



Making a generational impact and creating hope for the future

2021 Annual Report

INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR CHILD HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENT



Washington University in St. Louis

BROWN SCHOOL

Our Mission

To contribute to the reduction of poverty and improvement of public health outcomes for children, adolescents and families in low-resource communities, particularly those in Sub-Saharan Africa and other developing nations, through:

- Innovative applied intervention research
- Capacity building opportunities for a new generation of scholars
- Raising public awareness and support for economic empowerment interventions
- Informing public policy and programming

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Deans' Corner



Dear Friends and Colleagues,

This has been another year of challenges and transitions as the COVID-19 pandemic has continued to affect how we function in our lives and work. While our global community has shown tremendous resilience this year, the need for adaptability continues as the pandemic brings triumphs such as the rapid development and distribution of COVID-19 vaccines, as well as ongoing and emerging setbacks, including new variants of the virus and inequitable impacts of the pandemic across populations. The International Center for Child Health and Development (ICHAD) has continued to adapt to these challenges, resulting in the most successful year of growth and impact in its eight-year history. Supported by strong teams in Uganda, Ghana, Kenya, and the United States, ICHAD continues to fulfill its mission to reduce poverty and improve the health of children, adolescents, and families in Sub-Saharan Africa and other developing nations.

ICHAD has increased the number of extramural sponsored grants over the years and the team continues to disseminate study results in many ways, including through an increase in publications in top-tier journals, and with the publication of a new book, *Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa*. In addition, they are shaping the way mental health research training is designed and delivered. In honor of Global Mental Health Day, ICHAD was invited to share the successes of the Researcher Resilience Training (RRT) Program to support child and adolescent mental health researchers of African descent with program officials at the National Institute of Mental Health. In addition, ICHAD's teams have grown and in 2021, the Center has supported more master's degree and doctoral students and postdoctoral trainees than ever, building a new generation of researchers, leaders, and practitioners.

As my tenure as Neidorff Family and Centene Corporation Dean of the Brown School has come to a close and I transition to serve as the Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Initiatives at Washington University, I look forward to maintaining my engagement with ICHAD as a co-investigator and collaborator on several projects and programs. I am excited to continue to advance ICHAD's work under the leadership of Dr. Fred Ssewamala, Founding Director, and Drs. Proscovia Nabunya, Ozge Sensoy Bahar, and Lindsay Stark, ICHAD's co-directors.

Sincerely,

Mary M. McKay, PhD
Neidorff Family and Centene Corporation Dean
Co-Director, SMART Africa Center
Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis



Greetings Colleagues,

As incoming co-interim deans of the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis, we are thrilled to support and uplift the significant work ICHAD has accomplished this year. ICHAD's mission and impact embody the Core Commitments outlined in *The Brown School Strategic Plan 2020-2030: Equity and Diversity, Impact with St. Louis, Global Teaching and Research, and Transdisciplinary Research*. ICHAD is a leader at the Brown School and across the University in advancing these commitments, and we look forward to continuing to support the Center as it expands its impact in our communities, as well as in the communities served by ICHAD's intervention research and capacity building in Sub-Saharan Africa and other low-resource settings.

Sincerely,

Tonya Edmond, PhD
Co-Interim Dean
Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis

Rodrigo Siqueira Reis, PhD
Co-Interim Dean
Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis

Q&A with ICHAD Director Fred Ssewamala

William E. Gordon Distinguished Professor
Associate Dean for Transdisciplinary Faculty Research
Director, SMART Africa Center
Founding Director, ICHAD

Reflecting on tremendous growth and impact

Q: How has ICHAD's work changed during the COVID-19 pandemic?

A: Restrictions on travel and in-person gatherings have significantly changed how we design, conduct, and disseminate our research. As our team has adapted to ever-changing pandemic conditions, our Center has continued to grow and expand. With the shift to virtual meetings and collaboration across borders and time zones, ICHAD has built on our partnerships with other research centers and institutions, local organizations, and funding partners, resulting in a greater impact from our implementation research, training, and dissemination.

Q: ICHAD has gained tremendous growth over the last 5 years. What would you say are the key factors in its success?

A: That's easy – ICHAD staff and collaborators are key to our success. As we reflect on the past five years, I am humbled by the passion, dedication, and resilience of our ICHAD team members. It is their hard work and commitment to improving the lives of our participants and communities that has fueled our tremendous growth and success. Not only are they dedicated to their work with ICHAD, but they are committed to their own professional and educational advancement to elevate the scientific environment in Sub-Saharan Africa. Our growth in operations across Africa, including the number of participants (children and families) benefitting directly from our projects and innovative studies, would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of our staff and collaborators. I am eager to see what the next five years bring for ICHAD and the people we serve.

Q: What are you most proud of this year?

A: We have much to be proud of. In 2021, we have seen tremendous growth across all areas and we are not slowing down. We have submitted 18 grant applications this year with more collaborations than ever. Six of our grant submissions have been funded (or are pending) while six more are under review. As these partnerships continue to flourish, we anticipate our impact to continue to grow in 2022 and beyond. We are also disseminating our results in top-tier journals and outlets and have published 20 articles in 2021 alone. Lastly, I am thrilled with the publication of our book *Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa*, which examines evidence-based, culturally appropriate child and adolescent behavioral health research from Sub-Saharan Africa and offers insight on how to advance child and adolescent behavioral health in policy, research, and practice.

Q: What are your expectations for 2022?

A: We will build on the new partnerships, collaborations, and opportunities we have developed in 2021 and expand our innovative approaches to reducing poverty and improving health outcomes to have an even greater impact. I look forward to implementing our work right here in St. Louis, USA, and to other populations that include and span beyond Sub-Saharan Africa. I also expect to incorporate more trainees and mentors from the Global South, and to increase the capacity of researchers, practitioners, and institutions in high-need disciplines in Sub-Saharan Africa. And most important of all, I hope to continue to build stronger families of our own, and those that we support and/or sponsor. We are not doing research for the sake of doing research, but we are genuinely concerned about real impact and we want to exemplify that.



ICHAD by the Numbers (2017-2021)



Acknowledgment

ICHAD would like to thank the entire team of staff, partners, and collaborators for their hard work and continued dedication to ICHAD's mission. Special thanks goes to our funders: The National Institute of Health, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, the National Institute for Mental Health, the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, Fogarty International Center, and Barbara and Marc Arnold in Colorado, MilliporeSigma/Merck and Washington University's Africa Initiative Pilot Grant Program and the McDonnell Scholars Academy.

We would like to thank our in-country collaborating partners, including Reach the Youth-Uganda, ChildFund International, Rakai Health Sciences Program, Uganda Cancer Institute, AfriChild Centre, Makerere University, University of Ghana, Mildmay-Uganda, Centenary Bank, Stanbic Bank, Equity Bank, South African Medical Research Council, Masaka Catholic Diocese, and the district leaders across the seven geopolitical districts in the Greater Masaka region, along with the Uganda Ministries of Health and Education. We are also grateful for our domestic collaborating partners, which include the Institute for School Partnership at Washington University in St. Louis, Columbia University, Indiana University, New York University, University of California-Los Angeles, University of California-San Francisco, and University of Chicago.

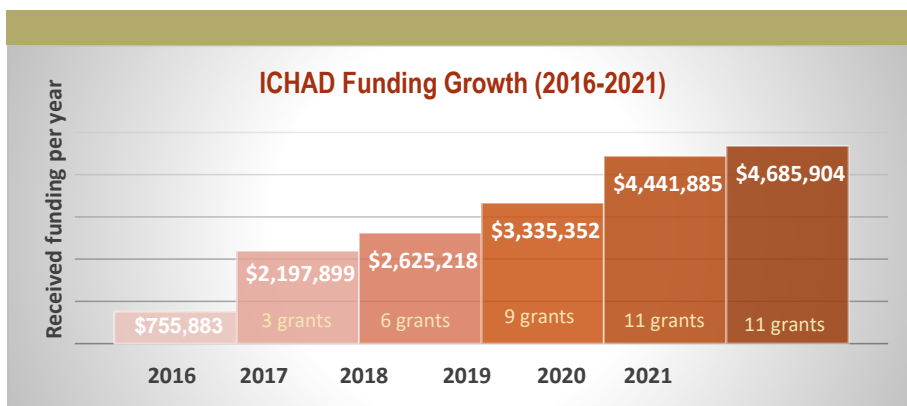
Our work would not be possible without the support of the teaching and administrative staff at each of the participating schools in the greater Masaka region (47 for the Suubi4Her study and 30 for SMART Africa), health care workers and clinic staff at each of the collaborating 39 health centers and clinics, as well as community health workers and parent peers totaling over 120 in number. Finally, we extend our sincere gratitude to all participating children and their caregivers, adolescents, and women who are the inspiration for the work we do.

