



Research partnership for the control of  
chronic conditions in Africa  
RESPOND-AFRICA Oct 2021

## Newsletter - October 2021

### RESEARCH STUDIES

#### NIHR-funded META Phase 2 study

We closed the trial on 15 October. Many congratulations to the team on their fantastic work and our thanks to the Trial Steering Committee and the DSMC for their input and support.

#### EDCTP-funded META Phase 3



1 - Good Clinical Practice (GCP) Training for the META 3 Trial team in Tanzania, Sept 2021. Dr Sama Ainan (far left), Prof Mfinanga (3rd from left) and Dr Sokoine Kivuyo (centre rear and smiling widely)

The first participant was enrolled 27th October. We are going to go slow with recruitment for bit and then accelerate. Anu is going to Tanzania at the start of November.

The first DSMC meeting took place on 4 October. The members comprise Prof Tom Harrison, Dr Candida Moshiro, Dr Euphemia Sibanda, Dr David Macleod and Prof John Wilding (Chair). The Trial Steering Committee members are Prof Nelson Sewankambo, Dr Janet Lutale, Prof Geoff Gill, Dr Josephine Birungi and Prof Peter Smith (Chair).

A draft proposal was sent to Merck for an ancillary study on the complications related to elevated blood glucose levels.

Fantastic work has been done by many team members to get us to this stage, but 3 staff whose work is absolutely priceless and often not so visible are the database programmers, Erik, Jonathan and Amani. They have designed, programmed, tested and put in place the data systems, which is truly world-beating.



2 - Erik van Widenfelt, Senior Database Programmer, LSTM



3 - Jonathan Willitts, Database Programmer, LSTM



4 - Fredrik Amani, System/Database Developer, NIMR

## INTE-AFRICA trial



5 - Prof Moffat addressing a meeting of Ugandan MoH health facility managers and district health officers.

2400 participants have now completed 12 months of follow up. In Uganda, the team convened a meeting of health facility managers and district health officers from four districts to discuss what should

happen after the end of the trial. The Assistant Commissioner for the Uganda NCD programme, Dr Gerald Mutungi, also attended.

### INTE-COMM trial and research programme



6 - Dr Faith Aikaeli presenting the INTE-COMM programme at a stakeholder meeting in Dar es Salaam, Sept 2021

The protocol for the study has now been finalised following inputs from Tanzania and Uganda stakeholders, and is being submitted for ethics clearance.

## CAPACITY STRENGTHENING

### PhDs and Masters

Opportunities for PhD and Masters scholarships were advertised in Tanzania and Uganda. Interviews are planned in early November.

### Institutional capacity building

Shree Hindu Mandal and NIMR continue to work towards the bronze award for Good Financial Grants Practice (GFGP). Manav Parmar (Finance Manager at Shree Hindu Mandal) has started a Master's in Business Administration.

### Training in Research Methods

Shabbar led an online session for the research team on sample size calculations. We are hoping to schedule some face-to-face communications and leadership training in the New Year.

## NEW PAPERS AND GRANTS

### Papers

Mfinanga, S; Nyirenda, M; Mutungi, G; Mghamba, J; Maongezi, S; Musinguzi, J; Okebe, J; Kivuyo, S; Birungi, J; Van Widenfelt, E; Van Hout, MC; Bachmann, M; Garrib, A; Bukenya, D; Cullen, W; Lazarus, J; Niessen, L; Katahoire, A; Shayo, E; Namakoola, I; Ramaiya, K; Wang, D; Cuevas, L; Etukoit, B; Lutale, J; Meshack, S; Mugisha, K; Gill, G; Sewankambo, N; Smith, P; Jaffar, S.) **“Integrating HIV, diabetes and**

**hypertension services in Africa: study protocol for a cluster-randomised trial in Tanzania and Uganda.”**  
Published in October in BMJ Open.

Birungi, J; Kivuyo, S; Garrib, A; Mugenyi, L; Mutungi, G; Namakoola, I; Mghamba, J; Ramaiya, K; Wang, D; Usman, M; Mangozi, S; Musinguzi, J; Mugisha, K; Etukoit, B; Kakande, A; Niessen, L; Okebe, J; Shiri, T; Shimwela, M; Lutale, J; Gill, G; Sewankambo, N; Smith, P; Nyirenda, M; Mfinanga, S; Jaffar, S.  
**“Integrating health services for HIV-infection, diabetes and hypertension in sub Saharan Africa: a cohort study.”** BMJ Open, in press.

