Plan Overview

A Data Management Plan created using DMPonline

Title: Perceptions and experiences of free maternal healthcare services in Cameroon, Mozambique, and Tanzania

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Project abstract:

Free maternal healthcare policies in sub-Saharan Africa aim to reduce financial barriers and improve access to skilled care, yet women’s experiences of these services remain uneven. This study explores how women in Cameroon, Mozambique, and Tanzania perceive and experience free maternal healthcare, and what factors influence their ability to seek, reach, and engage with these services. Using qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with women and key stakeholders, the research will examine how affordability, accessibility, and quality intersect in practice. Thematic analysis will identify shared and context-specific insights across the three countries. Findings will contribute to understanding how free care policies are experienced on the ground and offer recommendations for improving the equity and effectiveness of maternal health systems.

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Perceptions and experiences of free maternal healthcare services in Cameroon, Mozambique, and Tanzania

Data Collection

What data will you collect or create?

The study will use previously collected qualitative data related to women’s experiences of free maternal healthcare services in Cameroon, Mozambique, and Tanzania. The dataset includes anonymized transcripts of semi-structured interviews and/or focus group discussions with women who have accessed, or attempted to access, free maternal healthcare, as well as interviews with key stakeholders such as healthcare providers and policymakers.

How will the data be collected or created?

The data was originally collected under ethical approval and informed consent processes managed by partner institutions in each country. All data was transcribed, anonymized, and translated (where applicable) before being made available for secondary analysis. I will conduct thematic and comparative analysis, without re-identifying participants or contacting them.

Documentation and Metadata

What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?

Documentation

Codebook: Generated and regularly updated within ATLAS.ti, describing key codes, thematic categories, and their definitions.

Memos and analytic notes: Recorded directly in ATLAS.ti to capture reflections, analytic decisions, and rationale during coding.

Research log: A separate document (Word or Excel) noting major steps, decisions, and data-handling actions throughout the project.

Metadata

Participant pseudonym or ID, country, type of interview (e.g., woman/stakeholder), and date of original data collection.

File-level metadata such as filename, creation and modification dates, author, and version number.

Descriptive metadata for codes, memos, and document groups automatically stored in the ATLAS.ti project file.

Ethics and Legal Compliance

How will you manage any ethical issues?

- The original datasets were collected with informed consent and ethical clearance in each country.
- The researcher will not have access to any direct identifiers.
- Only anonymized data will be used for analysis, interpretation, and publication.
- BETCHA clearance from VU+

How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) issues?

The copyright and intellectual property rights (IPR) for the original interview data remain with the institutions and research teams that collected the data in Cameroon, Mozambique, and Tanzania. These organizations are the legal data owners, responsible for maintaining and preserving the original datasets under their national and institutional ethical frameworks.

I will not claim ownership of the original raw data. Instead, I will hold copyright only for the *derived analytical materials* created during the thesis project, including the ATLAS.ti project file, codebook, memos, thematic analyses, and written outputs.

Use of the original data is granted under a data use agreement

Storage and Backup

How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?

All research data and analysis files will be stored and managed using KIT's secure institutional server environment, which complies with European GDPR standards and institutional data protection policies. No data will be stored or transferred on personal devices, unencrypted drives, or third-party cloud services.

How will you manage access and security?

All data will be stored and managed on KIT's secure server.

Access to the data is restricted to the research team only, using password-protected accounts and multifactor authentication. The server provides encrypted storage and secure connections, and all access is logged and monitored by KIT's IT department.

The KIT laptop is encrypted and password-protected, and data will only be accessed through the secure server connection. No data will be stored or shared on personal devices, email, or public cloud services.

Selection and Preservation

Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?

The original interview transcripts and raw data will *not* be preserved or shared by myself, as ownership and archiving responsibilities remain with the institutions that originally collected the data.

What is the long-term preservation plan for the dataset?

Anonymized research materials — including the ATLAS.ti project file, codebook, and thematic summaries — will be stored on KIT's secure server for up to 10 years after the project, following KIT and VU Amsterdam data management policies.

Data Sharing

How will you share the data?

The data will be stored and preserved exclusively on KIT's secure server, which complies with GDPR and institutional research data management standards. Because the dataset contains sensitive qualitative information, it will not be openly shared or transferred to VU repositories.

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?

Yes. The dataset contains sensitive qualitative information about women's personal experiences with maternal healthcare, which falls under GDPR and ethical confidentiality agreements. The data were originally collected by partner institutions, and the researcher does not own the rights to share the raw files.

Therefore, data sharing is restricted to anonymized, derived materials

Responsibilities and Resources

Who will be responsible for data management?

I (student) will be responsible for day-to-day data management, including secure storage, documentation, and compliance with KIT and VU data protection policies.

Supervisors at KIT and VU Amsterdam will provide oversight and ensure adherence to ethical and institutional standards. The KIT IT department is responsible for maintaining the secure server environment, managing access controls, and performing automated backups.

What resources will you require to deliver your plan?

All necessary resources are already available through KIT and VU Amsterdam. I will use a KIT-managed laptop and secure institutional server for data storage, analysis, and backup. Software required for qualitative analysis (ATLAS.ti) and standard office applications are provided under institutional licences.