



International Seminar on decision making regarding abortion— determinants and consequences

**Organized by the IUSSP Scientific Panel on Abortion Research
and the Population Council - Nairobi/STEP UP
Nanyuki, Kenya, 3-5 June 2014**

Chair: Susheela Singh

Panel members: Agnes Guillaume, Ndola Prata, Sabina Rashid and Harriet Birungi

SHORT REPORT

The IUSSP Scientific Panel on Abortion, in collaboration with the Population Council's Nairobi office, held a seminar on “Decision-making regarding abortion—determinants and consequences” in Nanyuki, Kenya, 3-5 June 2014. The seminar was supported by funds provided by the IUSSP, and with additional technical and financial support from STEP UP (Strengthening Evidence for Programming on Unintended Pregnancy) Research Consortium, funded by UK aid from the UK Government, as well as financial support from a number of organizations: Bixby Center for Population Health and Sustainability, University of California, Berkeley; Centre Population et Développement (CEPED, France); Ipas; Venture Strategies for Health and Development (VSHD); and Venture Strategies Innovations (VSI).

This seminar provided a forum for discussing current research on the decision-making process regarding abortion and its determinants. The papers mainly focus on countries or contexts where access to abortion is restrictive due to legal conditions, high stigma, or poor quality of health systems. This group of papers present results from new studies based on both qualitative and quantitative data, propose new approaches and methodologies, and assess the advantages and disadvantages of existing methodologies, with the goal of advancing and guiding future work in this area. The decision making process regarding pregnancy resolution and abortion is insufficiently documented and poorly understood. The decision-making process related to pregnancy and abortion involves not only women but often other social actors such as male partners, family or community, medical institution and sometimes legal or religious institutions. In some societies women have little or no rights and autonomy regarding their own reproduction.

The 24 papers that were presented at the seminar addressed issues that included: abortion decision making – access and safety; social and economic factors and abortion; adolescents and abortion decision making; misoprostol and decision making; decision making and pregnancy outcomes; and there were three methodological papers.

Seminar participants came from diverse backgrounds and regions. They represented Latin America (5), Asia (4), Sub-Saharan Africa (8), North America (6), and other developed countries (6). Participants represented different career stages – Several were junior scholars, a few at the pre-doctoral stage. Panel members are actively pursuing the possibility of having a large proportion of the papers published in a special issue of a journal and are discussing options with various journals.