How women are treated during facility-based childbirth

Current Project Brief

Objectives and Background

Every woman has the right to dignified, respectful care during childbirth. Recent evidence has demonstrated that globally many women experience disrespectful or abusive treatment during labour and delivery in facilities, which can pose a significant barrier to women presenting to facilities for delivery. Disrespectful and abusive treatment during childbirth may also result in poorer health outcomes for women and newborns. Recent efforts to define and measure disrespect and abuse have resulted in highly variable estimates of prevalence.

Despite the growing recognition of this important public health problem, no effort has been made at the global level to define and measure its prevalence. To achieve this, there is a clear need for the maternal health community to reach consensus on a universal definition of disrespectful and abusive care during childbirth in facilities, in order to develop and validate tools to measure disrespect and abuse globally.

The primary objectives of this project are:

1. To develop an evidence-based definition and identification criteria of mistreatment of women during childbirth in facilities that can be used globally;
2. To develop and validate tools for measuring the treatment of women during childbirth in facilities in three countries;
3. To explore individual, provider, institutional and health systems factors that either promote or prevent disrespectful and abusive practices during childbirth in facilities;

Geographic location

Myanmar, Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea

Main deliverables

- A global definition and identification criteria for mistreatment of women;
- Validated evidence-based tools for estimation of prevalence at facility and community level;

Partners

University of Ibadan, Nigeria; University of Ghana, Ghana; Department of Medical Research (Lower Myanmar), Myanmar; Cellule de Recherche en Santé de la Réproduction en Guinée (CERREGUI), Guinea; Johns Hopkins School of Public Health, USA; WHO

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