We would also like to express our deepest appreciation to the experts who shared their work through our Speaker Series and research training events in 2021. They include Penina Acayo Laker, Susannah Allison, Ishmael Amarreh, Ellis Ballard, Bishop Luther Baker, Geetha Bansal, Theresa Betancourt, Arvin Bhana, Leopoldo Cabassa, Holly Campbell-Rosen, Patricia Cavazos-Rehg, Saltanat Childress, Elvin Geng, Ross Hammond, Jenine Harris, Keng-Yen Huang, D'Juan Huddleson, Leyla Ismayilova, Sean Joe, Mike Jones, Eugene Kinyanda, Manasi Kumar, Carolyn Lesorogol, Nikole Lobb Dougherty, Muthoni Mathai, Anne Mbwanyo, Mary McKay, Nicole Moore, James Mugisha, Barbara Mukasa, Abel Mwebembezi, Noeline Nakasujja, Janet Nakigudde, Harriet Namboozee, Timothy Opobo, Jay Piccirillo, Byron Powell, Jonathan Purtle, Ilana Seff, Vincent Sezibera, Mordecai Tayebwa, Erise Williams, Susan Witte, Jean Marie Vianney Havugimana, and Peter Yaro.

ICHAD Growth and Impact

Funding for Research Studies

Over the last half a decade, ICHAD has grown significantly in the range of research studies we house, with our sponsored funding more than doubling since 2017. ICHAD builds upon a 15+ year foundation of basic and applied innovative field research to address poverty and improve public health outcomes. ICHAD's continued success in securing extramural sponsored grants attests to the Center's continued commitment to our mission. These grants enable the Center to advance our mission through:



- **Innovative applied intervention research:** ICHAD houses a broad range of innovative research studies with applied social and economic empowerment interventions that have practice, programming, and policy implications. ICHAD's research studies seek to develop evidence-informed, scalable, and sustainable solutions to address poverty and improve youth outcomes.
- **Capacity building opportunities for a new generation of scholars:** ICHAD develops and implements enhanced research training programs and mentorship opportunities for master's, doctoral and post-doctoral students, as well as junior faculty at Washington University and partner institutions in the U.S. and developing countries. The trainings focus on conceptualization, design, implementation, and evaluation of applied intervention research concerning economic empowerment through asset development, social protection, and public health. The training programs also provide mentorship in scientific grant writing, manuscript preparation, and dissemination of key findings.
- **Raising public awareness and support for economic empowerment interventions:** ICHAD seeks to increase public awareness for economic empowerment programs that: a) address context-specific and mutually-reinforcing challenges/stressors faced by youth in developing countries (e.g., "youth bulge") and their families; and b) generate new public-private partnerships to advance widespread adoption, implementation, and scale-up of evidence-based economic empowerment interventions.
- **Informing public policy and programming:** ICHAD seeks to use the findings from our applied research to inform child and adolescent-focused policy and programming. We engage district- and national-level policymakers and establish academic-government partnerships to disseminate our study findings and move forward the policy agenda on child and adolescent well-being.

5 Year Snapshot - ICHAD Research Studies

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| 2012 - 2017 Suubi+Adherence NICHD – R01 N = 702 40 Health Clinics | 2016 - 2021 SMART Africa-Uganda NIMH – U19 N = 2,079 dyads 26 Primary Schools | 2017-2022 Suubi4Her NIMH – R01 N = 1,260 42 Secondary Schools | 2018 - 2023 Kyaterekera NIMH – R01 N = 542 33 HIV hot spots | 2019 - 2021 Suubi4Cancer NCI – R21 N = 4,000 39 Health Clinics |
| 2019 - 2021 Kayayei Project NIMH – R21 N = 90 | 2019 - 2021 Anzansi NICHD – R21 N = 100 dyads 10 Primary Schools | 2020-2022 Suubi4Stigma NIMH – R21 N = 89 dyads 9 Health Clinics | 2017 - 2022 SuubiAdherence-R2 NICHD – R01 N = 572 39 Health Clinics | 2021 - 2026 M-Suubi NICHD – R01 N = 840 dyads 42 Schools |

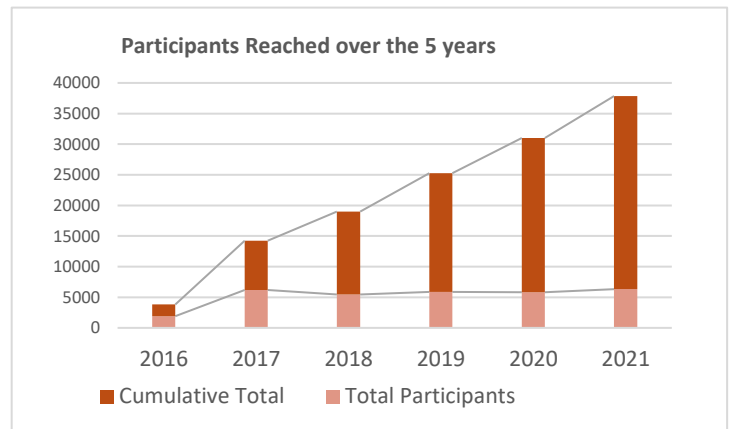
ICHAD Training Grants

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2016-2021 SMART Africa Global Fellows NIMH – U19 9 Fellows | 2018-2023 RRT - Researcher Resilience Training NIMH – R25 Fellows: 8 in 2019; 9 in 2020; 7 in 2021 | 2019 - 2023 LEAD Global Training Program NIMHD – T37 Fellows: 9 in 2020 11 in 2021 | 2020 - 2024 CHILD - GRF FIC and NICHD – D43 Fellows: 7 in 2020 5 in 2021 |
|---|---|---|---|

Impact on Participants

The number of study participants directly impacted by ICHAD has grown steadily over the past five years, with the total number of participants reaching 14,912 across all the studies active between 2017 and 2021. A snapshot of “ICHAD by the numbers” on page 4 highlights the specific activities and programs that study participants have directly benefited from, ranging from matched savings to income-generating activities.

- As part of the Suubi4Her study that matches participants’ school tuition, ICHAD has spent over \$3,851 supporting up to 47 girls to enable them to attend school.
- Across Anzansi, Suubi4Her, and Kyaterekera studies, ICHAD disbursed over \$30,663 in matched savings, corresponding to the \$42,923 saved directly by participants as part of the study interventions.
- ICHAD distributed essential protective supplies, including 3,538 Covid-19 masks and hand sanitizers to study participants in the study regions.
- Under the Kyaterekera study, ICHAD has distributed 13,008 condoms as part of HIV/STI prevention efforts among women engaged in sex work.



“I appreciate ICHAD for being trustworthy. At the beginning when they opened savings accounts for us, I thought they wanted to steal our savings in the disguise of matching it since they had control over our accounts. Due to that fear, I regularly monitored my deposits to find out whether they still stand. In due course, I found out that everything is real. My savings were matched and this has helped me to cover the school tuition for my girl.”

– Suubi4Her Study Participant Guardian from Butende S.S.

Support for a New Generation of Researchers

One of the growth markers for ICHAD’s capacity building impact has been the increased number of sponsored students at Washington University, building an informal pipeline for a new generation of researchers, leaders, and practitioners. In the academic year 2021-2022 alone, six staff members from the ICHAD Uganda field office were admitted into the PhD or MSW/MPH programs. While in St. Louis, ICHAD students work as research assistants or fellows, and are an integral part of the U.S-based research activities. The opportunity to work with ICHAD during their graduate education provides students hands-on experience to contribute to research coordination, data analysis, manuscript preparation, conference presentations, publications, and more.



ICHAD-U.S. team kicks off the Fall semester with a social gathering

In addition, ICHAD provides capacity building fellowships and bi-directional learning opportunities to students, team members, and early career researchers across the globe. Read more about our capacity building programs on page 17.

