



UDUAK OKOMO

Africa

Paediatrics and Epidemiology

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Banjul, The Gambia

At the heart of Dr. Uduak Okomo's work is the desire to decrease preventable deaths from infections in newborn babies. To this purpose, she has studied how neonatal infections are transmitted, and has found that hospital-acquired infections play a significant role. This finding has major implications for clinical and public health interventions and can inform policy at all levels of the healthcare system.

Dr. Okomo completed her undergraduate medical training in Nigeria, followed by paediatric specialist training in Nigeria and The Gambia. She received her PhD in Infectious Disease Epidemiology from the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine in the United Kingdom. With research funding from the Elizabeth Glaser Paediatric AIDS Foundation, she established a paediatric HIV/AIDS cohort in The Gambia, improving capacity for clinical care and research through mentorship, in partnership with the National AIDS Secretariat. She also led the team that wrote the first national paediatric HIV/AIDS treatment guidelines in The Gambia. With the support of a recently awarded Pump Priming Grant from the Wellcome Trust and in collaboration with UNICEF, she is currently carrying out a facility-based evaluation of stillbirths and neonatal deaths in the country. She is a Vice President and Chairwoman of the Gambia Chapter of the West African College of Physicians.

Dr. Okomo is as passionate about supporting young scientists as she is about improving neonatal survival. She is a visiting Consultant Paediatrician to the National Teaching Hospital and teaches Paediatrics at the School of Medicine & Allied Health Sciences, University of The Gambia. She is a member of the Medical Research Council's Gambia Women in Science Working Group and helps to facilitate the development and advancement of young girls in biomedical and clinical research careers, through public engagement activities and as a mentor to young African scientists across the region.

“ *Receiving this Award is an encouragement to continue my work to improve maternal and newborn survival in Sub-Saharan Africa. I hope it inspires African women scientists in global health to become scientific leaders in their spheres of influence and gives them the courage and confidence to tackle Africa's challenges in global health.* ”