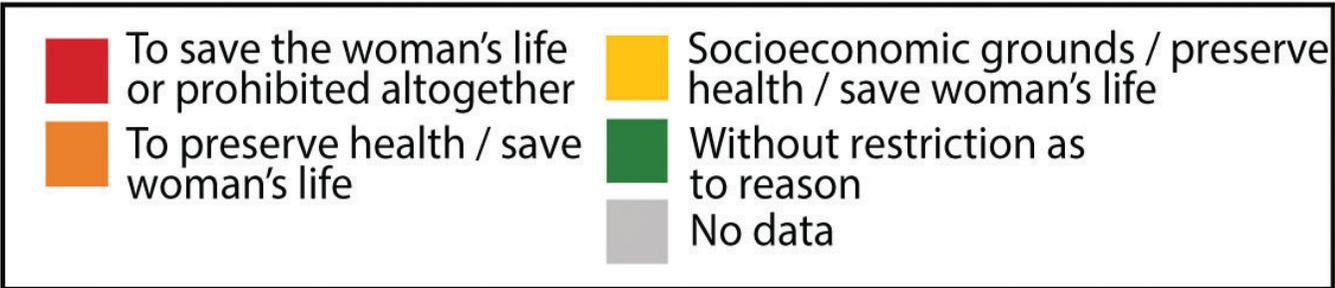
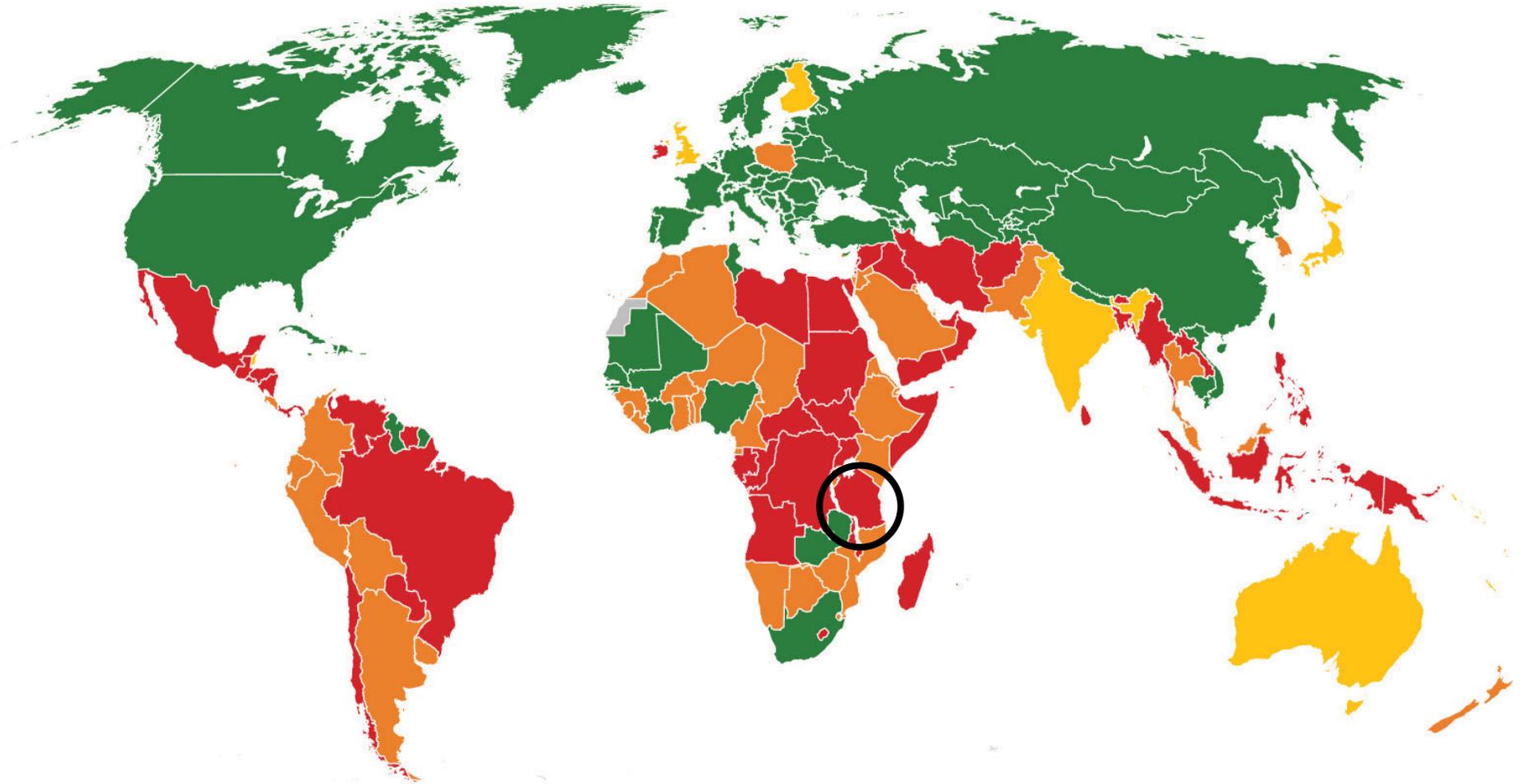


