Global health – focusing on women, children and youth

We are making major progress within medical research, while people all over the world are affected by great suffering which could be prevented and treated with knowledge and simple resources. Lund University is working actively to ensure that the research we conduct and the knowledge we possess contribute to solving global health challenges. Here are three research fields within global health, focusing on children, youth and women. These are particularly urgent areas of intervention in which we need your help to move the research forward.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF PRE-ECCLAMPSIA

Pre-eclampsia affects 8.5 million pregnant women worldwide every year. Researchers at Lund University have identified biological markers which provide an early indication of risk for pre-eclampsia and also reveal what happens in the body when a woman is affected by pre-eclampsia. This allows high-risk pregnancies to be identified before symptoms appear, which is particularly important in developing countries where antenatal care is often insufficient.

In experimental studies, researchers have succeeded in blocking the damaging mechanisms connected with pre-eclampsia. Plans for the next step of their research include clinical trials on patients. The hope is that this research will lead to medication for pre-eclampsia.

Help us to achieve our goals:

- Develop new, simplified diagnostic methods for low and medium-income countries.
- Develop new medication against pre-eclampsia.

ONE IN THREE LACKS BASIC SURGERY

More than one third of the world’s population currently lacks access to basic surgical care and every year untreated bone fractures and burns have life-altering consequences for millions of children.

For two years, Lund University has been leading an international research project called The Lancet Commission on Global Surgery in cooperation with Harvard Medical School and King’s College London. Researchers are mapping the human and economic consequences of insufficient surgical care and drawing up recommendations for how surgical care can be developed. Surgical care in low-income countries has proven to be as cost-effective as immunisation programmes.

Help us to achieve our goals:

- Develop innovative methods for surgical care in low and middle income countries.
- Establish a permanent research team at Lund University, with special connections to pediatric surgery and perinatal care in low and middle income countries.

SEXUAL COERCION AMONG YOUTH IN SWEDEN AND UGANDA

The fight against sexual coercion and violence is an important global gender equality and rights issue which exposes those affected to serious mental and physical health risks. Young people are often particularly affected.

Researchers at Lund University have shown that just over one third of youth in Uganda have been subjected to sexual coercion. Socio-economic vulnerability and a lack of gender equality makes so-called exchange sex (sexual activity in exchange for school fees, for example) into a survival strategy for many young people in developing countries. This generates a great vulnerability to sexual coercion and exploitation which in turn entails serious health risks such as HIV infection.

Help us to achieve our goals:

- Develop a new model of intervention to prevent sexual coercion and violence among youth.
- Research to support measures to reduce the vulnerability of young people to sexual coercion and violence.

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