



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

Education and Training for the Real World



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



**ASSOCIATION OF CHILDLESS COUPLES
OF GHANA**



Small Grant: Involuntary childlessness: enhancing knowledge and awareness in the Global South

Dr. Rosemary Hiadzi
Prof. Dr. Ernestina Donkor
Students: Esther Abedu, Deborah Baiden,
Charles Yajalin

Dr. Tammary Esho
Students: Benjamin, Sarah Migiro, Solomon
Mwenda

Dr. Trudie Gerrits, Dr. Henny Bos
Dr. Floor van Rooij
Students: Anna Jansen, Luca Koppen, Evelien
Oomen, Mara van Stiphout, Margot Visser,
Aida Bilajbegović

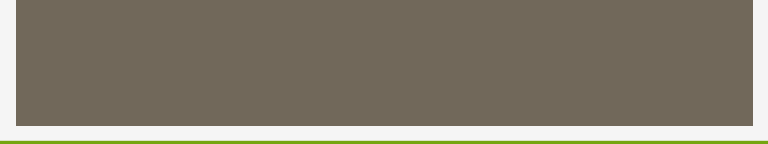
Nana Yaw Osei

Dr. Wanjiru Ndegwa

Prof. Dr. Willem Ombelet
Jan Goossens



Some questions
for the audience



What is the estimated prevalence of people facing fertility problems around the world?

- A. 2-5%
- B. 8-12%
- C. 22-35%

A= Red; B= White, C= Blue

What is the estimated prevalence of people facing fertility problems around the world?

- A. 2-5%
- B. 8-12% (White)**
- C. 22-35%



Whom of you (your organisation)
have ever payed programmatic
attention to infertility?

- A. No
- B. Yes
- C. I don't know

● A= Red; B= White; C= Blue



Do you think it is important to pay attention to infertility?

A. No

B. Yes

C. I don't know

● A= Red; B= White; C= Blue



Do you think it is important to pay attention to infertility?

- If no, why not?
- If yes, why?

Implications of infertility and childlessness

- ◉ Emotional (grief, guilt, depressed)
- ◉ Marital (gender-based violence, divorce, ..)
- ◉ Extramarital sex → STDs and HIV
- ◉ Social (stigmatization, exclusion, ...)
- ◉ Economic (huge expences treatment, no children to contribute to family income)
- ◉ Old age and death(taking care, mourning,...)
- ◉ Family descendance issues

Objectives “small grant”

- To increase awareness amongst various stakeholders about infertility and childlessness in Kenya, Ghana and worldwide
- To generate new insights about experiences and needs of people with fertility problems and (possible) interventions



UNIVERSITY OF GHANA



TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY OF KENYA

Education and Training for the Real World



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



**ASSOCIATION OF CHILDLESS COUPLES
OF GHANA**



**Footsteps Fertility
FOUNDATION**



Dr. Rosemary Hiadzi
Prof. Dr. Ernestina Donkor
Students: Esther Abedu, Deborah Baiden,
Charles Yajalin

Dr. Tammary Esho
Students: Benjamin, Sarah Migiro,
Solomon Mwenda

Dr. Trudie Gerrits, Dr. Henny Bos
Dr. Floor van Rooij
Students: Anna Jansen, Luca Koppen,
Evelien Oomen, Mara van Stiphout,
Margot Visser, Bilajbegović, Aida Aida
Bilajbegovic

Nana Yaw Osei

Dr. Wanjiru Ndegwa

Prof. Dr. Willem Ombelet
Jan Goossens

Activities

- **Studies:** Quantitative and qualitative studies in Ghana and Kenya
 - Interdisciplinary
 - Multi-country
 - Clinics & “patient” support groups
 - Students & staff
- **Workshops:** disseminating and discussing results amongst practitioners and people with fertility problems in **Ghana and Kenya**
- **Sharenet - Expert meeting** in the Netherlands