Research Projects

Newly Funded Studies

Thanks to the resilience and ongoing collaboration of our staff, participants, trainees, and partners, ICHAD was able to secure four newly funded/pending NIH-sponsored studies in 2021. Below is a brief description of each study:

M-Suubi: A Multi-level Integrated Intervention to Reduce the Impact of HIV Stigma on HIV Treatment Outcomes among Adolescents Living with HIV in Uganda

Funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), M-Suubi (R01MH126892) is a five-year study (2021- 2026) that examines the impact of a multi-level intervention combining group-based HIV stigma reduction training for educators (GED-HIVSR), multiple family groups (MFGs) for HIV stigma reduction (MFG-HIVSR), and with a family economic empowerment (FEE) intervention on HIV treatment adherence and engagement in care among adolescents living with HIV (ALHIV) attending boarding schools in Uganda. The study will enroll 840 ALHIV (and their caregivers) recruited from 42 schools in the greater Masaka region, a region heavily affected by HIV. M-Suubi intervention will be provided for 20 months, with assessments at baseline, 12, 24, and 36 months. Findings from the study could inform combination intervention efforts to optimize HIV treatment outcomes and engagement in care among ALHIV. The dynamic team of experts from around the globe that will contribute to this study include:

Principal Investigators: Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Massy Mutumba, PhD (University of Michigan)

Project Team Members: Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Shenyang Guo, PhD; Penina Acayo Laker, MFA (Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts), Torsten Neilands, PhD (University of California – San Francisco); Yesim Tozan, PhD (New York University); James Mugisha, PhD (Kyambogo University); Deborah Padgett (New York University)

Field Coordinator: Rashida Namirembe, MSW

In-Country Research Collaborators: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Barbara Mukasa, MBChB (Mildmay-Uganda)



Suubi4Stronger Families: Addressing Child Behavioral Health by Strengthening Financial Stability and Parenting among Families in Uganda (pending)

Pending funding from the National Institutes of Health, Suubi4Stronger Families (R01MH128905) is a five-year study that will examine the mechanisms by which economic empowerment (EE) and multiple family group (MFG)-based family strengthening (FS) interventions targeting social, familial, and context-specific drivers affect the mental health of children in mid-upper primary schools in Uganda. Children in Sub-Saharan Africa are burdened by significant unmet mental health needs, including disruptive behavior disorders that persist through adolescence and adulthood if left untreated. The study will utilize an experimental, longitudinal design with three study conditions across 30 cluster-randomized primary schools to compare single and combination intervention options for 900 children (10-14 years); influences of economic empowerment and family strengthening interventions on economic, perceptual, and functioning mediators; and context-specific moderators. The three study conditions are: 1) EE only, 2) MFG-based FS only, 3) combined EE+MFG-based FS. The interventions will be provided for 12 months and assessments will occur at baseline, 12, 24, and 36 months.

Principal Investigators: Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Mary M. McKay, PhD

Project Team Members: Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Shenyang Guo, PhD

Study Consultant: Torsten Neilands, PhD (University of California – San Francisco)

In-Country Research Collaborators: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Noeline Nakasujja, PhD (Makerere University)

Obuvumu: Improving Health Service Uptake for Survivors of Sexual Violence (Discrete Choice Experiment) (pending)

Pending funding from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), Obuvumu (R34MH128753) is a three-year study that quantitatively investigates the demand for, barriers to, and preferences for health services among sexual violence survivors using a Discrete Choice Experiment. The negative impacts of sexual violence, which include unwanted pregnancy, physical injury, risky behaviors, exposure to sexually transmitted infections, chronic stress, depression, and low self-esteem, can be mitigated by providing timely and effective health services that target injury management and psychosocial support. However, health services for survivors of sexual violence in Uganda, and much of Sub-Saharan Africa, are vastly underutilized for a variety of reasons. In the absence of timely and effective treatment, high rates of sexual violence result in serious psychological and physical consequences at a population level and compromise future social and economic development.



The Obuvumu (*courage* in Luganda, a local Ugandan language) study innovates and addresses current gaps through the following specific aims: 1) conduct formative qualitative research to inform a Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) that will generate systematic information on health service utilization for female survivors of sexual violence in Uganda, 2) using a DCE, assess the factors that most influence women's decisions to seek services after experiencing sexual violence, and 3) based on findings from the DCE, apply user-centered design principles to co-design an intervention that addresses barriers and preferences identified in Aims 1 and 2. Study findings are intended to inform interventions that facilitate health service utilization among survivors of sexual violence in low-income countries like Uganda, ultimately improving the overall reproductive health, mental health, and related health outcomes for women in communities where rates of sexual violence are high.

Principal Investigators: Lindsay Stark, DrPH; Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Massy Mutumba, PhD (University of Michigan)

Project Team Members: Derek Brown, PhD; Rachel Brathwaite, PhD

In-Country Research Collaborators: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda)

Bridges-Round 2: Evaluating the Long-term Impact of a Family Economic Empowerment Intervention on HIV Risk Prevention and Care Continuum Outcomes among Orphaned Youth Transitioning to Young Adulthood (pending)

Building on the success of the *Bridges to the Future* study (R01HD070727, 2012-2018) that tested a family-based economic intervention among 1,383 primary school-going adolescents orphaned by HIV in rural Uganda, Bridges-Round 2 (R01MH128232) will examine the long-term impact of the original *Bridges* intervention on health-risk behaviors of young people orphaned by HIV/AIDS (YPoAIDS) as they transition through young adulthood. Specifically, Bridges-R2 will address two critical policy and programming questions related to HIV prevention and engagement in care continuum that remain unaddressed: 1) longer-term effectiveness of *Bridges* across Young people orphaned by AIDS (YPoAIDS)'s life course is currently unknown but critically important because of unique vulnerabilities during the transition into young adulthood; and 2) self-reports of sexual health are unreliable, hence the need to integrate biomarkers to provide the most precise results of these highly relevant (but currently unknown) sexual health outcomes among participants. Knowledge and findings from this study can be translated into sustainable, theoretically-guided prevention and treatment efforts that promote the wellbeing of adolescents and young adults affected by HIV/AIDS across the life course, in low-resource settings.

Principal Investigators: Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Proscovia Nabunya, PhD

Project Team Members: Patricia Cavazos-Rehg, PhD (Psychiatry Department); Derek Brown, PhD; Shenyang Guo, PhD, Torsten Neilands, PhD (University of California – San Francisco)

In-Country Research Collaborators: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Barbara Mukasa, MBChB (Mildmay-Uganda); Noeline Nakasujja, PhD (Makerere University)

Concluding Research Projects

SMART Africa-Uganda (2016-2022)



SMART Africa-Uganda is the scale-up study that examines the impact and implementation of an evidence-based multiple family group (MFG) intervention for children experiencing behavioral problems and their families in Uganda. The five-year, multi-country longitudinal study that was focused on reducing child mental health service and research gaps in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, and Uganda, concluded in 2021-22 academic year.

We are grateful to everyone that has contributed to this important study. The study has published seven journal articles from the dataset and brought together policymakers, practitioners, researchers, and community members over five annual conferences to collaboratively develop and test theoretically informed, culturally appropriate, evidence-based, youth- and family-focused service models. We want to extend our gratitude to the team for all your hard work and dedication to the study over the last five years! Thank you!



Funder:

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

Principal Investigators:

Mary McKay, PhD; Fred Ssewamala, PhD; Kimberly Hoagwood, PhD (New York University)

Project Team Members:

Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Apollo Kivumbi, MBChB, MPH

Field Coordinators:

Joshua Kiyangi, MSTAT; Josephine Nabayinda, MSC; Phionah Namatovu, MPH

In-Country Research

Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Rev. Fr. Kato Bakulu (Masaka Diocese)

Collaborators:

SMART Africa-Uganda At-a-Glance

2,079 dyads (children ages 8 to 13 and their guardian) served

26 primary schools in the Greater Masaka region of Uganda

2 publications in 2021

Asampong, E., Ibrahim, A., Sensoy-Bahar, O., Kumbel, K., Yaro, P. B., McKay, M. M., & Ssewamala, F. M. (2021).

Adaptation and implementation of the multiple-family group intervention in Ghana. *Psychiatric Services*.

Naslund, J. A., Kalha, J., Restivo, J. L., Amarreh, I., Sensoy Bahar, O., Shields-Zeeman, L., Ssewamala, F. M., Nabunya, P., Pathare, S. (2021). **Identifying challenges and recommendations for advancing global mental health implementation research: A key informant study of the National Institute of Mental Health Scale-Up Hubs. *Asian Journal of Psychiatry*.**

The 5th Annual Child Behavioral Health Conference Highlights

SMART Africa Study Findings

As part of the culmination of the SMART Africa study, the **5th Annual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa** was held virtually on April 21-22, 2021 and focused on “South to South Collaboration to Strengthen Child and Adolescent Mental Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: Lessons Learned from SMART Africa Center.” The two-day conference featured keynote remarks by NIMH Director Joshua Gordon, Vikram Patel from Harvard Medical School, Cornelius Williams, Director of the Child Protection Programme at UNICEF, Florence Baingana, Regional Adviser for Mental Health at the WHO Regional Office for Africa, and Chiara Servili from the WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MSD). Keynote speakers discussed behavioral health and global research priorities moving forward. Attendees were also privileged to hear from NIH Program Officers Holly Rosen-Campbell and Geetha Bansal, as well as Washington University leaders Chancellor Andrew Martin, Brown School Dean Mary McKay, and Vice Chancellor for International Affairs Kurt Dirks. Key themes and takeaways included the need to strengthen our existing South to South collaborations by working with both local governments and stakeholders, and by engaging multilateral agencies such as UNICEF and WHO. Conference speakers also touched on the importance of implementation science and taking a life course approach that takes into account an individual or cohort’s life experiences when developing interventions.



