



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

## Newsletter 11 Official Launch of Midwifery Master's Program in MUHAS

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On December 8<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated the start of the new Master's program in Midwifery and Women's Health at Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) School of Nursing. The program is the first Midwifery Master's program in the country. The ceremony was hosted by MUHAS faculty members. From St. Luke's International University, President Ibe, Dr. Horiuchi and Dr. Shimpuku attended the ceremony. The Ambassador of Japan to Tanzania, H.E. Mr. Masaki Okada, and JICA representatives were also present at the ceremony. It was a great occasion to meet with stakeholders from both Tanzania and Japan.

### Courtesy Visit to VC's Office



Before the ceremony, **Dr. Dinah Gasarasi** (the Director of Planning and Development and representing the Vice Chancellor) welcomed Ambassador Okada and the JICA representatives at the VC's office. This visit shows that the program is considered an important part of the university. [Photo: Ambassador Okada signs the guest book]

**Dr. Lilian Muselle** chaired the ceremony.

**Dr. Sebalda Leshabari**, the Dean of School of Nursing, opened the ceremony by introducing the participants. She mentioned her gratitude to St. Luke's International University for encouraging and supporting MUHAS to develop the Midwifery Master's program. She considers the start of the programme as a dream come true after years of efforts



This was followed by the speech of **Dr. Gasarasi** on behalf of Professor Ephata Kaaya (the VC) to welcome guests from the Japanese side. She explained how the relationship between MUHAS and St. Luke's has developed over time, to start this program. She also announced a joint program with St. Luke's and JICA, to send St. Luke's Master's students as JICA volunteers to Muhimbili National Hospital.



The next speech was given by the Ambassador of Japan, **Mr. Okada**. He congratulated the start of the program and emphasized the importance of midwifery education, considering maternal and child health issues in Tanzania. He expressed the hope that this partnership will benefit the communities and commended the tireless work by people involved in this program

The president, **Dr. Ibe**, explained how the relationship started and developed after we signed the Memorandum of Understanding in 2009. She also mentioned that the beginning of St. Luke's was also supported by an American missionary. Now it is time for St. Luke's to support MUHAS.



**Dr. Horiuchi** expressed her sincere gratitude and taught the participants the importance of education to change the society. She said, "Although I am a professor, I am still a student. I am learning new things every day." The faculty all nodded to her words.



**Dr. Shimpuku** talked about her experience with MUHAS from 2008 when she was still a PhD student. She worked hard to bridge the faculties of the two institutions, and it is also a dream come true for her that this program has started. She was happy to see the faces of the committed students.

**Mr. Yoichiro Kimata**, JICA senior representative, gave a speech to congratulate the new Midwifery program, as well as the JICA-St. Luke's joint program, and encouraged students for the future of Tanzania. He made the encouragement in Swahili, and there was a big round of applause at the end of his speech.



**Ms. Agnes Mtawa**, the Director of Nursing Service at Muhimbili National Hospital, talked about her visit to Japan in 2012 through the exchange program of St. Luke's, and how respectful people were. She expressed her appreciation for all she learnt in Japan and promised her support for clinical teaching in this program.

The Student representative, **Mr. Denis Kashaia**, was thankful for all the people who contributed to developing the program so that students can now pursue their career. He understood our aim for this program to enhance midwifery education to an advanced profession, using evidence-based practice to set protocols, leadership to improve education, and influence on policy-making at national level.



As a keynote, **Dr. Tomohiko Sugishita** gave a presentation entitled, "A Path to UHC through Transformative Learning in Midwifery Program." He first talked about his experience in Tanzania and asked the participants to call him "Baba Mkude" (Mogorogo Baby's Father) as he had children both in Japan and Tanzania. He used the example of Japan to illustrate the improvement of maternal and child health even after World War II. He mentioned that we should not be wondering or just

observing what is happening, but be making changes as individual citizens. He used the data of health indicators and the number of health care providers in Japan, saying that the changes were made by

nurses and midwives. All the participants were encouraged and given a good motivation.



At the end of the ceremony, St. Luke's president handed a memento, a crystal trophy, to **Dean Dr. Leshabari** to congratulate her on their success in starting the Midwifery Master's program. They looked very happy to receive it as a reminder of their efforts.

The Vice Chancellor of MUHAS, **Professor Dr. Ephata Kaaya**, came back for this event and commended the great success both institutions had made to start the program. The program is officially recognized by the university!



**We are all very happy to start the program  
for the future of Midwifery in Tanzania!!**



## Humanized Childbirth Class



**Dr. Shimpuku** arrived a bit earlier and spent a whole day with the students, lecturing, discussing, and demonstrating Humanized Childbirth. During the development of this program, the faculty agreed that Humanized Childbirth / Women-centered Care are the core concepts throughout the curriculum. At the end of this class, students were asked to make a group presentation on the implementation of the concept in Tanzania, in front of other faculty members.



## Student presentation

After the ceremony, students gave presentations to the faculty from St. Luke's. The main discussion topic was how we could actually implement the concepts in the very crowded health care facilities in Tanzania. They stated that education of both women and midwives are necessary to learn about women's rights. Before that, women need to be heard about what they know. Professionals need to be humble that midwives do not know everything about women, but women themselves do.



They continued to discuss the strategies to change the situation. One is involving other stakeholders, such as WHO, JICA, etc., and expand this concept to all educational programs for midwives. They also talked about resources and management, outcome evaluation of maternal and neonatal health, and exchange information and program successes with authorities and with other countries that are seeking a model for their own country.



From the discussion, I, Dr. Shimpuku, found that they learned and understood the concepts well, and that they thought for the short period of time about the possible changes they might be able to make. I hope students will implement several projects from this discussion and witness the actual changes. After the presentations, they gave us gifts of *Kitenge*, the traditional cloth of Tanzania. We were very happy to receive beautiful high-quality cotton.

## At Maternity Home

Between the hectic schedules, we visited Mnazi Moja Hospital (MMH) in Zanzibar and Muhimbili National Hospital. We especially learnt a lot in the Maternity Home of MMH. Women were very tolerant and persevered while giving birth. There is still a lack of proper equipment and environment. With the support of other stakeholders, we hope to improve the conditions and develop further educational program to improve midwives' working environment and midwifery care.



The website is also updated for more information :  
Asia Africa Midwifery Research Center  
<http://www.slcn.ac.jp/aamrc/>