

Tanzania Research Network Newsletter

May 2019

Issue 10

Prepared by Jenny Renju and Matt Kirby

Welcome to this (long time coming) new issue of the Tanzania Research Network News. Sorry for the delay in its release, we have had some shuffles and changes and as everyone knows, everything always takes longer than we may wish! However in this issue we have some exciting updates on the network functioning and news from NIMR Mwanza, IHI, KCMUCo and MITU as well as introductions of a new network institution and a new team member in MITU.

We thank everyone who has contributed to this issue of the newsletter and welcome anyone to send in updates, news, opportunities etc. for the next issue.

*Wishing everyone a great day,
All the best*

Jenny Renju and Matt Kirby (TRN co-chairs)

In this issue:

- Tanzania Research Network Updates
- Early Career Researchers in NIMR Mwanza
- Supporting Research uptake – multi-country stakeholder workshop (IHI, LSHTM)
- World Malaria Day (NIMR Mwanza)
- Introducing new members (MITU, Mwanza)
- Call for inputs

TANZANIA RESEARCH NETWORK UPDATES

By Matthew Kirby and Jenny Renju

During the network meeting in Mwanza, Jenny Renju and Matthew Kirby (Both LSHTM staff based at KCMC/KCMUCo, Moshi) were approved to co-chair the network. Since this time they and a broader group have met a few times to review the network structure and format. During these meetings it was suggested that the current network activities remain the same and include:

- the continuation of the mailing list (list serve),
- the newsletter (bi-annual) to include
 - Opportunities (jobs, training, grants, small studies for students)
 - New staff joining
 - Upcoming Conferences
 - Publications and Awards (publications should have at least one LSHTM author)
 - Project highlights and updates
- Quarterly network meeting calls
- adhoc network meetings to convene during larger international meetings and quarterly virtual meetings.

During the meeting and in wider consultation we felt that all institutions in the network should put forward two representatives (where appropriate one from the Tanzanian institution and one from LSHTM staff based at that institution) who will join the quarterly Network meeting calls and will also act a conduit to share the stories, opportunities etc from their respective institutions. We also agreed that we would welcome in other Tanzanian institutions.

Current (May 2019) Tanzania Research Network Partner Institute Point people

Institution	Contact persons	Email address
KCMC/KCMUCo	1. Florida Muro	floridajm@yahoo.com
	2. Tara Mtuy	tara.mtuy@lshtm.ac.uk
NIMR Mwanza	1. Natasha Protopopoff	Natacha.Protopopoff@lshtm.ac.uk
	2. Alphaxard Manjurano	alphaxard.manjurano@lshtm.ac.uk
MITU, Mwanza	1. Looking for volunteers	
	2. ???	
Ifakara Health Institute	1. Lameck Luwanda	
	2. Looking for volunteers	
University of Dodoma	1. Abbas ismail	abbasism2003@yahoo.co.uk
	2. Bathsheba mahenge	bmahenge@gmail.com
??? Other institutions welcome		

You will see that we have gaps and welcome anyone interested to contact myself (jenny.renju@lshtm.ac.uk) to become part of the core communication team. It is through your contacts and insights that we will be able to enrich this network and make it work for all involved.

We are also looking for keen and interested people who can help with the following

- Logo design
- Newsletter template and design
- Social media strategy

Please get in touch if any of this is of interest to you....

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS COMING TOGETHER IN NIMR, MWANZA

By Charles Kakilla, Karen Zablon and Lucy Bernard

During the last large network meeting, held on 28th November, 2018 at the Mwanza Intervention Trials Unit, we heard about the formation and collegiate support of Early career researchers in NIMR, Mwanza. In this newsletter issue we are delighted to showcase two updates from these early career researchers. We hope that the lessons and experiences of this recently formed support group of early career researchers could be emulated in other institutes across the Tanzania research network.

Meet Karen Nelwin Zablon

"I am an early career 25 year old researcher who holds a Bsc Honors in Biology from University of Dodoma, Tanzania. Currently I am working as a Research Scientist at the National Institute for Medical Research in Mwanza, Tanzania. My academic and research interest are in Malaria. Over the years I have been an active player in malaria research by presenting research outputs at international conferences. This year (2019) I was fortunate enough to be 1 of the 16 participants undertaking a training workshop on Capacity Building in Malaria with a Focus on E- Learning.