The SMART Africa Uganda team discusses preliminary study findings while community stakeholders gather in Masaka

During the conference, the SMART Africa teams shared preliminary findings in three separate panel discussions examining the impact of the multiple family group (MFG) intervention for children ages 8-13 with behavioral difficulties. The **Uganda** scale-up study team utilized data from over 2,400 caregivers to examine the short-term impact of the MFG intervention (at 8 and 16 weeks), comparing outcomes across three study conditions (control, MFG delivered by parent peers, and MFG delivered by community health workers). Results indicate that at baseline, 6% of children exhibited symptoms of disruptive behavioral disorders, with 6% and 2% exhibiting oppositional defiant disorder and conduct disorder respectively. Less parental supervision, widowhood, and large family size were identified as risk factors for elevated symptoms of behavioral challenges. At both 8 and 16 weeks, children receiving the MFG intervention demonstrated significant reductions in behavioral challenges compared to the control condition, indicating that MFG is an effective intervention for addressing disruptive behaviors in low-resource settings. In a separate analysis, compared to other family-based interventions, the MFG intervention had a much lower per-participant cost, though few comparisons are available in the [literature](#).

The team in **Ghana**, one of our capacity building sites, implemented the study in three schools using a similar study design. In the two treatment arms, 60 families received MFG sessions delivered by School Health and Education Program coordinators, and 60 received MFG sessions delivered by parent peers. The team is still analyzing data, but testimonies from families point to improved emotional and social well-being among children receiving the MFG intervention.

The SMART Africa **Kenya** team also implemented the study in three schools (n=179 families) to test the MFG intervention delivered by parent peers as facilitators versus community health workers. As with the Ghana team, the SMART Africa Kenya team is still analyzing data, however, initial feedback show promise of the intervention in improving children’s behaviors as well as the benefits of engaging community stakeholders at all stages of study implementation. For additional details, poster presentations, and conference videos, visit the [conference website here](#).

Anzansi Study (2019-2022)



The Anzansi (*resilience* in the local language of Northern Ghana) Family Program is a two-year study that tests the feasibility of an innovative combination intervention program amongst adolescent girls at risk of dropping out of school in Northern Ghana. By promoting financial stability and strengthening family relations, this study seeks to address the increasing numbers of unaccompanied minors migrating from rural to urban areas searching for better economic opportunities. The study evaluates child development outcomes, including school attendance, intention to independently migrate, family financial stability, psychosocial and mental health functioning, and family cohesion. In March 2021, 47 families in the treatment arm completed Financial Literacy Training (FLT) and Multiple Family Group (MFG) sessions and received certificates for the two study interventions. From March through October 2021, the implementation partner BIBIR Ghana team conducted check-in meetings with participants to offer advice and support on income-generating activities. Post-intervention assessments for 96 participants were completed in November 2021 and in-depth interviews exploring participants' experiences with the intervention are ongoing with 20 families (adolescent girls and their caregivers).

Participants deposited into their Child Development Accounts (CDA) from February 2021 until October 2021, and their savings were matched at a ratio of 1:2. Over the 9-month intervention period, participants saved 18,450 Ghana Cedis (\$3,000) in total and participants' total savings were matched at 30,980 Ghana Cedis (\$5,037). In December 2021, the CDA with their matched savings were handed over to 47 families in the treatment group. A 6-month follow-up post-intervention data collection is scheduled to start in May 2022.

Anzansi Study At-a-Glance

100 adolescent girls (ages 11-14) from 10 schools and their caregivers served

47 families receive MFG sessions and Family Economic Empowerment training sessions

\$3,000 saved by participants

\$5,037 matched saving

"I strongly believe that BasicNeeds-Ghana through the Anzansi study, has opened a new era of hope for families as they are now able to own and operate bank accounts which will support them to cater for their families."

**– Kingsley Kumbelim,
Anzansi Study Coordinator (Ghana)**

Funder:

Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)

Principal Investigator:

Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD

Project Team Members:

Alice Boateng, PhD; Abdallah Ibrahim, DrPH; Emmanuel Asampong, PhD; Mary McKay, PhD; Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Fred Ssewamala, PhD

Field Coordinators:

Kingsley Kumbelim; Portia Nartey

In-Country Research Collaborators:

Joseph Osei, Director (BIBIR Ghana); Peter Yaro, Executive Director (BasicNeeds)

Suubi4Her (2017-2022)



Participants use their matched saving for income generating activities such as a sewing machine and cow

The Suubi4Her study seeks to examine the impact and costs associated with an innovative combination intervention that aims to prevent HIV risk behaviors in communities heavily impacted by HIV/AIDS. By promoting financial stability and addressing mental health through family strengthening, Suubi4Her seeks to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for this critical demographic. In 2021, the study team completed 93 qualitative interviews with adolescents and their caregivers, teachers, and facilitators. 183 interviews were transcribed and translated. In addition, the team completed 124 survey interviews at additional 24-month follow-up assessments in 2021. 36-month follow-up interviews are still on hold due to COVID-19 and related school closures. The team received refresher training on Good Clinical Practice and Good Laboratory Clinical Practice led by our collaborating partners Grace Kigozi from Rakai Health Sciences Program and Associate Professor Joseph Ochieng from Makerere University. The research team obtained continuing review approval from the Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) through August 14, 2022.

Suubi4Her At-a-Glance

1,260 participants across 47 schools
\$ 2,192 saved by participants
\$ 2,056 in matched savings
47 participants benefited from school fees match savings
183 interviews translated

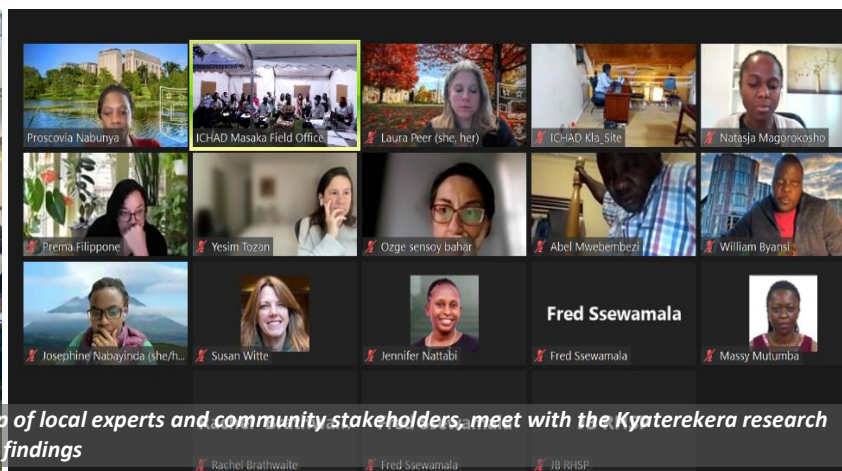
"Based on the knowledge I got from Financial Literacy Training sessions, I started up a poultry project during the lockdown and the project is doing so well. I had enough time for my project, it has kept me busy throughout this period when schools are closed."

– Participant from Nativity of Our Lady Bisanje S.S.

Funder: National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
Principal Investigator: Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD
Project Team Members: Mary McKay, PhD; Claude Mellins, PhD; Irwin Garfinkel, PhD; Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Torsten Neilands, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD
Field Coordinator: Flavia Namuwonge
Research Collaborators: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Rev. Fr. Kato Bakulu (Masaka Diocese); Gertrude Nakigozi, MBChB, PhD (Rakai Health Sciences Program)

Ongoing Research Projects

Kyaterekera Project (2018-2023)



Community Collaborative Board (CCB) members, a group of local experts and community stakeholders, meet with the Kyaterekera research team virtually to provide feedback on preliminary study findings

Through a combination of economic empowerment, vocational skills training, and HIV Risk Reduction (HIVRR) sessions, the Kyaterekera (*saving for the future* in Luganda) Project aims to reduce new incidences of sexually transmitted infections and HIV among women engaged in sex work in Uganda. In 2021, the research team completed 12-months follow-up interviews at one site and 18-months follow-up interviews at 15 sites over the telephone. 24-months in-person interviews began at three sites where biomarker collection also resumed. 47 participants who tested negative at Wave II before the COVID-19 outbreak were still HIV negative. All participants were also tested for STIs and those who tested positive received treatment at the site.

Financial Literacy Training (FLT) sessions are a key intervention component of this study and 163 participants participated in FLT this year. 360 financial diaries were given out to participants at eight sites to capture their expenditures. Over 20,000 expenditure entries were recorded during the intervention. Broad expense categories included: household expenditures on food, clothing, communication, transportation, health and medical care, cosmetics, toiletries, education, transportation, utilities, kitchenware, investments and savings, medicine, leisure, and accommodation. Data analysis is still ongoing.

The team held two meetings with the 12 Community Collaborative Board (CCB) to receive feedback on the four submitted manuscripts out of the Kyaterekera study. In addition, the team held a meeting with the Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) to update members on the study progress, specifically about the data collection and management process.

