As the year wraps up there is a lot to report. We have programs starting, finishing, and being redesigned. One of the highlights of this quarter was the signing of the MSH agreement to begin work in Madagascar (see page 5), and the FIGO World Congress 2018 in Brazil.

FIGO wrapped up in October and was a great success. There were over 130 presentations by ACOG Fellows, including three panels on global women’s health programs that highlighted our work in Uganda, Ethiopia, Malawi, Zambia, and Latin America.

Dr. Atul Gawande moderated the Bridging Theory and the Real World: Implementing Evidence-Based Care at Scale panel. The panel featured discussion with ACOG’s Dr. Barbara Levy; Drs. Neel Shah and Katherine Semrau, Ariadne Labs; Jerker Lijestrand, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Dr. Mekdes Daba, Ethiopian Society of Ob/Gyns; and Maria Fernanda Escobar, MD, Latin American Region FIGO Committee for Safe Motherhood and Newborn Health.

The lively discussion focused on the need for experts in implementation of clinical programs to be a part of the discussion before and during research design to improve implementation of the interventions. The speakers were able to articulate real-world experiences from Colombia, Ethiopia and the US.

Also at FIGO Dr. Herbert Peterson facilitated a panel on Saving Mothers, Giving Live that reviewed the highly successful, multiyear project to reduce maternal mortality. ACOG’s Office of Global Women’s Health was a founding partner in the USAID-funded program.

OGWH’s lunch symposium was another highlight from the week in Rio. OGWH organized speakers who discussed the topic of Professional Associations — Catalysts to improve quality and spark innovation. ACOG President-Elect Dr. Ted Anderson joined Dr. Delayehu Bekele, President, Ethiopian Society of Ob-Gyns to discuss the success of ACOG’s professional association partnerships in Malawi, Ethiopia and Uganda. Colleagues from Uganda spoke about the impact of ACOG’s surgical obstetrics training program, led by ACOG Fellow Dr. Owen Montgomery and his colleagues at Drexel University.

Our global work is unique because of these simultaneous approaches — effective interventions and support of the professional association. This combination can offer valuable solutions that can be sustained.

ACOG AND ABT PARTNER TO FIGHT CERVICAL CANCER

ACOG and Abt Associates have begun a collaboration to work on projects to combat cervical cancer, a major preventable threat to women’s health. We will collaborate on projects in low- and middle-income countries that will provide guidance on best practices, train key staff and offer technical assistance. The collaboration seeks to integrate the private sector, governments and other partners into programs that develop effective systems for vaccination, screening, early diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of cervical cancer. ACOG and Abt also will advocate for inclusion of cervical cancer screening in family-planning and maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) programs.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth O’Connell, at eoconnell@acog.org.
UPDATES FROM THE OFFICE OF GLOBAL WOMEN’S HEALTH

Rethinking maternal and newborn health series: Should we promote deliveries in low-volume primary care facilities

ACOG partnered with Management Sciences for Health (MSH) to bring together experts for the first panel of their Open Discussion Series. The series, titled, “Thorny issues facing women’s, children’s and adolescent’s health” provides a platform to discuss difficult topics that challenge what we know and how we approach women’s, children’s, and adolescents’ health in low- and middle-income countries.

The panel brought different opinions and viewpoints together to discuss that in many low- and middle-income countries, women have been encouraged to deliver at the nearest health facility under the care of a skilled birth attendant. However, emerging evidence demonstrates that not all health facilities are equal in their capacity to respond to complications that occur around childbirth. That without quality, access alone does not improves outcomes. So is the answer to consolidate services in harder to reach hospitals with high clinical skill, or train more providers and adequately equip rural clinics.

A lively debate was had with a panel moderated by Catharine Taylor, VP, Health Programs at MSH. And the panelists were Margaret Kruk, MD, Associate Professor, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Michelle Pino, Certified Nurse-Midwife, Indian Health Service; Ousmane Faye, MD, Project Director, Management Sciences for Health; and Barbara Levy, MD, Vice President, ACOG.

The discussion was streamed live on YouTube with 45 attendees at ACOG and over 100 attendees online, http://youtu.be/MltcakPDqGY.

GE India

OGWH and GE Healthcare launched the first eModules in early 2018, and over 500 eModules have been purchased (as a reference, US eModules sell about 600 per year).

