

A neglected crisis? The feminization of poverty.

Maternal health in low and middle income settings

By Dr. Vanja Berggren (Karolinska Institutet, Sweden)

Abstract: Women's health in relation to pregnancy and deliveries is not often prioritized in low- and middle-income countries. Subsequently, there are high numbers of maternal deaths in these contexts. Considering that most of these deaths are preventable one could argue that this is a health crisis. The neglect of vulnerable women has been called by some scholars the pathology of poverty or the feminization of poverty.

But recognition of a health crisis also provides a turning point and an opportunity for transformational change of health systems and experiences. Drawing on prior research work, including a recent study in Limpopo, this seminar explores how this health crisis impacts vulnerable women, such as migrants, and how cross disciplinary collaborations might enrich our understandings and responses to this. The seminar contextualizes this in a reproductive health and rights perspective targeting women and the Sustainable Development Goals. Drawing on feminist scholar Rosemary Tong's (1997) statement that "no matter what kind of patriarchal system women live under, radical feminist writings inspire women of all races and classes", the seminar opens for discussion how cross disciplinary research about women, migration and health could make a difference?

Speaker biography:

Dr. Vanja Berggren, is an associate professor in public health at Karolinska Institutet Sweden, her research focuses on women's reproductive health and rights in migration settings. After a post-doctoral study in Syria and Saudi Arabia she shared her time between two Swedish government missions (on girls risking forced marriages and Female Genital Mutilation). Vanja has extensive publications in these fields and has more recently been coordinating exchange and capacity-building projects with Uganda, Sudan, Jordan and South Africa.

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1 – 2:30pm

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