Murtagh, S, McCombe, G, Bachmann, M, Garrib, A, Jaffar, S, Lazarus, J, Mfinanga, S, Ramaiya, K, Sewankambo, N, Van Hout, MC and Cullen, W **“Integrating Diabetes, Hypertension and HIV Care in sub-Saharan Africa: A Delphi Consensus Study on international best practice”**. BMC Health Services Research, in press.

McCombe, G; Lim, J; Van Hout, MC; Lazarus, J; Bachmann, M; Jaffar, S; Garrib, A; Ramaiya, K; Sewankambo, N; Mfinanga, S; Cullen, W **“Integrating care for diabetes and hypertension with HIV care in sub-Saharan Africa: A scoping review”**. International Journal of Integrated Care, in press.

Singh, S; Kirk, O; Jaffar, S; Karakezi, C; Ramaiya, K; Kallestrup, P; Kraef, C **Patient perspectives on integrated health care for HIV, hypertension and type 2 diabetes – a scoping review.** BMJ Open, in press

Bukenya, D; Van Hout, MC; Shayo, E; Kitabye, I; Musenze Junior, B; Ritar Kasidi, J; Birungi, J; Jaffar S; and Seeley, J. **Integrated Health Care Services for HIV, Diabetes Mellitus and Hypertension in Selected Health Facilities in Kampala and Wakiso Districts, Uganda. A qualitative methods study.** Accepted. PLOS Global Health.



## Grants

### NIHR Global Health Policy and Systems Research - Researcher-Led Awards

This proposal was led by Prof Kaushik, Shree Hindu Mandal and Prof Mbanya, University of Yaoundé 1 and was submitted for funding in August 2021. We are waiting for the outcome.

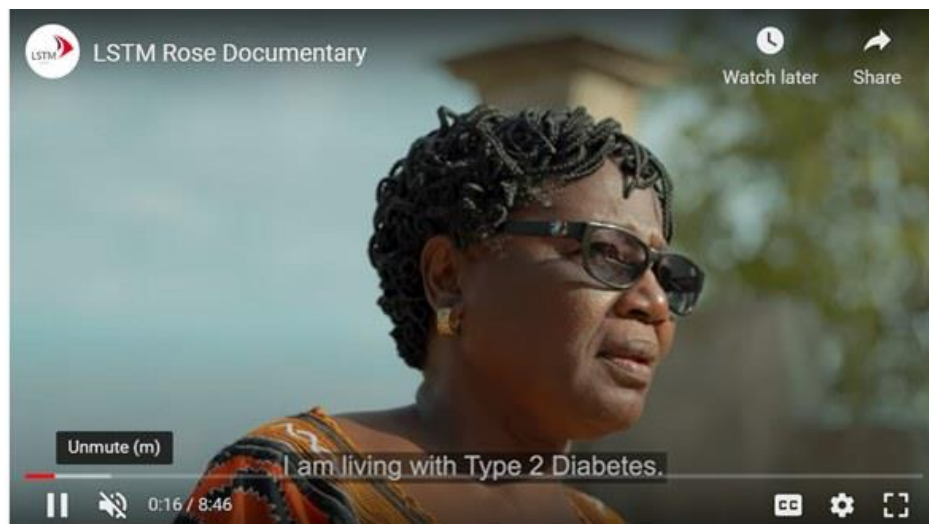
### EC Horizon Europe

We saw this call “Innovative approaches to enhance poverty-related diseases research in sub-Saharan Africa” about 2 weeks before the deadline and managed to submit to it. Our application focused on evaluating the scale up of INTE-AFRICA with additional innovation through TB and HBV testing in some Centres. It involved new partners - Kings College London, Institut D’Investigacio En Ciencies De La Salut Germans Trias I Pujol (IGTP) Spain, Erasmus University, Rotterdam and Region Hovenstaden, Copenhagen. We should hear the outcome in early 2022.

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & INVOLVEMENT

### Patient Stories

As part of our NIHR funding for community engagement, Shree Hindu Mandal commissioned a local filmmaker to produce a short film of a patient experience of living with a chronic condition. The film follows Rose who has diabetes and explores how it affects her life and that of her family. The video can viewed [here](#).



7 - A still from our film following Rose's story.

### “Talking Heads”

We now have 4 new videos to share, about the Group’s work. The videos can be found [here](#) and [here](#).



8 - Our in-house 'filmmaker', Dr James Prior, interviewing Anu for talking head



9 - Prof Kaushik with Dr Mohamed and Sr Mary Nghumbu at Shree Hindu Mandal Hospital

The second two videos are from Kaushik, speaking in beautiful Swahili, and will be launched on World Diabetes Day (14 Nov) – watch this space!