Seeking clandestine abortion safely: Unwanted pregnancy and medical abortion among young women in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Conference presentation at FIAPAC
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(Ref. 3 and 4)

Abortion in Tanzania:

- Induced abortion rate of 36 abortions per 1,000 women ⁽³⁾
- Unsafe abortion:
 - 16-23% of maternal mortality ^{(4) (5)}
 - 40% of hospitalizations due to obstetric complications ⁽⁶⁾
 - Disproportionately affects young women ⁽⁷⁾

Misoprostol in Tanzania:

- Registered in Tanzania in 2007
 - Mentioned as an abortion method in recent studies
 - Available off-label (?)
-
- Under which conditions are women accessing medical abortion?
 - How is medical abortion affecting the situation of women with unwanted pregnancies?



Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Study aim:

Concerning medical abortion, explore:

- Community knowledge
- Accessibility
- Experiences from use

Study methods:

In-depth interviews

- **Women (<26 years) after MA (15)**
- **Health workers (17)**
- **Drug cellers (10)**

Focus group discussion

- **Young women in low-income areas (7)**
- **Students (3)**

Informative interviews

- **NGOs (15)**
- **Authorities (6)**

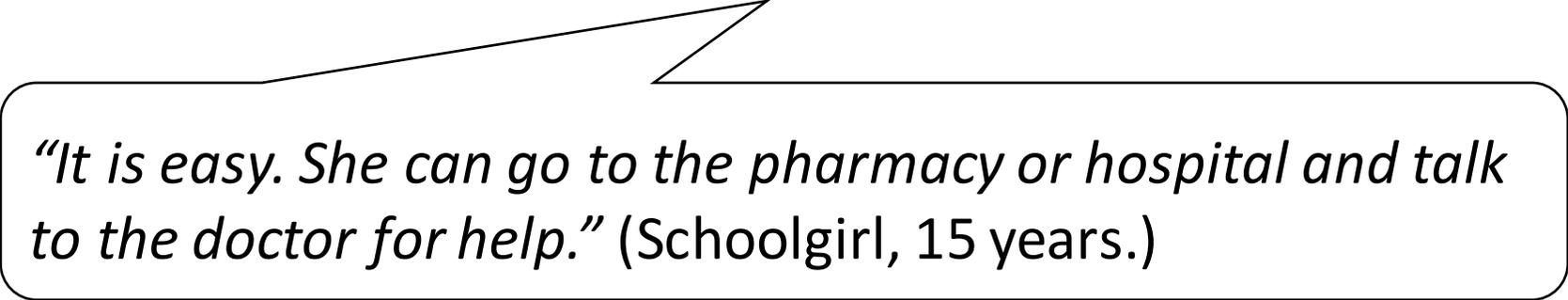
Field notes

- **Small interviews**
- **Everyday conversations**
- **Media**

Client simulation study (63)

Findings:

- «Miso» a common and well-known method
- Wide availability, from drugstores and health workers



“It is easy. She can go to the pharmacy or hospital and talk to the doctor for help.” (Schoolgirl, 15 years.)

- Varied and sub-optimal safe-use instructions
- Lack of a protocol
- Profit-seeking providers



“Because they're not qualified (the drug vendors), they sell it like a rice: “Take this and use it!” No more explanations. What I can say is that our government regulations are also hindering the women to be open, and the sellers of drugs to give wide explanation on how to practice safe abortion.”

(Drugstore owner)

- High acceptability
 - Safer alternative
 - Accessible
 - Less painful and more 'natural'
 - Private



"I think it's good (misoprostol), because its effects are not as bad as the ones I've heard others can have. Like if you go to the hospital, they might injure your uterus and be at risk of being infertile. But they say this method is better than the rest." (Young woman, 20 years)

Discussion:

- 'Safer' unsafe abortions
- On women's own terms
- More affordable

- How about outside Dar es Salaam?

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Questions?

This research is part of a study between academics in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Zambia and Norway, called:

Competing discourses impacting girls' and women's rights: Fertility control and safe abortion

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