

As of April 2021

Profile of Bureau Staff



1. Job title:

Deputy Director, Division of Global Health Policy and Research,
Department of Health Planning and Management

2. Name: Hiromi Obara, M.D. MSc.

3. Area of expertise: Reproductive Maternal and Newborn Health (RMNH),
Monitoring and Evaluation of RMNH, Obstetrics and Gynecology

4. Long-term overseas experiences:

- 2019— now (2y) Project Coordinator, Project for Improving the quality of comprehensive services for cervical cancer, Cambodia, JICA (implemented remotely from Japan)
- 2016-2019 (3y) Health Policy Advisor in Lao PDR, JICA
- 2011-2014 (3y) Reproductive Health Medical Officer, Dept. of Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Adolescent Health, Division of NCDs and Health Promotion, WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, WHO
- 2007-2010 (3y) Chief Advisor, The Project for Improving Maternal and Child Health Service in Rural Areas in Cambodia, JICA
- 2006 (1y) Officer, Development Study for Health Sector, Cambodia, JICA
- 2001-2003 (2y) Technical advisor on Obstetrics and Gynecology, MCH Project, Cambodia, JICA

5. Committee member and Advisor

Global and regional Levels:

- Dec 2020 – Feb 2023 Expert. WHO Mother and Newborn Information for Tracking Outcomes and Results (MoNITOR) (Dec 2020 – Feb 2023)
<https://www.who.int/data/maternal-newborn-child-adolescent/monitor>
- 2017-2021 Member of WHO Guideline Development Groups in the area of reproductive, maternal and newborn health. e.g. Intrapartum care for a positive childbirth experience, prevention of mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B virus infection, abortion, contraceptive eligibility, and others.
- Since 2015 - A member of Independent Review Group (IRG) of newborn care programme by WPRO

Country level:

- Nov 2017- Mar 2019 Alternate member of Global Fund Country Coordination Committee of Lao PDR

Japan: Editorial Board Member - Global Health and Medicine published by the National Center for Global Health and Medicine <http://www.globalhealthmedicine.com/site/editorialboard.html>

5. Society

- Since 1995, Member, Japan Obstetrics Gynecology Society (Since 2020, Specialist of Ob/Gyn)
- Since 1994, Member, Japan Association for International Health

6. Awards:

- Good Poster Award by the Congress President: 66th Annual Congress of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology (2014) . H Obara, N Fujita, K Kakimoto. Analysis of contraceptive related articles and abstracts in Acta Obstetrica et Gynaecologica Japonica for 65 years— 1949 to 2013. 2014;233 (S93). In Annual Congress of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology.
- FIGO Awards in Recognition of Women Obstetrician/Gynaecologists (in the occasion of XXII World Congress of Gynecology and Obstetrics November 2018)

7. Publication list:

ORCID ID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4789-4972>

1) Paper

Reproductive, maternal, newborn and women's health

1. Haruyama R, Obara H, Fujita N. What is the baseline situation of Japan against the global goals and targets towards the elimination of cervical cancer? *Glob Health Med.* 2021 Feb 28; 3(1): 44–47. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7936364/>
2. Kikuchi S, Tomoko K, Obara H. Do the Asia and Oceania Federation of Obstetrics and Gynecology members' websites provide information targeting women in the context of the COVID - 19 pandemic? *J Obstet Gynaecol Res.* 2020 Oct;46(10):2193-2194. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32767685/>
3. Zhao Li, Obara H, Sobel HL, et.al. Association between early essential newborn care and breastfeeding outcomes in eight countries in Asia and the Pacific: a cross-sectional observational - study. *BMJ Glob Health.* 2020 Aug;5(8):e002581. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32764149/>
4. Bellizzi S, Sobel HL, Obara H, Temmerman M. Underuse of modern methods of contraception: underlying causes and consequent undesired pregnancies in 35 low- and middle-income countries. *Hum Reprod.* 2015 Apr;30 (4):973-86. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25650409>
5. Souza JP, Obara H, Gülmezoglu AM, Windmer M, Lawrie TA, Adejuyigbe EA, et al. Maternal and perinatal health research priorities beyond 2015: an international survey and prioritization exercise. *Reprod Health.* 2014 Aug;11 (1):61. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25100034>
6. Obara H, Sobel H. Quality maternal and newborn care to ensure a healthy start for every newborn in the World Health Organization Western Pacific Region. *BJOG.* 2014 Sep;121 Suppl:154–9. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25236650>
7. Obara H. The prevalence and determinants of severe maternal morbidity and mortality in the top referral obstetric hospital in Cambodia Hiromi OBARA Complete Version of Paper Submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of. MSc in Epidemiology LONDON SCHOOL OF HYGIENE & TROPICAL MEDICINE; 2004.
8. Koum K, Hy S, Tiv S, Sieng T, Obara H, Matsui M, et al. Characteristics of antepartum and intrapartum eclampsia in the National Maternal and Child Health Center in Cambodia. *J Obstet Gynaecol Res.* 2004 Apr;30 (2):74–9. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15009606>
9. Koum K, Sann CS, Obara H, Fujita N, et al. Maternal death cases in the top referral hospital in Cambodia. *J Obstet Gynaecol Res.* 2002 Feb;28 (1):13–8. <http://doi.wiley.com/10.1046/j.1341-8076.2002.00004.x>
10. Obara H, Minakami H, Matsubara S. et al. Vaginal birth after cesarean delivery: results in 310 pregnancies. *J Obstet Gynaecol Res.* 1998 Apr;24(2):129–34. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/9631601>