“Due to the HIVRR and FLT sessions that we had, I embarked on concentrating on my restaurant business and reduced on the number of customers to only three partners.

– Participant from Kakuuto site

Funder:

Principal Investigators:

Project Team Members:

Field Coordinators:

Research Collaborators:

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)

Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Susan Witte, PhD

Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Larissa Jennings Mayo-Wilson, PhD; Joseph Kagaayi, PhD; Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Yesim Tozan, PhD

Edward Nsubuga; Josephine Nabayinda, MSC

Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda)

Kyaterekera Project At-a-Glance

542 participants recruited at 19 sites

2,038 boxes/cartons of condoms distributed

127 face masks distributed

\$3,875 saved by participants

2 publications in 2021

Nabunya, P., Byansi, W., Damulira, C., Sensoy Bahar, O., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Tozan, Y., Kiyingi, J., Nabayinda, J., Brathwaite, R., Witte, S. S., Ssewamala, F. M. (2021).

Predictors of depressive symptoms and post-traumatic stress disorder among women engaged in commercial sex work in southern Uganda. *Psychiatry Research.*

Nabunya, P., Kiyingi, J., Witte, S. S., Sensoy Bahar, O., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Tozan, Y., ... & Ssewamala, F. M. (2021). **Working with economically vulnerable women engaged in sex work: Collaborating with community stakeholders in Southern Uganda.** *Global Public Health.*

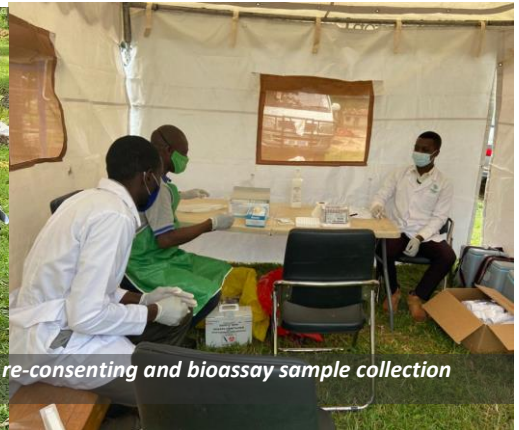
Suubi+Adherence-R2 (2020-2025)



Study team members attend training on biomarker and collection Standard Operating Procedure



Study team members conduct re-consenting and bioassay sample collection



The Suubi+Adherence-R2 study seeks to examine the long-term impact of the Suubi+Adherence intervention on HIV viral suppression and to explore the impact of the intervention on key HIV treatment adherence outcomes for youth living with HIV, including cognitive functioning and their ability to access and refill prescribed medication, adherence to prescribed daily medication routines, and their engagement in HIV care such as keeping medical appointments. Team members completed qualitative and cognitive functioning interview training along with Good Clinical Practice sessions and Good Clinical Laboratory Practice to equip study staff with knowledge on how to protect the rights, integrity, and confidentiality of human subjects, as well as handling participants' biodata, and pill counting. Following these training sessions, team members traveled to 39 health centers in southwest Uganda to trace study participants from the first round of the Suubi+Adherence study. Following participant tracing, the team embarked on re-consenting, completing quantitative interviews, bioassay sample collection (led by our collaborators, Mildmay Uganda), and completing cognitive testing. To date, 572 of the original study participants completed wave 6 interviews (7 years post baseline), including cognitive functioning testing.

"I had no prior experience working with children affected by HIV before I joined ICHAD, and through my work, I witnessed huge numbers of children and families affected. I came to know how people are struggling with poverty during my home visits under the Suubi+Adherence study. ICHAD has also trained me to work with communities of different backgrounds. I also gained knowledge about income-generating activities, including how I can start a small business with my family. The ICHAD team has been very supportive and I learned a lot through the various trainings which have made me grow professionally."

– Jane Namulindwa, Administrative Assistant

Suubi+Adherence-R2 At-a-Glance

572 participants from the original study reconsented and interviewed (aged 10-16 years at initial recruitment for the Suubi+Adherence study)

39 health clinics

7 publications in 2021



See publication on page 21

Funder:

Principal Investigators:

Project Team Members:

Field Coordinators:

Research Collaborators:

The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institutes of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)
Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Proscovia Nabunya, PhD
Rachel Brathwaite, PhD; Derek Brown, PhD; Shenyang Guo, PhD; Claude Mellins, PhD; Torsten Neilands, PhD; John Santelli, PhD; April Denise Thames, PhD
Phionah Namatovu, MPH
Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Barbara Mukasa, MBChB (Mildmay-Uganda)

Suubi4Stigma (2020-2022)

Suubi4Stigma study examines the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary impact of two evidence-based interventions, group cognitive behavioral therapy (G-CBT) and multiple family group (MFG), to address HIV/AIDS-associated stigma among adolescents (aged 10-14 years) living with HIV in Uganda. This year, the team successfully enrolled 89 child-caregiver dyads (N=178 participants) across 9 health clinics in the study region. All participants completed baseline assessments, including in-depth interviews to explore their experiences with HIV-related stigma. Following baseline assessments, the team embarked on the delivery of MFG and G-CBT sessions in each of the 6 health clinics randomized to the treatment arms. The 10 sessions (per intervention) were delivered by trained peer parents and para-counselors at each clinic. Even in the middle of the pandemic, sessions were completed with over 90% attendance rate per session. The team also completed the 3-month post-intervention assessments, including in-depth interviews to explore participants' experiences with the intervention. Data analysis is ongoing and final assessments will be conducted in April 2022.



Suubi4Stigma participants meet at the Health Center for screening, consenting and assenting

| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Funder: | National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) |
| Principal Investigators: | Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD |
| Project Team Members: | James Mugisha, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Jean-Francois Trani, PhD |
| Field Coordinator: | Herbert Migadde, BIT |
| Research Collaborators: | Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda) |

Say No to Stigma (2020-2021)

Funded by the Washington University Africa Initiative Pilot Grant Program, the “Say No to Stigma” pilot study aims to develop a set of new, age-appropriate, culturally relevant signage and messaging around mental health and stigma to be used in Uganda’s primary schools. ICHAD Co-Directors, Drs. Ozge Sensoy Bahar and Proscovia Nabunya have partnered with Assistant Professor Penina Acayo Laker at the Sam Fox School of Art at Washington University in St. Louis for this study. Under their leadership, the study aims to develop visual solutions through a set of extensive creative workshops informed by focus groups with children, school administrators, and teachers from one primary school in the Masaka region of Uganda.

In 2021, the team conducted six focus group discussions (FGD) with 30 participating children (grades 3-7) and 8 teachers/headteachers to explore their understanding of and experiences with mental health and mental health-related stigma. A two-day design/visual workshop was also held with participants to help develop age-appropriate, culturally relevant signage and visual messaging around mental health and reducing stigma. Participants were engaged to draw pictures based on 6 sub-themes depicting how emotional well-being presents (behavior, community, and school perception) and management of emotional distress (through social support). Following consultative meetings with children, winning messages/signage in each category will be displayed in the primary schools in the form of comics, posters, and environmental graphics.



Participants share their experience and understanding of mental health related stigma

Workshop images + prototypes



Global Incubator Seed Grants funded by the McDonnell International Scholars Academy

Two ICHAD-affiliated Global Incubator Seed grants were selected for funding by Washington University's McDonnell International Scholars Academy. The first, led by ICHAD Co-Director Proscovia Nabunya and Professor of Psychiatry Patricia Cavazos-Rehg, will conduct focus groups with youth (ages 14-17) living with HIV (YLHIV) and healthcare providers to inform the development of a feasible, acceptable, and cost-effective mobile health (mHealth) intervention protocol for YLHIV experiencing depressive symptoms in the Masaka region and improve treatment outcomes among YLHIV in low-resourced settings. The team will be supported by LEAD Postdoctoral Associate, Lindsey Filiatreau and ICHAD Global Affiliate James Mugisha at Makerere University in Uganda. The second grant was submitted by Boazhou Sun, Associate Professor in the Department of Radiation Oncology at the Medical School, who will work with partners at the Uganda Cancer Institute to adapt a highly efficient and cost-effective approach for linear accelerator deployment and quality assurance processes to support safe and efficient use of radiation therapy technologies in Uganda.

Examining the Effects of COVID-19 Restrictions on Ugandan Youth Living with HIV

ICHAD Postdoctoral fellow William Byansi, a Ugandan national with ties to both Makerere University and Washington University in St. Louis, received a one-year supplemental grant from NIH's Fogarty International Center. For this supplement, Dr. Byansi will work with his mentors, Dr. Noeline Nakasujja at Makerere University and Dr. Fred Ssewamala, to leverage the established CHILD-GRF training program and ICHAD's Suubi+Adherence study to examine the impact of the pandemic response and social distancing measures on adolescents' mental health, including COVID-19-related depressive symptoms, anxiety, and stress. The team will conduct interviews with 500 youth living with HIV (YLHIV) across 39 health facilities accredited to provide antiretroviral therapy (ART). The study will also examine the multi-level COVID-related facilitators and barriers to ART access and uptake among YLHIV. Findings may inform the development of interventions to address mental health challenges associated with future epidemics for YLHIV in low-resource settings.

