

Project report

Training and support of Primary Care Providers in Rwanda: Avenues for Improvement.

Dear Karen Elise Jensen's Foundation,

We are glad to share with you this sixth project report that covers the period from April 2016 to November 2017. During this period the twin-PhD students (Michael Schriver and Vincent K. Cubaka) finalized their respective PhD works, successfully defended their PhD theses and submitted their papers to scientific journals. Meanwhile, the research-year student Ditte Andreasen finalized her Master dissertation successfully.

This report presents the main activities that took place during the aforementioned period as well as outcomes and upcoming activities. The report also presents the status of scientific publications. The three main research focuses of the project have guided this report:

1. External supervision in primary health care
2. Patient provider communication
3. The practice of diagnosis in primary health care

1. External supervision in primary health care

Michael is the principal investigator for this part of the project.

Two qualitative papers exploring external supervision of Rwandan primary health care settings have been finalized and submitted for publication. One of the papers has recently been published in the African Journal of Primary Health Care and Family Medicine under the title "*The relationship between primary healthcare providers and their external supervisors in Rwanda*". The other paper entitled "*Perceptions on evaluative and formative functions of external supervision of Rwandan primary healthcare facilities: A qualitative study*" is undergoing a second review in the scientific journal PLOS-One.

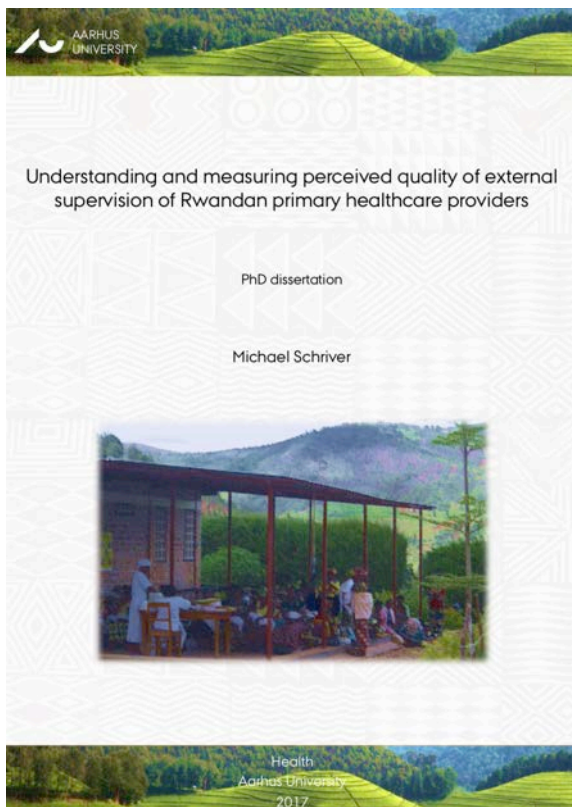
The ExPRESS tool, the questionnaire we have developed to measure support in supervision,

has undergone further validity and relevance tests. A paper describing the development and validation of the tool has been submitted for publication to the journal *Global Health Action*. The paper entitled “*Development and validation of the ExPRESS instrument for primary healthcare providers' evaluation of external supervision*” is undergoing review.

Using the above three studies of 1st authorship and a systematic review on supportive supervision in Africa (of 3rd authorship), Michael has written a PhD dissertation entitled “*Understanding and measuring perceived quality of external supervision of Rwandan primary healthcare providers*”. Michael successfully defended this thesis publicly on August 25 2017, and the KEJ foundation was also represented at the defence.



Michael during the PhD defence



Michael's dissertation cover page

2. Patient provider communication

Vincent is the principal investigator for this part of the project.

Two qualitative studies have been finalized. We conducted individual in-depth interviews with patients and health care providers. Data from interviews were analysed and two papers have been written and submitted for publication. The first paper entitled “*‘He should feel your pain’: Patient insights on patient-provider communication in Rwanda*” has been accepted for publication in the African journal of Primary Health Care and Family Medicine. The second paper entitled “*Providers’ perceptions of communication with patients in primary healthcare in Rwanda*” is undergoing review in the journal *PLOS-One*.

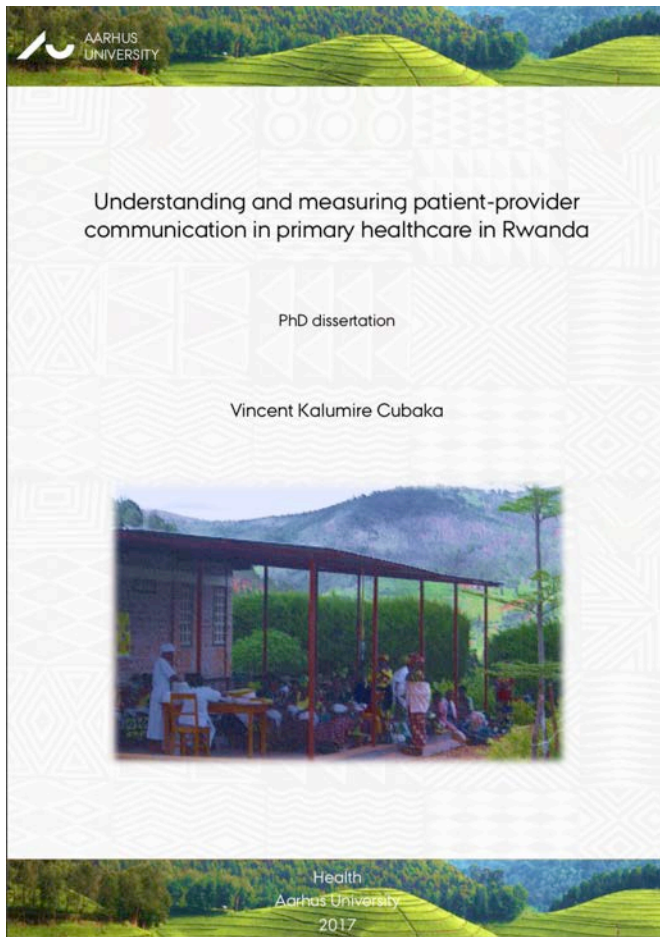
Furthermore, the communication assessment tool (CAT), a validated tool used to assess providers’ communication skills from a patient perspective, has been further validated for use in Rwanda and an article describing the adaptation and validation process has been finalized and submitted for publication in the journal *Patient Education and Counselling*. This article is under review and is entitled “*Measuring patient-provider communication skills*