As part of this collaboration, Dr. Aparna Sridhar has helped to develop ultrasound curriculum to be delivered as “live” in early 2019. The trainings should occur three times in 2019, and two FACOGs will travel per trip to deliver these classroom trainings. Each class will have of 20-25 healthcare providers. Our intention is to help through technical expertise to help improve the quality of care.

CAFA Examinations

CAFA, the Accreditation Committee of the Federation of Central American Associations and Societies of Obstetrics and Gynecology (FECASOG), will welcome five new members in 2019 replacing members who have completed their terms.

A strategic plan is being developed to better position CAFA to have the impact on medical education that has always been the goal of the program. Subject-matter experts are being recruited to advise CAFA and represent ACOG in the areas of exam creation, accreditation, and advocacy. These positions are volunteer roles.

On Saturday, October 13, 320 doctors in Central America took the CAFA exams. The breakdown below by country was:

- Guatemala – 89 doctors;
- Honduras – 57 doctors;
- El Salvador – 52 doctors;
- Costa Rica – 36 doctors;
- Panama – 44 doctors;
- Nicaragua – 42 doctors.

Certification examinations were held in four other LATAM countries on October 27 with 128 final-year residents and practicing doctors taking the exams.

Accreditation visits were held in three sites this year.

There will be a CAFA meeting in December in El Salvador where exam and accreditation results for all 10 countries will be presented. It will be a time to celebrate the members who have given their time, and the growth of the activities in LATAM.
ACOG hosted a panel discussion on September 24, 2018, on Safe Surgery: Saving Mothers & Babies at Birth: a Maternal Health Panel Discussion.

The panel discussion, held in Kampala, Uganda, was moderated by NTV’s Josephine Karungi, and held at Makerere University. The Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Health, Dr. Diana Atwine, was the Keynote Speaker. The panel highlighted the role of competent surgery and its impact in reducing maternal deaths. In attendance were press, key government officials, and leaders in health.

ACOG described the Essential Training in Operative Obstetrics (ETOO) program at Makerere University, which will officially relaunch in December. Stakeholders at Makerere University, Mbarara University of Science and Technology, Busitema University and Drexel University have developed a new curriculum which is innovative and more suitable for the dynamic young learners of today.

ACOG has been asked by the government to scale up this program to provide training to all medical interns nationally. ACOG’s OGWH is working hard to build and fund this important program. We hope to launch the national program in April 2019.

The ETOO program will train 200 Master Trainers and over 490 service providers in surgical skills.

The ETOO program will focus on training doctors in the areas of basic and safe surgical skills, including how to conduct cesarean deliveries in order to prevent maternal and perinatal deaths, and maternal complications. This will assist with lowering maternal and newborn mortality rates in Uganda.

There will be many events leading up to the relaunch of the ETOO program, including:

- **November 15**: Final curriculum review in Philadelphia, PA
- **December 13**: Ministry of Health Maternal Health Working Group meeting
- **December 10**: ETOO first training at Makerere University and Mbarara University of Science and Technology
- **February 5**: Busitema University first ETOO training
- **April 2**: Signing of the Public-Private Partnership in Kampala, Uganda (anticipated)

ESOG-ACOG COLLABORATION WRAPS UP

The ESOG-ACOG Collaboration wrapped up in September with a leadership meeting in Addis Ababa. During the meeting, reports of the various achievements since April, were presented by leaders of each thematic area. A discussion was also held on how to take the project forward beyond its termination period.

At the XXII FIGO World Congress Dr. Delayehu Bekele, ESOG President, presented at the OGWH-sponsored lunch symposium on the key successes of the program:

- ACOG acted as a consultant and supported ESOG’s program requirements and activities
- Leadership stakeholders met continuously throughout the collaboration and was active and invested in the program and outcomes
- The Ethiopian Ministry of Health was involved from the beginning and was supportive of the activities, and
- Extensive progress was made in each specific thematic area, building a strong and vibrant professional association as was the goal of this work.

JEANNE CONRY VOTED PRESIDENT-ELECT OF FIGO

Jeanne Conry, MD, PhD, FACOG, became president-elect of the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) during the XXII FIGO World Congress. Her three-year term as president will begin in 2021. Conry has the distinguished honor of being the second woman to hold this position since FIGO was founded in 1954.

Conry’s agenda will include convening groups to advocate for bringing women’s health to the forefront of international issues, support effective family planning choices for all women, and educate and advocate for awareness about the impact of the environment on reproductive health.