Ongoing Collaborations

In addition to the studies and training programs housed at Washington University, ICHAD Co-directors also collaborate with other institutions across the country on several ongoing studies, including:

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| Structural & Social Transitions among Adolescents in Rakai (2017 – 2022) NICHD | Examines the influence of social structural determinants on transitions from adolescence to adulthood by continuing to track participants from Rakai Community Cohort Study established in 1994. | PI - Dr. John Santelli and other colleagues at Columbia University (Co-I: Fred Ssewamala) |
| Optimizing Prevention Approaches for Children Reintegrating from Orphanages in Azerbaijan (2019 – 2024) NICHD | Seeks to develop locally appropriate strategies to eliminate childhood abuse and reduce the long-term negative impact of low childhood socioeconomic status on mental health. | PI - Dr. Leyla Ismayilova, University of Chicago (Co-I: Fred Ssewamala) |
| An Economic and Relationship-Strengthening Intervention for HIV-Affected Couples Who Drink Alcohol in Malawi (2019 – 2022) NIAAA | Aims to produce a culturally-grounded, sustainable, and evidence-based intervention to reduce heavy alcohol use and its harms on couple relationships, household poverty, and HIV health outcomes. | PI - Dr. Amy Conroy, University of California San Francisco (Co-I: Fred Ssewamala) |
| Using mobile technology to prevent HIV and related Youth Health problems: Sexual health, Mental health, and Substance use in southwest Uganda (Youth Health SMS) (2020-2025) NIMH | Building upon two existing NIH-funded projects, SSTAR and Suubi4Her, this study addresses the OAR high priority area of reducing HIV incidence by targeting health disparities and comorbidities and developing a scalable mobile phone-based intervention designed ultimately to decrease HIV incidence using mental health and substance use screening for at-risk adolescent and young adult. | PI - Dr. Philip Kreniske, Columbia University (Co-I: Fred Ssewamala) |

Capacity Building

Research Training Programs

Research training programs are an integral part of ICHAD's capacity building efforts highlighting our commitment to develop and implement contextually-relevant evidence-based interventions to support children, families, and communities in addressing the unique challenges they experience. ICHAD has three NIH-funded research training programs: R25 Researcher Resilience Training Program (RRT), T37 LEAD Global Training Program (LEAD), and D43 CHILD-Global Research Fellowship (CHILD-GRF). Each training program has a unique research focus area and target candidate population (see table below), and they are each dedicated to supporting the next generation of researchers from underrepresented backgrounds and groups to gain the skills and networks needed to lead multi-disciplinary, collaborative research teams. Originally designed to incorporate in-person, hands-on training and research experiences, our programs were implemented virtually again in 2021 due to the continued COVID-19 restrictions and uncertainty. Each of the 30 trainees is matched with a mentor from Washington University in St. Louis, Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, or from one of our numerous partner institutions to develop a research project, analyze data, draft a manuscript or apply for their own research funding.



"I absolutely loved the program! It built my confidence as a researcher. It also provided me with space to build resilience with other diverse researchers. I was developed, challenged, mentored, and embraced as a scientist. The sessions were well planned and prepared. The content was amazing. The team at Washington University was empowering."

– RRT Trainee

Building on the success of the virtual programming adapted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the 2021 summer training curriculum featured ten weeks of training sessions consisting of:

- Workshops
- Webinars
- Discussion panels
- Informational career talks
- Regular program-specific check-in meetings
- Meetings with mentors
- Trainee-led sessions
- Social hours with trainees across Washington University campus
- Pilot award peer review sessions
- Publication working meetings

In response to feedback from trainees, the 2021 curriculum featured more peer-to-peer learning and professional networking opportunities as well as more interactive panel discussions. Each trainee gave final presentations, sharing their progress and next steps for the research they initiated with their mentors. In the full expression of capacity building, the majority of trainees continue to work with the mentors beyond the formal training period, building on the work initiated in the training program. For more information, read the 2021 ICHAD Capacity Building Report.

| |  Researcher Resilience Training (RRT) https://sites.wustl.edu/rtrtraining |  LEAD Global Training Program https://sites.wustl.edu/lead |  CHILD Global Research Fellowship Washington University in St. Louis Makerere University https://sites.wustl.edu/childgrf |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Directors | Mary McKay, Fred Ssewamala, Sean Joe | Fred Ssewamala, Patricia Cavazos--Rehg | Fred Ssewamala, Mary McKay, Noeline Nakasujja |
| Research Focus | Child and adolescent mental health in low-resource settings | Global health disparities with a focus on mental health | Child and adolescent HIV and mental health |
| Region | U.S. and Sub-Saharan Africa | U.S. and Sub-Saharan Africa | Uganda |
| Career Level | PhD, MD, or other doctoral students, postdocs, fellows, residents, early career faculty (advanced degree completed within 5 years of program start) | | Advanced graduate-level student through early career faculty (advanced degree completed within 5 years of program start) |
| Eligibility Requirements | No citizenship requirement, but must be affiliated with a U.S.-based institution; priority given to those of African descent | U.S. citizen; Under-represented minority | Ugandan national |
| Duration | 1-year appointment (April-March) | 10-week appointment (June-August) | 3-year appointment (begins each June) |
| Timeline | 1 week in person; on-going research/mentorship for 1 or 2 years | 4 weeks in the U.S.; 6 weeks in a SSA research site | 6-week summer training in U.S. over a three-year period; on-going research/mentorship |
| Funded by | National Institute of Mental Health: R25MH118935 | National Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities: T37MD014218 | Fogarty International Center and National Institute for Child Health and Development: D43TW011541 |

ICHAD Staff Training, Professional Development, and Advancement

ICHAD's unique success and continued growth on two continents are in large part due to our commitment to staff development at every stage. To build on the potential of our ambitious and talented staff and student workers, we have built a robust staff training and professional development curriculum that includes weekly meetings with co-directors Fred Ssewamala, Proscovia Nabunya, and Ozge Sensoy Bahar. The curriculum offers a combination of technical skills-building to enhance staff capabilities in their roles, as well as professional development sessions to provide skills and knowledge for individual career advancement. These sessions utilize the expertise of the leadership and colleagues from within ICHAD and from our implementing partners. See table for staff training topics in 2021.



We are particularly proud of the educational achievements and advancements of our staff in 2021, which included:

- Six members of ICHAD Uganda staff were admitted to doctoral and masters programs at institutions in the USA
- Six members of ICHAD Uganda graduated with masters, bachelors, and diplomas
- Three existing ICHAD staff received a promotion or took on newly created roles
- ICHAD Uganda received six new hires, increasing staff by 13%

"I have received several trainings that have helped me grow professionally especially in the field of research. Training sessions helped me learn about ethical research protocols and standards, administrative duties, and enhancing my computer applications knowledge through the various tasks assigned to me by my supervisors.

At ICHAD, I have learned the importance of collecting and maintaining quality data because of its potential influence to change policy in our country and the world at large, especially in favor of the vulnerable populations like adolescents, youth, and women, among others."

– Teopista Nantongo, Administrative Assistant, ICHAD Uganda

| Staff Training Topics in 2021 | Facilitator/Trainer |
|--|--|
| Good Clinical Practice Training on Human Subjects Protection | Grace Kigozi, Rakai Health Sciences Program, Uganda; and Andrea Morris, Manager, WashU Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research (OVCR) |
| Computer Refresher Trainings | Robert Kasumba, Graduate Student Assistant, ICHAD USA, and Claire Najjuuko, IT Manager, ICHAD Uganda |
| Qualitative Interviews Translation Training | Josephine Nabayinda, PhD Student/Research Associate, ICHAD USA |
| Confidentiality Refresher Training | Ritah Barungi, Human Resource Specialist, ICHAD Uganda |
| Qualitative Coding/Analysis Training | Dr. James Mugisha, Kyambogo University |
| Field Experience | Edward Nsubuga, Study Coordinator and Florence Namuli, Deputy Study Coordinator, ICHAD Uganda |
| Research Dissemination and Publications | Dr. Proscovia Nabunya, ICHAD Co-Director |
| Qualitative Interview Training | Dr. Ozge Sensoy Bahar and Dr. Proscovia Nabunya, ICHAD Co-Directors |
| Implementing Matched Savings Accounts | Jennifer Nattabi, PhD Student/Research Associate, ICHAD USA |
| Cognitive Interview Trainings and Scoring | Dr. April Thames, Global affiliate, University of California Los Angeles |
| PowerPoint and Canva Workshop | Bethel Mandefro, Center Coordinator, ICHAD USA |
| Quantitative Data Analysis Training | Dr. William Byansi, Postdoctoral Research Associate, ICHAD USA |
| Data Collection Using RedCAP | Vicent Ssentumbwe, Data Manager, ICHAD Uganda |
| Pill Counting and Data Collection | Phionah Namatovu, Research Coordinator, ICHAD Uganda, and Dr. Samuel Kizito, PhD Student/Research Associate, ICHAD USA |
| Good Clinical Laboratory Practice | Mildmay-Uganda and Makerere University |

ICHAD and SMART Africa Speaker Series

The ICHAD/SMART Africa Speaker Series elevates current global research on the well-being of children, adolescents, and families. Several local, domestic and international collaborators shared their work through the speaker series and videos for their presentation are [available online](#).