in Rwanda: Selection, adaptation and validation of the Communication Assessment Tool”.

From the three above studies of 1st authorship, Vincent has written a PhD dissertation entitled “*Understanding and measuring patient-provider communication in primary healthcare in Rwanda*”. He has successfully defended the dissertation on August 25 2017.



Vincent during the PhD defence



Vincent's dissertation cover page

During this period Vincent has participated in the Primafamed workshop (May 2016, Nairobi) and in two Besrouer Conferences from the College of family physicians of Canada, one in Rio de Janeiro, in November 2016 (in relation to the Wonca World conference) and another one in Montreal in November 2017. These conferences have been great opportunities for him to link with and learn from other family physicians and health professionals educators, and to be involved in collaborative research around family and community medicine.



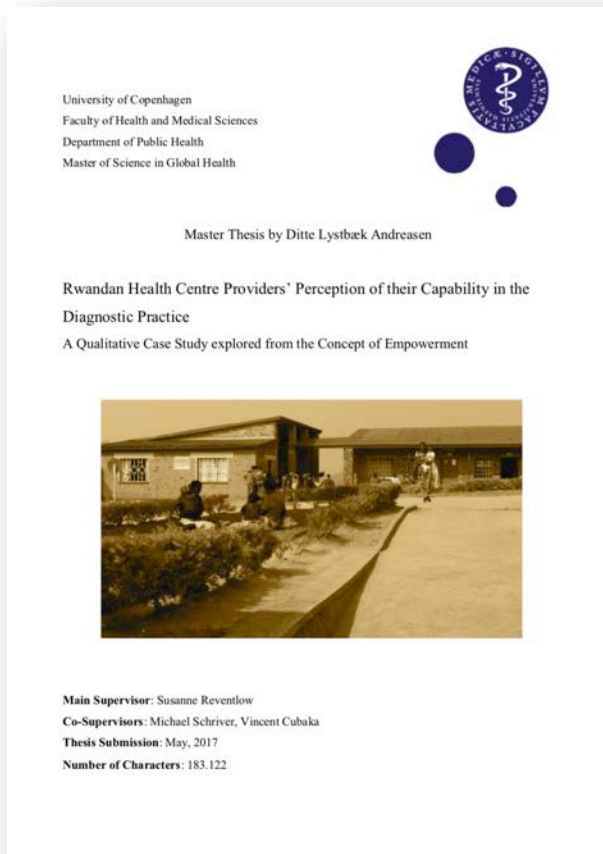
Vincent presenting a poster in the Besrouer conference, Montreal Nov. 2017

3. The practice of diagnosis in primary health care

Ditte led this part of the project.

We explored health centre providers' perspectives on their competence-level for diagnosing patients in the consultation room of primary care facilities in Rwanda. Data analysis has been finalized. From this work Ditte has written a Master thesis entitled "*Rwandan Health Centre Providers' Perception of their Capability in the Diagnostic Practice. A Qualitative Case Study explored from the Concept of Empowerment*". She successfully finalized the thesis at the University of Copenhagen, receiving the grad "12" for her thesis.

She is currently working on a paper about this work, to be submitted for publication in a peer reviewed journal.



Cover page of Ditte's Master thesis



Kalø, the day after Michael's and Vincent's defences

4. Upcoming activities

- Finalising the write-up and publication of the paper about the practice of diagnosis in primary healthcare in Rwanda.
- Finalising and submitting the protocol for a follow-up study on supervision. This study is built on the ExPRESS tool. The purpose is to strengthen Rwandan primary healthcare providers' skills by improving the quality of their external supervision using an innovative feedback model. The preliminary title is "*Towards supportive supervision of primary health care in Rwanda. Testing an innovative model for primary care providers' feedback to their external supervisors.*"
- Continue the Duo-ethnography study (further data collection, analysis, write-up, and publication). This qualitative study explores the experience and perceptions of 4 PhD students involved in 2 twin-PhD projects. The preliminary title is "Exploring equity in a twin research collaboration across South and North. A duo- ethnography."
- Preparing and organising a symposium about South-North Partnership for Primary healthcare Training and Research in Rwanda. The suggested date is early March 2018. Among others, it will be an opportunity to present and discuss the outcomes of this project in Rwanda.
- Vincent has signed a new contract with the University of Rwanda (UR). He will be employed as a researcher and a lecturer thanks to the Karen Elise Jensen's Foundation that funded his post named "The Karen Elise Jensen lectureship in Primary Care". One of his objectives is to fully establish and consolidate the research unit for primary care at UR. His responsibilities will include conducting and supporting Primary healthcare and community oriented research as well as teaching Social and Community Medicine. Michael, Per and Ditte will continue assisting and supporting him for this endeavour.

With Kindest Regards,

Per Kallestrup

Vincent Cubaka

Michael Schriver

Ditte Andreasen