

## **Travel rapport**

### *“The Abortion Situation in Jimma, Ethiopia seven years after Legislation of the Law”*

In 2005 the Ethiopian Law on Abortion was revised, legalising safe terminations of pregnancies. However, social norms regarding abortion are just beginning to change and the expansion of safe abortion services has progressed slowly. Concern therefore remains about pregnancy terminations still being performed under substandard conditions outside the legal framework. Against this background, it was decided to conduct a study which aimed at describing the abortion situation in Jimma, Ethiopia, seven years after the legislation of the law. From August 2011 to April 2012 information on women experiencing abortion was collected in public institutions and NGOs providing safe abortion, post abortion care and antenatal care in Jimma.

The study describes women having induced abortion in first and second trimester. To capture women who had resorted to unsafe pregnancy termination, the study also included women admitted with incomplete abortion and through an empathetic interview identified women who were admitted with complications after an unsafe abortion. Additionally, a group of pregnant women attending antenatal care were included as a reference group. Hence the study comprised three groups of women: 1) women having first trimester induced abortion (safe/unsafe); 2) women having second trimester induced abortion (safe/unsafe) and; 3) pregnant women attending antenatal care.

In all 872 women with first trimester abortion, 71 women with second trimester abortion and 404 women attending antenatal care were included in the study. Structured interviews were conducted to describe the socioeconomic and reproductive profile of the women in each study group. The health consequences associated with safe and unsafe abortion, respectively, were studied by review of the clinical charts.

The study was conducted in collaboration with Dept of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Jimma University Hospital, with local supervision by Dr. Dereje Negussie, Ass Professor, Dept of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Jimma University Hospital.

The collaboration with the local institution has been a positive experience. Thanks to the local supervisor's professional knowledge and extended local network, it has been possible to create contacts and set up data collection, not only in the hospital, but also in health centres and clinics in Jimma town. This study is the first in the collaboration between Jimma University and Odense University. It is expected that more projects will be established in this collaboration.

It is believed that the findings from the study will add to the debate when it comes to legalising abortion in other sub Saharan African countries.

The results are expected to be published in an international peer-reviewed journal.

Vibeke Rasch