Conry has more than 28 years of experience practicing obstetrics and gynecology. She is past president of the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) and a member of the FIGO executive board; chair of the United States Women’s Preventive Services Initiative, a collaborative initiative of health professional organizations and consumer advocates who recommend and guide preventive health services across a woman’s life span; and cochair of the FIGO Working Group on Reproductive and Developmental Environmental Health. Conry is also a seasoned global lecturer and author of numerous publications. In addition to her many achievements during her ACOG presidency, Conry introduced the National Maternal Health Initiative, a collaborative that focuses on maternal mortality and women’s health across their life spans.
OGWH PARTNERING WITH MSH IN MADAGASCAR

The Office of Global Women’s Health (OGWH) has signed on as a sub-grantee of MSH Health Impact on the USAID Madagascar Accessible Continuum of Care and Essential Services Sustained (ACCESS) program. The USAID Madagascar Accessible Continuum of Care and Essential Services Sustained (ACCESS) program aims to support activities that will contribute to USAID/Madagascar’s five-year (2016-2020) Health Development Objective focused on “sustainable health impacts accelerated for Malagasy People.” The activities will strengthen the service delivery continuum through community health volunteers, primary health facilities, and district hospitals by improving clinical and non-clinical skills of health providers and through focused efforts to strengthen health systems at the district level and below.

The primary purpose of the USAID work in Madagascar is to improve health outcomes among poor and underserved populations through improved health behaviors and increased access to quality health services. More specifically, USAID’s work aims to reduce maternal and child morbidity and mortality and support efforts towards progressive malaria elimination.

OGWH will work with the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American College of Nurse-Midwives to provide capacity building, guidance on curricula and guidelines, training in specific skills, and helping to drive quality improvement efforts.

A stakeholders meeting was held in October 2018. In January a site assessment trip is planned where ACOG, AAP, and ACNM will jointly conduct site visits and identify quality improvement plans and gaps to develop a training program.

The FACOGs who will be working on this project are fluent French speakers with experience in international settings. We are looking forward to having them represent ACOG. They include Drs. Eve Espey, Khady Diouf, Scott Eder, Sierra Washington, and Andrea Walker.

SAVING MOTHERS, GIVING LIFE: LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE 5-YEAR PARTNERSHIP

The CSIS Global Health Policy Center hosted a public event highlighting lessons learned from the 5-year Saving Mothers, Giving Life (SMGL) initiative. SMGL is a public-private partnership which dramatically reduced maternal and newborn mortality in Zambia, Uganda, and Nigeria.

SMGL was unique in the way it brought together partners across U.S. Government health programs and agencies, as well as external partners and host governments to focus on a singular goal. The event featured a presentation of the outcomes of five years of SMGL programming followed by three high-level panel discussions that highlighted the successes and challenges of the innovative partnership.

Watch the panel discussion on YouTube:
https://www.csis.org/events/saving-mothers-giving-life-lessons-learned-5-year-partnership%C2%A0
The Committee on American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Women’s Health continued to show support for areas that have been affected by opioid use disorder (OUD). In April and May 2018, Fellows revisited Indian Health Service (IHS) facilities in the Great Plains and Billings areas. These comprehensive site visits include tours, interviews, and chart reviews that teams utilize to provide recommendations to staff, this year focusing on treating women with OUD. The committee produced written guidelines for the IHS on AI/AN pregnant women and women of childbearing age with OUD.

The committee’s next site visits will be to the Phoenix area in February 2019.

This past May, at ACOG’s Annual Clinical and Scientific Meeting in Austin, the William H.J. Haffner Award was presented to Glen Kishi, MD, Chief of OB/GYN at Phoenix Indian Medical Center. Dr. Kishi was recognized for his leadership and vision of maximizing the quality, appropriateness, and effectiveness of care provided for AI/AN women.

Planning is underway for the committee’s next regional training, which are catered to healthcare professionals who care for women in AI/AN populations. The Best Practices in Women’s Health: Focus on American Indian/Alaska Native Women meeting will take place in Oklahoma City, OK in August 2019. The biennial International Indigenous Women’s Health Meeting, co-hosted by the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC), will take place in February 2020 in Albuquerque, NM. Sessions include women’s health updates, buprenorphine-waiver certification, and Advanced Life Support in Obstetrics (ALSO) certification.

To be added to the email list for registration and program updates for future meetings, please email Justine Joo (jjoo@acog.org).