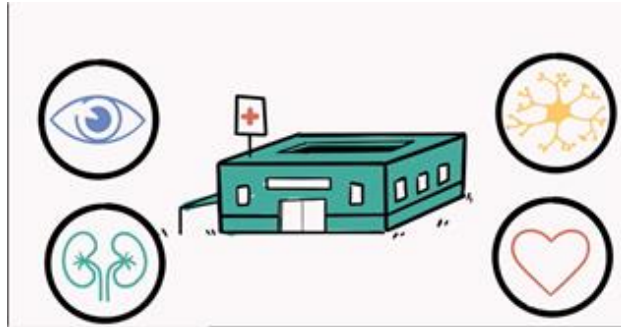
#### [META animated film](#)

Anu was back in the recording studio to read the script for the short, animated film for META 3 trial, which we hope to launch in the next few weeks.



10 - A sneakpreview of the animations for the META3 trial *video*





### The BBC in Tanzania

In mid-October, a film crew from the BBC was in Dar es Salaam to work with Kaushik and the Tanzania NCD Alliance to produce a film on integrated care for HIV, diabetes and hypertension. The story will be hosted on a dedicated BBC.com hub website, expecting to reach a million viewers and additionally disseminated on BBC's social media channels.

### NCD Alliance

Through the preparations for the BBC film above, we have built links with the NCD Alliance in the UK who are keen on integrated non-communicable disease care and HIV care. Respond-Africa, through Shabbar has participated in the survey and key informant interview.

The NCD Alliance has just published a policy report "From Silos to Synergies Integrating noncommunicable disease prevention and care into global health initiatives and universal health" [https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource\\_files/NCD\\_%20LEVERAGING\\_GLOBAL\\_HEALTH\\_WINS\\_8\\_09\\_FINAL.pdf](https://ncdalliance.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/NCD_%20LEVERAGING_GLOBAL_HEALTH_WINS_8_09_FINAL.pdf)

We also re-started discussions with the NCD Dept at WHO. Over the coming months, working with our steering committees, we will plan a strategy for this engagement.

### Global Alliance for Chronic Diseases



11 - Josephine and Joseph attending the online GACD Annual Scientific Meeting, 14 October

A brief update on the INTE AFRICA trial was presented at the GACD Scale Up Research Programme Workshop on 14 October 2021.



Joseph made the presentation on behalf of the partnership and Josephine was involved in her role as Co-Chair of the GACD Scale up Committee.

## Tanzania Health Summit



12 - Prof Mfinanga outlining the Respond Africa research portfolio at the Tanzanian Health Summit 2021

The 8th Tanzania Health Summit was held in Dodoma on 10-13 October.

Under the conference theme “Leave no one behind 2021-2026. Analysing the promises and tracking the progress”, Prof Mfinanga presented the work of Respond Africa outlining our research portfolio.

## TEACHING



Shabbar was back in Barcelona (virtually) for his annual lectures to students at ISGlobal on HIV and health care delivery and on interpreting evidence for policy.

## AWARDS

### Times Higher Education Annual Awards

RESPOND-Africa is one of six entries to be shortlisted for International Collaboration of the Year 2021. The Awards ceremony is in late November, with Anu, Joseph and Hazel representing the partnership....and hopefully picking up the award! We have written a short piece on “creating equitable and inclusive partnerships in health research that span different continents”, which the Times Higher Education will be publishing in a couple of weeks.

### Best Medical Doctor in Tanzania



13 - Regional Commissioner for Mwanza representing the Minister of Health, Tanzania) presenting the “Best Medical Doctor” award to Prof Kaushik

Prof Kaushik was honoured by the Tanzania Medical Association with the award of “Best Medical Doctor”

Best Research Scientist in National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), Tanzania



Dr Sokoine has been awarded the “best scientist employee of the year 2021” for NIMR, Muhimbili Centre in Tanzania.

Congratulations Sokoine!

### *AND FINALLY...*

It's not all hard work in RESPOND-Africa...

Dr Katie Bates visited Liverpool in early September, driving all the way from Innsbruck (accompanied by her dog, Pan) to finally meet the LSTM team face to face! We got together for a coffee and Katie explored the local area, finally saw her office, and importantly, found out where the coffee machine lives. It was great to see you in Liverpool Katie, and we look forward to having you back here soon!

Plus:



14 - The Uganda INTE-AFRICA team stay active during a study planning meeting!



15 - The Liverpool team get together for coffee and cake...reportedly baked at home and expertly packaged !

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