

**Abstract #: 1421****Effects of the Colombian armed conflict on reproductive, maternal and child health**

Isabel Garcés-palacio<sup>1</sup>, Mary Salazar-Barrientos, Edison Bedoya Bedoya, Ana Langer

<sup>1</sup>Universidad De Antioquia, Medellin, Colombia

**Background:** Colombia has been affected by internal armed conflict for 70 years. About 7.3 million people have been internally displaced and nearly 50% of them were women. In conflict-afflicted areas, pregnant women and newborns have higher rates of adverse health outcomes.

**Methods:** Secondary analysis of public databases. We examined sixteen indicators from the Countdown to 2030 initiative, for which data from Colombia were available and reliable between 1998 and 2016. We also constructed a variable (victimization rate) to measure the intensity of the conflict for each municipality/year and grouped them into quintiles. We compared relative differences and confidence intervals using the Rothman and Greenland method.

**Results:** Across time, most indicators improved in all municipalities. However, four indicators were significantly different between municipalities with high versus low victimization rates. The maternal mortality ratio was higher in the municipalities with higher victimization rates in the periods 1998-2004, 2005-2011 and 2012-2016. The percentages of caesarean births and women who received four or more antenatal care visits were lower in settings with highest levels of victimization (1998-2000,) while the fertility rate among women 15-19 years old was higher in those municipalities between 2012 and 2016.

**Conclusions:** In Colombia, several maternal and child health indicators have improved during the years of the conflict; however, municipalities most affected by the armed conflict had poorer reproductive and maternal health outcomes.

**Key messages:** Maternal and reproductive health were negatively affected by protracted armed conflict in Colombia.