2021 ICHAD/SMART Africa Speakers Series

Implementation and Sustainability: Lessons Learned from a Rwandan Intervention for Global Early Childhood Development

Theresa Betancourt, ScD, MA

Professor in Global Practice, Boston College School of Social Work

Vincent Sezibera, PhD

Director of the Centre for Mental Health, University of Rwanda

Jean Marie Vianney Havugimana

Program Manager, FXB Rwanda

Combination Microfinance and HIV Prevention Interventions for Women Engaged in Sex Work: What Do We Know Works? Where Do We Go from Here?

Susan Witte, PhD

Professor of Social Work, Columbia School of Social Work

Adaptive Strategies for Retention in HIV Care in Africa: A Research Agenda for Personalization of Public Health

Elvin Geng, MD, MPH

Professor of Medicine in the Division of Infectious Diseases; Director of the Center for Dissemination and Implementation, Washington University

Interdisciplinarity and Human-Centered Design: Fostering Participatory Design Research Approaches to Address Public Health Related Issues

Penina Acayo Laker, MFA

Assistant Professor, Communication Design, Sam Fox School of Design and Visual Arts, Washington University in St. Louis

Conservation and Community in Kenya: Costs, Benefits and the Prospects for Change

Carolyn Lesorogol, PhD

Professor, International Social Development, Brown School at Washington University

Improving Child and Adolescent Mental Health: Opportunities and Challenges for Multi-level Culturally Congruent Preventive Interventions

Leyla Ismayilova, PhD

Associate Professor, Crown Family School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, The University of Chicago

Advancing Scalability and Impacts of a Teacher Training Program for Promoting Child Mental Health in Ugandan Primary Schools

Yen Huang, MPH, PhD

Associate Professor, Dept. of Population Health & Dept. of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, NYU School of Medicine

Janet Nakigudde, PhD

Behavioral Science Lecturer, Clinical Psychologist, Makerere University, College of Health Sciences, Makerere University



Building Resilience in Research: Experiences from an NIMH-Funded Training Program

In honor of Global Mental Health Day, ICHAD was invited to share the successes and best practices of the Researcher Resilience Training (RRT) Program to support child and adolescent mental health researchers of African descent with program officials at the National Institute of Mental Health. With an introduction by RRT co-director Dean Mary McKay, and facilitation by co-directors Dr. Fred Ssewamala and Dr. Sean Joe, RRT alumni Proscovia Nabunya and Leslie Adams, presented their career progress as a result of their participation in the program to a highly engaged audience of NIMH program officers and staff. Presenters also used this opportunity to highlight the cumulative success of early researchers that participated in the RRT training program, including:

- Four PhDs/Postdocs have transitioned from RRT to faculty roles
- RRT Fellows have been part of 80+ peer-reviewed publications since the program began in 2019
- RRT Fellows have received 19 grants since 2019 (including an R21, R01, R34, and D43 supplement)

Poster Presentations

ICHAD research assistants, directors, and collaborators continue to present study findings at international conferences.

| 25th Annual Conference Anniversary Celebration -Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) | | |
|---|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Title | ICHAD Study | Presenter |
| Development and External Validation of a Risk Calculator to Predict 'Poor Mental Health' Outcomes Among Youths Affected By HIV in Uganda | Bridges, Suubi+ Adherence | Rachel Brathwaite |
| PrEP Knowledge, Attitudes and Use Among Vulnerable Women Engaged in Sex Work in Uganda: Implications for HIV Prevention | Kyaterekera study | Susan Witte |
| Prevalence of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and HIV in Economically Vulnerable Women Engaged in Sex Work in Uganda: Implications for HIV Care and Treatment Engagement | Kyaterekera study | Joshua Kiyangi |
| Family Factors and Gender Norms As Protective Factors Against Sexual Risk-Taking Intentions Among Adolescent Girls in Southern Uganda | Suubi4Her | Joelynn Muwanga |
| Prevalence and Correlates of Depressive Symptoms Among High School Adolescent Girls in Southern Uganda | Suubi4Her | Proscovia Nabunya |
| Food Insecurity and Violence Against Children at Homes in Southern Uganda: A Propensity Score Analysis | Suubi4Her | Daji Dvalishvili |
| The Effect of Family-Based Economic Empowerment Intervention and Family Factors on Sexual Risk-Taking Attitudes Among Adolescents Living with HIV in Uganda | Suubi+Adherence | Thembe Shato |
| Sex-Disaggregated Associations between Gender Norm Perceptions, Self-Concept, and Hopelessness Among AIDS-Orphaned Children in Uganda | Suubi Maka | Flora Cohen |
| The Relationship between Family Cohesion and Child Behavioral Challenges Among School-Going Children in Southwestern Uganda | SMART Africa | Ozge Sensoy Bahar |
| Caregiver Characteristics Associated with DBDs Among School Going Children in Uganda | SMART Africa | William Byansi |
| Intimate Partner Violence and Mental Health: Sex-Disaggregated Associations Among Adolescents and Young Adults in Uganda | | Flora Cohen |
| 16th International Conference on HIV Treatment and Prevention Adherence | | |
| Self-reported adherence to antiretroviral therapy (ART) among women engaged in commercial sex work in Southern Uganda | Kyaterekera study | Proscovia Nabunya |
| Engaging vulnerable women engaged in commercial sex in the implementation of an HIV risk reduction intervention in Southern Uganda | Kyaterekera study | Proscovia Nabunya |

2021 Publications

In addition to the publication of our book *Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ICHAD team members also worked with other researchers and collaborators to publish study findings in the following peer-reviewed journals.