Participants attending the training workshop were from all over the globe; Africa, South America, Middle East, and South East Asia. The 5th Malaria Training Course was held in Tanzania, at Ifakara Health Institute Bagamoyo from the 25th of March to the 19th of April. The workshop was organized by the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH), Basel, Switzerland in collaboration with Ifakara Health Institute, Tanzania with support from the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation University Hospital of Vaud and Barcelona Institute for Global Health. The objectives of the training workshop were to increase knowledge and expertise in malaria as a tool of developing self-competence and e-learning. By the end of the training workshop I had the capacity to; manage malaria issues more effectively and I can now develop material which will aid me in tackling malaria in Tanzania. It is through the teachings and engagement from both international and national experts from both affected and non-malaria affected countries that has made a huge impact in adding to my prior knowledge and enabling me to

see things from a different perspective. During the training we covered a number of scientific issues ranging from; the use of genomic methods to developing new malaria diagnostics products, optimization of vaccines and understanding the interaction between pathogens and hosts, the use of statistical and mathematical modelling in analyzing data & predicting disease outcomes and the role of health economics in malaria elimination. Partaking in this course has enabled me build collaborative relations with fellow participants and strengthened academic collaborations between my institution and Swiss TPH and IHI for future projects. Attending this malaria training workshop has given me an opportunity to further my studies, as I submitted a Masters in Epidemiology application to the Swiss TPH with anticipation to start my Masters classes by 2020. This has been a major highlight in my career as a young scientist. I encourage other colleagues to keep scouting for such great opportunities”

Charles Kakilla (early career researcher in Mwanza) getting out and about

Charles tells us about his updates from the last few months. Thank you Charles and well done for getting yourself out and about!

“I attended the 7th East African Health and Scientific Conference, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. At the meeting I gave a talk on our ongoing study – Malaria vector species composition and entomological indices following several years of indoor residual spraying in regions bordering Lake Victoria, Tanzania. I was also awarded a sum of £1,207 by the Application of Novel Transgenic Technology and Inherited symbionts to Vector Control (ANTI-VeC) Network to attend the 2nd annual meeting taking place on the 20th-21st June 2019 at Imperial College, London United Kingdom. This activity is jointly coordinated by University of Glasgow, Medical Research Council (MRC UK), Center for Virus Research (CVR), Imperial College London, Global Challenge Research Fund (GCRF), bioscience for the future (BBSRC), and Science of the Environment”.

MAKING THE MOST OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT: THE SHAPING UP WORKSHOP TO FACILITATE TRANSLATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS INTO HIV POLICY IN THREE AFRICAN COUNTRIES

By Jenny Renju and Jim Todd

Researchers from KCMUCo (Rune Nathaniel and Denna Micheal), IHI (Farida Hassan and Lameck Luwanda) and LSHTM (Jenny Renju and Jim Todd) participated in a stakeholder workshop in Kilimanjaro in Tanzania from January 13th-18th 2019. The workshop was organized by the SHAPE-UTT (“Strengthening Health Systems for the Application of Policy to Enable Universal Test and Treat”) project is to assess policy implementation and health systems impacts of Option B+ and universal Test and Treat in Malawi, Tanzania and South Africa. The workshop was attended by national HIV policymakers, HIV practitioners, researchers from three research institutions in Tanzania (Ifakara Health Institute), South Africa (African Health Research Institute) and Malawi (Malawi Epidemiological Intervention Research Unit), and academics from LSHTM and the University of KwaZulu Natal in South Africa in order to promote genuine stakeholder engagement in the analysis and synthesis of research findings in order to improve the relevance to and uptake of research into policy. The five day workshop was broken down into a series of different sessions.



Valuable lessons were learned to inform future policy maker engagement at such meetings. Firstly, providing time and space for a meaningful engagement with policy makers and actors playing a broader role in the formulation and implementation of policy across different countries was invaluable. The richness of discussions was a direct result of an enabling environment which truly valued the inputs from all participants. Secondly by nature of their different roles, researchers and policy makers tend to

look at things slightly differently, and so having multiple days (and also importantly evenings and “down time”) enabled relationships to be formed which will spread beyond the scope of this project. When planning such events, it is important that the differences in participants’ perspectives and the approaches that they are familiar with are considered. Thirdly long presentations session (while often used in research meetings) need to be enhanced with discussions capturing points visually e.g. on flip charts. We also found the smaller round table discussion crucial in enabling all of the policy makers attending to voice their views and experiences. The group was also small, enabling everyone to have time to get to know each other and receive valued inputs from all. The open and relaxed nature of the discussions enabled participants to speak candidly. Finally the joint production of publications (in the form of an opinion piece and a research article) promoted engagement and ownership over the process.

