

## East African Network of Excellence in Clinical Research and Practice

EACCR is a regional-led EDCTP-supported network and a result of a multi-center grant application process initiated in September 2007, successfully awarded in May 2008 and effective by May 2009. The project was established to synergize existing clinical research and practice expertise to strengthen control of HIV, TB and malaria amongst East Africans. The objective is to strengthen project management, human resource training, infrastructural upgrades, south-south and north-south collaboration. It offers a robust platform for convergence of research experts, research users and industrialists whilst promoting native leadership and multi-disciplinary interaction. The implementation structure constitutes three disease-specific committees, and a training committee, each coordinated by a leading center of excellence in the region.



Pontiano Kaleebu, project coordinator

### Background

Sub-Saharan Africa is challenged by the increasing multi-drug resistance to major infections such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria, fragmented research, weak health systems and persistent geo-political divisions. With more upcoming centers of clinical research excellence in this region and more capacity building initiatives, multi-center projects and high profile advocacy are required through a regional network to encounter these common challenges in tandem with EDCTP's strategy for Africa.

### Goals and objectives

The East African Consortium for Clinical Research (EACCR) was established to cross-fertilize complementary diverse existing expertise in the regional centers of excellence to strengthen

the control of HIV/AIDS, TB and malaria amongst East Africans. The objective is to strengthen project management, human resource training, infrastructural upgrades, south-south and north-south collaboration.

### Expected deliverables

These include:

- Access to larger funding volume, larger sample sizes for clinical trials with adequate evidence
- Multidisciplinary interactions
- Stronger south-south collaborations
- Higher visibility both collectively and individually through international excellence in health research and practice on the important life threatening diseases in the region.

### Capacity building and EDCTP relevant

EACCR will enhance multi-disease capacity to conduct ICH-GCP compliant clinical trials and boost best practices for clinical, laboratory, data management, grant management and ethical/regulatory activities in East Africa. This will be achieved through an enhanced mentoring programme by:

- Strengthening short and long term training courses offered within the region
- Exposing network personnel to short and long term training courses and organizing

exchange visits to share best practices.

The network will use a highly participatory website as its platform for sharing tasks and outputs whilst supporting sites

**EACCR spearheads East African capacity strengthening drive to fight against HIV/AIDS, Malaria and TB through international excellence, regional and global networking**

## Project at a glance

### Official title

East African Consortium for Clinical Research

### Acronym

EACCR

### Project Coordinator

Pontiano Kaleebu  
Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI),  
Uganda

### Participants

- Gibson Kibiki, Tanzania
- Frank Mosha, Tanzania
- Roma Chilengi, Kenya
- Sayoki Mfinanga, Tanzania
- Salim Abdulla, Tanzania
- Kayla Laserson, Kenya
- George Miiro, Uganda
- Edward Mbidde, Uganda
- Andre Van der Ven, Netherlands

### Total budget

€ 3,500,000

### EDCTP budget

€ 2,500,000

### Project duration

36 months

### Start date

16 May 2009

### End date

15 April 2012



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### For more information

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EACCR team at UVRI during the launch

through online networking. In addition, we shall use a reciprocal monitoring scheme among sites. This will help to raise the quality of our research whilst bringing the added advantage of sharing standards and tools.

Capacity building for sister institutions in the network will be emphasised in order to enable them to participate in future planned multi-center clinical trials. These goals and objectives are in tandem with EDCTP's strategy of creating and maintaining sustainable capacity in Africa to initiate, conduct, evaluate and communicate high quality clinical trials on diseases of African relevance for accelerated discovery of new or improved disease control interventions through integrated multi-center projects, mentoring and networking.

### Partners and networking

EACCR is made up of 28 regional institutions from 5 countries: Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Sudan. These institutions collaborate with northern partners such as the universities of Radboud (Netherlands), Bergen (Norway), Munich (Germany), both Goteborg and Karolinska Institute (Sweden), London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (UK), the KNCV TB foundation (Netherlands) and the Medical Research Council (UK). It will be open to more countries/partners in the region. It will network with other Networks of Excellence in Africa and other capacity building initiatives (such

as ISHReCA, Wellcome-funded THRIVE, ESSENCE and INTERACT etc).

The East African Consortium for Clinical Research is managed through the Secretariat coordinated at Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) and supported by Steering and Project Implementation Committees. The implementation structure constitutes the three disease-specific committees, and a training committee, each coordinated by a leading center of excellence in the region. EACCR has secured Memoranda of Understanding with key partners; secured 2 EDCTP awards for its senior fellows; established terms of reference for its management structure; set up some infrastructure (personnel, Information Technology, project management software etc); conducted workshops on grant writing and bio-ethics; networked with WANETAM, TESA and AAVP and launched work plan on 21-22 January 2010.



Dr Pontiano Kaleebu (Project Coordinator and Ag Director, UVRI) discussing with Prof. Andre Van der Ven (Radboud University, Netherlands)