

## **Access to care and treatment of cancer patients in SSA**

While the incidence rates of cancer are increasing globally, mortality rates are taking different directions. Studies with a focus on breast cancer have shown that in most high income countries (HICs) mortality rates are decreasing while they are on the rise in LMICs at the same time.

Besides early detection and diagnosis, the fast access to quality treatment is essential for good outcomes in cancer patients. The number of cancer patients not receiving adequate treatment is much higher in SSA than in HICs which can be partly attributed to shortcomings in screening and fast diagnosis. A recent multi-country observational study has found that 17% of women in the observed countries have not received adequate treatment within one year after diagnosis. This suggests that late or no treatment of cancer patients and high mortality rates are not only dependent on late diagnosis but also on shortcomings in treatment after diagnosis.

There has been some research on factors influencing delayed testing and treatment in different countries in Africa including qualitative approaches. Most of them took a focus on the lack of participation in screenings and reasons for late diagnosis and the majority of studies has been conducted either for breast or cervical cancer in one single country.

Within the current questionnaire-based study, we aim to identify the factors that influence the delay in receiving treatment, the decision of stopping any treatment and even the decision of receiving no treatment.