This workshop has been made possible with the support of many, and we are grateful for the time, energy and brain power of all our participants. We would like to acknowledge the financial support from the GCRF Global Impact Accelerator Account Grant for this workshop, the Medical Research Council HSRI3 funding for the overall project funding. In particular, we would like to thank our project partners and collaborators. We are also grateful for the support from THRIVE, ANDLA, ALPHA, LSHTM, and KCMUCo and for the sponsorship from the Blue Zebra Art Studio and the logistical support from Amina Farah (THRIVE-LSHTM/KCMUCo). A final acknowledgement and thanks goes to a colleague to all, a mentor, inspiration and a dear friend to many, for Basia Zaba; whose spirit was certainly felt throughout the week.

WORLD MALARIA DAY

By Charles Kakilla, NIMR, Mwanza

I led a team of malaria group from Mwanza National Institute for Medical Research to participate in World Malaria Day on 25th April 2019. In Tanzania Malaria Day activities were conducted in the town of Lindi. We exhibited tools and equipment we use in trapping mosquitoes and some of the bioassays used in IRS, the entomological monitoring project we are part of in Mwanza. It was quite an interactive event and the local community was very excited about the research.

For forthcoming issues – please do share with us what you are getting up to on these national health and engagement days...

INTRODUCING NEW MEMBERS

By Anika Salim , MITU/LSHTM



We would like to extend a warm welcome to Anika: Anika is a graduate of Imperial College London and LSHTM and has spent time working across the Pharmaceutical, Medical devices and Biotech sector. Anika has also worked in Sierra Leone during the Ebola crises, and has recently joined the DoRIS team in Mwanza, Tanzania as the Clinical Trial Manager.

“I look forward to exploring Tanzania and love outdoor activities. I am a qualified personal trainer too, so would like to meet like-minded people and make new friends”.

INTRODUCING NEW TANZANIA RESEARCH NETWORK PARTNERS – THE UNIVERSITY OF DODOMA

We are delighted to introduce a new institution into the Tanzania research network. Thank you to Abbas and Bethseda for sharing some information about the University of Dodoma

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS, CONSULTANCY AND INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION

The University of Dodoma was formally established in March 2007 following the signing of the Charter by the President of the United Republic of Tanzania. The first academic programmes commenced in September 2007. The University has seven colleges which are College of Education, College of Humanities and Social Sciences, College of Informatics and Virtual Education, College of Natural and Mathematical Sciences, College of Health Sciences, College of Earth Sciences, College of Business Studies and Law. The University of Dodoma (UDOM) Charter of 2007, gives UDOM a broad mandate to initiate and conduct basic and applied research in the fields of Life Sciences, Information and Communication Technology, Business, Education, Health, Natural Resources, Social Sciences, Humanities, Earth Sciences, and any other area of learning and knowledge generation in close association with industry and commerce so as to bring social and economic development of Tanzania.



Flora Fabian, University of Dodoma

In order to achieve the University objectives in the area of research, the Directorate of Research and Publications, Consultancy and Institutional Collaboration (DRP, CIC) was established and be responsible to oversee all research related activities at UDOM. To enable the DRP, CIC to oversee research activities effectively, the UDOM research policy and guidelines was established in 2008 and later on reviewed 2014. The directorate also oversee the management of research funds at UDOM. College Research and Publication Committees will be responsible for implementation of the policy at the College levels.

Research vision

Effective contribution to make the University of Dodoma a centre of excellence for research that leads to sustainable development, nationally and internationally.

Research mission

To generate, apply, refine and advance knowledge in the fields of education, earth sciences, health sciences, natural sciences, mathematical sciences, information and communication technologies, business, humanities and Social Sciences as well as use it to enrich teaching and provide solutions to development challenges.

We look forward to seeing how new research collaborations can arise from the Tanzania network contacts and warmly welcome the University of Dodoma to the network.

LOOKING FORWARD... PLEASE DO GET IN TOUCH – SHARE YOUR NEWS, SHARE ANY OPPORTUNITIES AND SHARE YOUR UPDATES

BY COMMUNICATING THROUGH OUT NETWORK WE CAN MAKE IT STRONGER.

WE WILL SHARE THE DATE OF THE NEXT NETWORK MEETING WITH THE CORE TEAM, PLEASE DO GET IN TOUCH WITH ANY AGENDA ITEMS OR IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO VOLUNTEER TO BE ON THE CALL..

MANY THANKS AND MORE SOON....