Health Policy and health systems

1. Yokobori Y, Obara H, Yasuo Sugiura Y, et al. Gaps in the civil registration and vital statistics systems of low- and middle-income countries and the health sector's role in improving the situation. *Global Health & Medicine.* 2021. (Advance publication) <https://doi.org/10.35772/ghm.2020.01103>
2. Obara H, Fujita N, Hidechika A, et al. Sustainable implementation of international health cooperation projects while Japanese technical experts cannot go to low- and middle-income countries because of the COVID-19 pandemic travel restrictions. *Glob Health Med.* 2020 Apr 30;2(2):148-150. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/33330798/>
3. Kitamura T, Obara H, Nagai M, et al. World Health Assembly Agendas and trends of international health issues for the last 43 years: Analysis of World Health Assembly Agendas between 1970 and 2012. *Health Policy.* 2013 May;110 (2-3):198-206. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23295159>
4. Matsuoka S, Obara H, Nagai M, Murakami H, Lon RC. Performance-based financing with GAVI health system strengthening funding in rural Cambodia: a brief assessment of the impact. *Health Policy Plan.* 2014 Jul;29 (4):456-65. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23735736>

Infertility and clinical obstetrics & Gynecology

1. Shibahara H, Obara H, Tawati A, et al. Prediction of pregnancy by intrauterine insemination using CASA estimates and strict criteria in patients with male factor infertility. *Int J Androl*. 2004 Apr; 27 (2):63–8. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15149462>
2. Shibahara H, Obara H, Kikuchi K, et al. Prediction of Human Sperm Fertilizing Ability by the Hyperactivated Motility Patterns. *J Mamm Ova Res*. 2003;20 (1):29–33. <https://doi.org/10.1274/jmor.20.29>
3. TAWATI A, Shibahara H, Obara H, et al. Influence of endometrial thickness and pattern on pregnancy rates in in vitro fertilization-embryo transfer. *Reprod Med Biol* 2002;1 (1):17–21. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1046/j.1445-5781.2002.00002.x/abstract?deniedAccessCustomisedMessage=&userIsAuthenticated=false>
4. Shibahara H, Suzuki T, Obara H, et al. Establishment and application of criteria for the elective transfer of two good-quality embryos to reduce high-order multiple pregnancies. *Reprod Med Biol*. 2002;1 (1):23–9. <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1046/j.1445-5781.2002.00003.x/abstract>
5. Suzuki T, Shibahara H, Obara H, et al. Accuracy of the normal sperm morphology value by Sperm Quality Analyzer IIC: comparison with the strict criteria. *Int J Androl*. 2002 Feb;25 (1):49–54. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11869376>
6. Takamizawa S, Shibahara H, Obara H, et al. Dynamic changes of the immunoglobulins in patients with severe ovarian hyperstimulation syndrome: efficacy of a novel treatment using peritoneo-venous shunt. *Am J Reprod Immunol*. 2002 Jan;47(1):25–30. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11883746>
7. Taneichi A, Shibahara H, Obara H, Fujiwara H, et al. Sperm immobilizing antibodies in the sera of infertile women cause low fertilization rates and poor embryo quality in vitro. *Am J Reprod Immunol*. 2002 Jan;47 (1):46–51. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11883749>
8. Obara H, Shibahara H, Sato I, et al. Prediction of unexpectedly poor fertilization and pregnancy outcome using the strict criteria for sperm morphology before and after sperm separation in IVF–ET *Int J Androl*. 2001 Apr;24(2):102-8. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/11298844/>