Some Findings

Limited (access to) Treatment

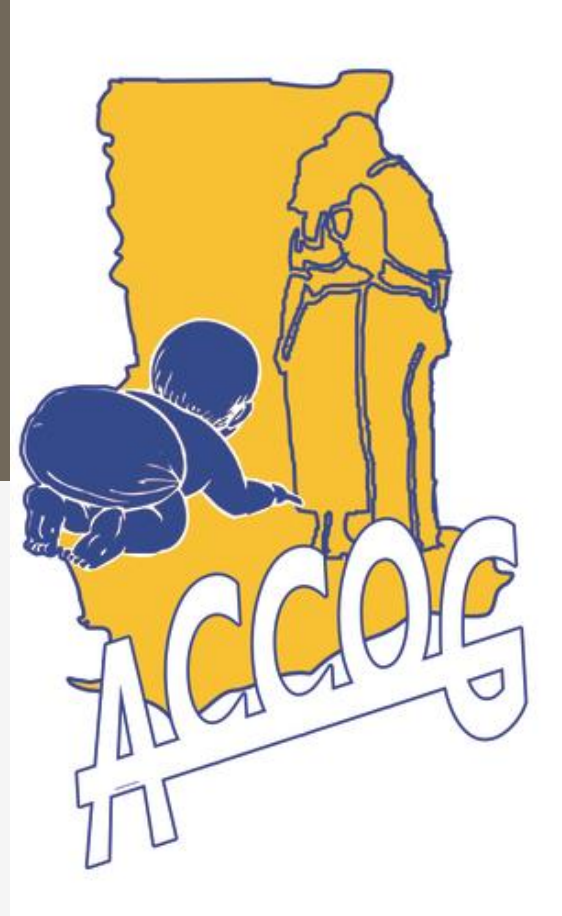
- Assisted Reproductive Technologies (ART) only available in the **private health care sector**.
- *'It's [IVF] too expensive...Yeah, like, too much. So, for me, when I have never even seen not a million, 50000 shillings [500 US dollars], I have never. No. The little money I get, I eat and life goes on'. (Daisy)*

- **Stratified reproduction:**

Stratified reproduction refers to the idea that some people, because of cultural, structural and/or economic factors, are more empowered to reproduce than others (Colen, 1986; 1995)

Limited (access to) information

- Stratification enhanced by **limited (access to) information** about infertility and fertility treatment.
- **Tension of aims** in provision of private fertility care
 - Medical aim
 - Private-for-profit aim
- *'They [the doctors] didn't even bother to put me through a single [test] before starting the procedures...[But] the consequences are with the patient always, and never with the doctor. [Instead, they] go home with all the money'. (Cheryl)*



**Pentecost Hospital Fertility Clinic &
The Association of Childless Couples of Ghana, Accra**

Importance of ACCOG

Access to information and treatment

'The problem is not always with the woman'

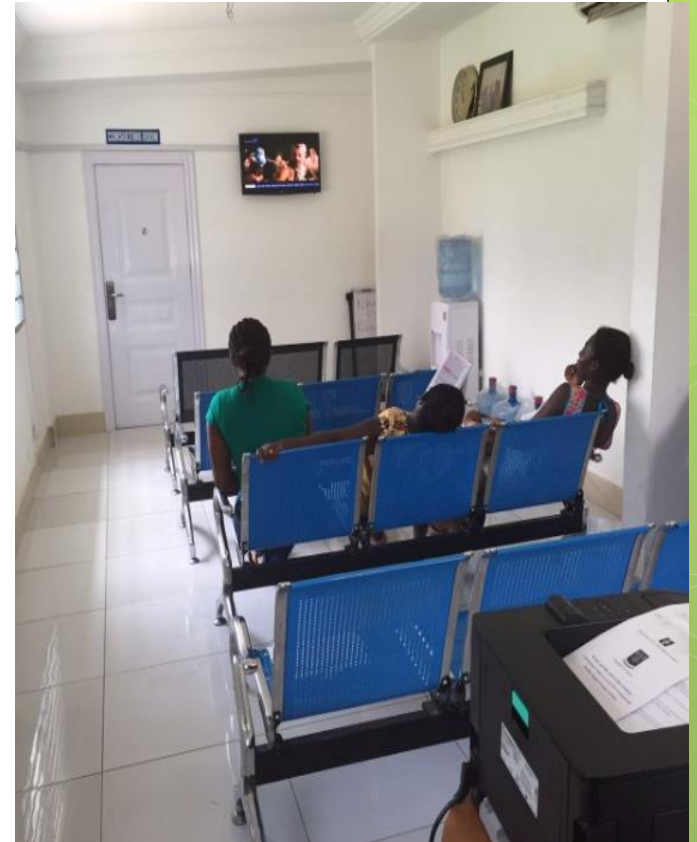
Coping practices

'Doing it together' /

A life without a child is meaningful

Sharing experiences

'We are one umbrella'



Recommendations

Raising Awareness of Policy Makers, Health Professionals, and NGOs

- Disseminate research evidence – clinical, epidemiological and social science
- Advocacy by (in)fertility support groups
- Seek collaboration with journalists, social and mass media

Destigmatize Infertility

Public Education

- Not blaming the victim
- Both male and female infertility exist
- Male infertility is NOT the same as sexual impotence

Health professionals: Provide accurate information

- Male and female factor infertility
- Realistic information about treatment options (low-tech and high-tech), risks and success rates - not providing false hope

Address Unmet Need for ARTs

- To make safe, affordable and effective IVF accessible to all who need it
- Support 'more affordable' IVF initiatives

Counseling and Support

- Access to professional psycho-social counseling, also including addressing issues of sexuality
- Set up support groups for people facing fertility problems– Information and peer support