
<http://university.luke.ac.jp/about/project/aamrc/about.html>