9. Watanabe T, Minakami, Obara H, et al. Effect of labor on maternal dehydration, starvation, coagulation, and fibrinolysis: *Journal of Perinatal Medicine*. *J Perinat Med*. 2001 Jan;29 (6):528-34. <http://www.degruyter.com/view/j/jpme.2001.29.issue-6/jpm.2001.073/jpm.2001.073.xml>
10. Shibahara H, Fujiwara H, Obara H, et al. Usefulness of transvaginal hydrolaparoscopy in investigating infertile women with Chlamydia trachomatis infection. *Hum Reprod*. 2001 Aug;16 (8):1690–3. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11473964>
11. Shibahara H, Obara H , Sato I. et. al. Activity of testis angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) in ejaculated human spermatozoa. *Int J Androl*. 2001 Oct;24 (5):295-9. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11554987>
12. Hirano Y, Shibahara H, Obara H, et al. Relationships between sperm motility characteristics assessed by the computer-aided sperm analysis (CASA) and fertilization rates in vitro. *J Assist Reprod Genet* 2001 Apr;18 (4):213–8. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11432113>
13. Shibahara H, Tanaka Y, Obara H, et al. Comparison of pregnancy outcome between gamete intra-fallopian transfer (GIFT) and in vitro fertilization-embryo transfer (IVF-ET). *Singapore J Obs* . 2001 July;32:43–6. <http://www.ogss.net/Index/images/stories/Vol32No2Article8.pdf>
14. Watanabe T, Minakami H, Obara H, et al. Effect of Heparin on Activated Partial Thromboplastin Time in Patients Undergoing Gynecologic or Obstetric Surgery. *Gynecol Obstet Invest*. 2001;51 (3):178-83. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11306905>

2) Other publications

Translated book

- Pill book by the pill doctor (Japanese translation of *The Pill Book* by Professor John Guillebaud), compiled by Dr T Saotome, Medical tribune publisher, 2001. (I translated one chapter of the book). [Amazon Site](#)

Japanese articles

- International Health and Medicine 3rd version compiled by the Japan Association for International Health, Kyorin shoin publisher. 2013. (I am the author of the chapter on Reproductive health/population and family planning.) [Amazon site](#)

- Hoken no Kagaku, Kyorin shoin publisher. Vol. 62. No.3 Global Reproductive Health Issues, Global Trend in Maternal health and care. 2020
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3) Publications to support country level RMNCH programme

WHO recommendations contributed as a member of Guideline Development Group

1. WHO recommendation on antihypertensive drugs for non-severe hypertension in pregnancy, 2020
2. WHO, Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of hepatitis B virus: Guidelines on antiviral prophylaxis in pregnancy, 2020.
3. WHO, Recommendation on calcium supplementation before pregnancy for the prevention of pre-eclampsia and its complications, 2020.
4. WHO, Contraceptive eligibility for women at high risk of HIV - Guidance statement Recommendations on contraceptive methods used by women at high risk of HIV, 2019
5. WHO Recommendations on Uterotonics for the prevention of postpartum haemorrhage, 2018
6. WHO Recommendations on Intrapartum Care for a Positive Childbirth Experience, 2018
7. WHO Recommendation on tranexamic acid for the treatment of postpartum haemorrhage 2018
8. WHO Medical management of abortion, 2018
9. WHO updated recommendations, 2018
 - ✓ Drug treatment for severe hypertension in pregnancy
 - ✓ Policy of interventionist versus expectant management of severe pre-eclampsia before term
 - ✓ Calcium supplementation during pregnancy for prevention of pre-eclampsia and its complications
 - ✓ Induction of labour at or beyond term

Contributed as an External Reviewer

1. WHO, Consolidated guideline on self-care interventions for health: sexual and reproductive health and rights, 2019
2. WHO. Consolidated guideline on sexual and reproductive health and rights of women living with HIV, WHO 2017
3. WHO. Health worker roles in providing safe abortion care and post-abortion contraception. WHO, 2015

WHO publications acknowledged

1. WHO. Recommendations for the prevention and treatment of postpartum haemorrhage, WHO 2012
2. WHO, Success factors for women's and children's health: Lao PDR, 2015
3. WHO, Success factors for women's and children's health: China, 2015
4. WHO, Success factors for women's and children's health: Viet Nam, 2015
5. WHO, Success factors for women's and children's health: Cambodia, 2015
6. WHO. Success factors for women's and children's health: Policy and programme highlights from 10 fast-track countries. WHO, 2014 (Acknowledged as a technical supporter)
7. WHO. Trends in Maternal Mortality:1990 to 2013 Estimates by WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, The World Bank and the United Nations Population Division. WHO, 2014
8. WHO. Regional Framework for Reproductive Health in the Western Pacific. WHO, 2013

Newborn care measurement, country progress monitoring on newborn care

1. WHO, Third Biennial Meeting on Accelerating Progress in Early Essential Newborn Care (EENC): Synergies with Hospital Quality and Safety, December 2020 Virtual meeting, Meeting Report. 2021 (Contributed as a temporary advisor/member of Independent Review Group)
2. WPRO, Second biennial progress report (2016-2017), 2018 (Contributed as a member of Independent Review Group)
3. SWPRO, Second Biennial Meeting on Accelerating Progress in Early Essential Newborn Care, Da Nang, Viet Nam, Meeting report, 2017 (Contributed as a member of Independent Review Group)
4. WPRO. First Embrace- First biennial progress report 2017 (Contributed as a member of Independent Review Group)
5. WPRO. Workshop on validation of early essential newborn care progress (Contributed as a resource person) 2015

6. WPRO. Meeting Report: Meeting on Accelerating Progress in Early Essential Newborn Care, Tokyo, Japan, 21-25 September 2015 (Contributed as co-host and temporary advisor)
7. WHO. Action Plan for Healthy Newborn Infants in the Western Pacific Region (2014-2020). WHO, 2014

Country level policy, strategy, plan and evaluation

1. Ministry of Health, Lao PDR, Revised version of MCH handbook, 2019
2. Ministry of Health, Lao PDR, National Health Insurance Strategy 2017-2020, 2017
3. Ministry of Health, Lao PDR, National Strategy and Action Plan for Integrated Services on Reproductive, Maternal, Newborn and Child Health 2016-2020 (Acknowledged as a consultant)
4. Puttney P, Phrasisombath K, Obara H. Evaluation of Lao PDR's strategy and planning framework for integrated package of maternal neonatal and child health service 2009-2015

Invited speakers.

- Situation of Maternal, Newborn and Child Health (MNCH) in Resource-Limited Settings and Progress towards Millennium Development Goals 4 & 5 - Possible Ways in which Human Resources in Japan could Contribute to Improving MNCH around the World
International Workshop 64th Annual Congress of the Japan Society of Obstetrics and Gynecology Kobe Japan. 2012.
<http://www.jsog-oj.jp/detailAM.php?-DB=jsog&-LAYOUT=am&-recid=7124&-action=browse>
- Impact of access to midwifery services on the neonate
The Second Global Midwifery Symposium on “Strengthening Quality Midwifery Care: Making Strides, Addressing Challenges” Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. 2013
<https://www.unfpa.org/events/second-global-midwifery-symposium-%E2%80%9Cstrengthening-quality-midwifery-care-making-strides>
- Pregnancy and Diabetes, Semi-annual meeting, Cambodian Society of Gynecology and Obstetrics, Phnom Penh, Cambodia. June 2019

Web story and newspaper

- Bringing to Laos a Health Care System That Gives Peace of Mind to All – Web News by JICA Dec 2018 https://www.jica.go.jp/english/news/field/2018/181212_01.html
- Award-winning OB-GYN: Japanese health advisor achieves global recognition for efforts in Laos. The Laotian Times, Nov 2018
<https://laotiantimes.com/2018/11/19/global-award-figo-obara-medic/>