| Study | Publications in 2021 |
|------------------------------|--|
| Bridges to the Future | <p>Development and external validation of a risk calculator to predict internalising symptoms among Ugandan youths affected by HIV. <i>Psychiatry Research</i>. Brathwaite, R., Ssewamala, F. M., Neilands, T. B., Nabunya, P., Byansi, W., & Damulira, C.</p> <p>A multifaceted intervention with savings incentives to reduce multidimensional child poverty: Evidence from the Bridges Study (2012-2018) in rural Uganda. <i>Social Indicators Research</i>. Wang, J. S-H., Malaeb, B., Ssewamala, F. M., Neilands, T. B., & Brooks-Gunn, J.</p> <p>Impact of a family economic intervention (Bridges) on health functioning of adolescents orphaned by HIV/AIDS: A 5-year (2012-2017) cluster randomized controlled trial in Uganda. <i>American Journal of Public Health</i>. Ssewamala, F. M., Wang, J. S-H., Brathwaite, R., Sun, S., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Neilands, T. B., & Brooks-Gunn, J.</p> |
| CHILD-GRF | <p>Child Mental Health in HIV-impacted Low-resource Settings in Developing Countries- Global Research Fellowship (CHILD-GRF): A Research Training Program Protocol. <i>Frontiers in Public Health</i>. Ssewamala, F. M., Sensoy Bahar, O., Nakasujja, N., Abente, B., Nabunya, P., Peer, L., Zmachinski, L., Fragale, S., & McKay, M. M.</p> |
| Kyaterekera | <p>Predictors of depressive symptoms and post-traumatic stress disorder among women engaged in commercial sex work in southern Uganda. <i>Psychiatry Research</i>. Nabunya, P., Byansi, W., Damulira, C., Sensoy Bahar, O., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Tozan, Y., Kiyangi, J., Nabayinda, J., Brathwaite, R., Witte, S. S., Ssewamala, F. M.</p> <p>Working with economically vulnerable women engaged in sex work: Collaborating with community stakeholders in Southern Uganda. <i>Global Public Health</i>. Nabunya, P., Kiyangi, J., Witte, S. S., Sensoy Bahar, O., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Tozan, Y., ... & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> |
| SMART Africa | <p>Identifying challenges and recommendations for advancing global mental health implementation research: A key informant study of the National Institute of Mental Health Scale-Up Hubs. <i>Asian Journal of Psychiatry</i>. Naslund, J. A., Kalha, J., Restivo, J. L., Amarreh, I., ... Patel, V., Peterson, I., Sensoy Bahar, O., Shields-Zeeman, L., Ssewamala, F. M., ... Pathare, S.</p> <p>Adaptation and implementation of the multiple-family group intervention in Ghana. <i>Psychiatric Services</i>. Asampong, E., Ibrahim, A., Sensoy-Bahar, O., Kumbel, K., Yaro, P. B., McKay, M. M., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> <p>Strengthening system and implementation research capacity for child mental health and family well-being in Sub-Saharan Africa. <i>Global Social Welfare</i>. Mwayo, A., Kumar, M., Mathai, M., Mutavi, T., Nungari, J., Gathara, R., McKay, M., Ssewamala, F. M., Hoagwood, K., Petersen, I., Bhana, A., & Huang, K-H.</p> |
| Suubi Maka | <p>Gender norms, beliefs and academic achievement of orphaned adolescent boys and girls in Uganda. <i>The Journal of Genetic Psychology</i>. Nabunya, P., Curley, J., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> |
| Suubi+ Adherence | <p>Suubi+Adherence-Round 2: A study protocol to examine the longitudinal HIV treatment adherence among youth living with HIV transitioning into young adulthood in Southern Uganda. <i>BMC Public Health</i>. Ssewamala, F. M., Sensoy Bahar, O., Nabunya, P., Thames, A. D., Neilands, T. B., Damulira, C., Mukasa, B., Brathwaite, R., Mellins, C., Santelli, J., Brown, D., Guo, S., Namatovu, P., Kiyangi, J., Namuwonge, F., & McKay, M. M.</p> <p>Family economic empowerment, social support and sexual risk behaviors among adolescents living with HIV in Uganda: The Suubi+Adherence Study. <i>Journal of Adolescent Health</i>. Shato, T., Nabunya, P., Byansi, W., Nwaozuru, U., Okumu, M., Mutumba, M., Brathwaite, R., Damulira, C., Namuwonge, F., Sensoy Bahar, O., Neilands, T. B., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> <p>Relationship between mental health and HIV transmission knowledge and prevention attitudes among adolescents living with HIV: Lessons from Suubi+Adherence cluster randomized study in Southern Uganda. <i>AIDS and Behavior</i>. Byansi, W., Brathwaite, R., ... Nabunya, P., Sensoy Bahar, O., Damulira, C., Namuwonge, F., McKay, M. M., Mellins, C. A., & Ssewamala, F. M. William Byansi, Rachel Brathwaite, Madison Calvert, Proscovia Nabunya, Ozge Sensoy Bahar, Christopher Damulira, Flavia Namuwonge, Mary M. McKay, Claude A. Mellins & Fred M. Ssewamala</p> <p>Evaluating potential mediators for the impact of a family-based economic intervention (Suubi+ Adherence) on the mental health of adolescents living with HIV in Uganda. <i>Social Science & Medicine</i>. Cavazos-Rehg, P., Byansi, W., Doroshenko, C., Neilands, T. B., Anako, N., Bahar, O. S., Kasson, E., Nabunya, P., Mellins, C. A., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> <p>Predicting the individualized risk of poor adherence to ART medication among adolescents living with HIV in Uganda: the Suubi+ Adherence study. <i>Journal of the International AIDS Society</i>. Brathwaite, R., Ssewamala, F. M., Neilands, T. B., Okumu, M., Mutumba, M., Damulira, C., Nabunya, P., Kizito, S., Sensoy Bahar, O., Mellins, C. A., & McKay, M. M.</p> <p>The efficacy and cost-effectiveness of a family-based economic empowerment intervention (Suubi + Adherence) on suppression of HIV viral loads among adolescents living with HIV: results from a Cluster Randomized Controlled Trial in southern Uganda. <i>Journal of International AIDS Society</i>. Tozan, Y., Capasso, A., Sun, S., Neilands, T.B., Damulira, D., Namuwonge, F., Nakigozi, G., Mwebembezi, A., Mukasa, B., Bahar, O.S., Nabunya, P., Mellins, C. A., McKay, M. M., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> <p>The relationship between life satisfaction, personal health, quality of life, and medication adherence among adolescents living with HIV in southwestern Uganda. <i>Journal of Public Health</i>. Byansi, W., Nabunya, P., Muwanga, J., Mwebembezi, A., Damulira, C., Mukasa, B., Zmachinski, L., Nattabi, J., Brathwaite, R., Namuwonge, F., Sensoy Bahar, O., Neilands, T.B., Mellins, C. A. & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> |
| Suubi4Cancer | <p>Pediatric, adolescent, and young adult cancer in an HIV-infected rural sub-Saharan African population. <i>AIDS Care</i>. Johnson, K. J., Sensoy Bahar, O., Nattabi, J., Migadde, H., Ssentumbwe, V., Damulira, C., Kivumbi, A., Niyonzima, N., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> |
| LEAD Global Training Program | <p>Training LEADers to Accelerate Global Mental Health Disparities Research (LEAD) Program: A Research Training Program Protocol. <i>Frontiers in Public Health</i>. Sensoy Bahar, O., Cavazos-Rehg, P., Ssewamala, F. M., Abente, B., Peer, L., Nabunya, P., Soto de Laurido, L. E., Betancourt, T. S., Bhana, A., & Edmond, T.</p> |
| Multiple Study Data Sets | <p>Engaging community and governmental partners in improving health and mental health outcomes for children and adolescents impacted by HIV/AIDS in Uganda. <i>Pediatric Medicine</i>. Tumwesige, W., Namatovu, P., Sensoy Bahar, O., Byansi, W., McKay, M. M., & Ssewamala, F. M.</p> |

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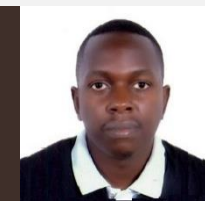
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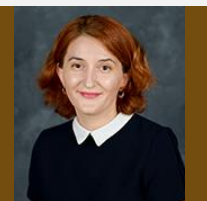
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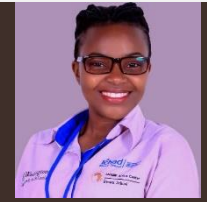
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Since joining ICHAD-Uganda in 2013, I have grown professionally engaging in different activities including data entry, interviews, home visits, IT management, and logistics. I enjoy the work I do at ICHAD because I have a passion for working with and helping others which I see we are doing under the various interventions. I want to have a positive impact on those who need help. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of a profession that reaches out to our most vulnerable populations and strives to make a difference in so many lives.

– Herbert Migadde, Study Coordinator



Meet the ICHAD Uganda Team



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Financial Manager



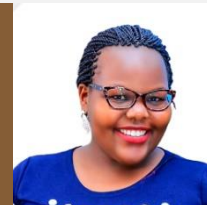
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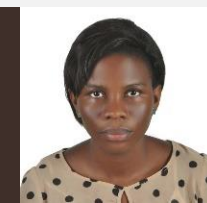
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Vicent Ssentumbwe
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Olive Imelda Namuyaba
Deputy Data Manager/
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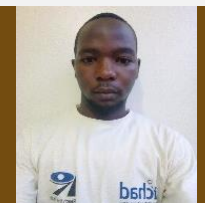
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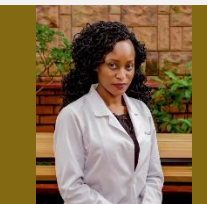
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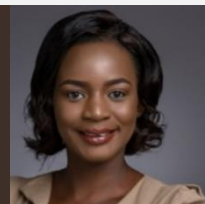
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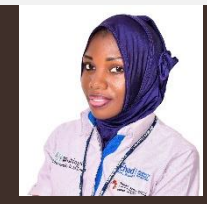
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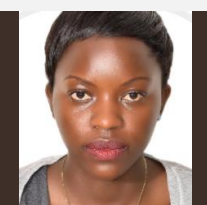
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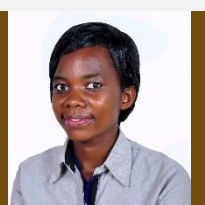
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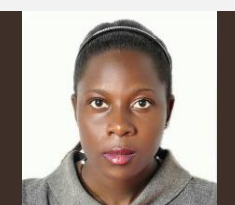
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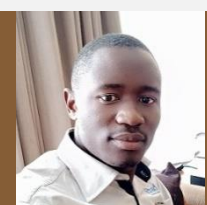
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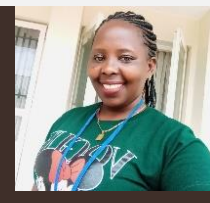
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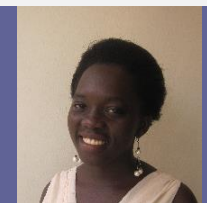
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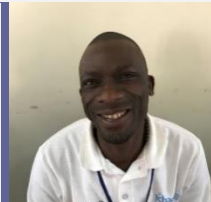
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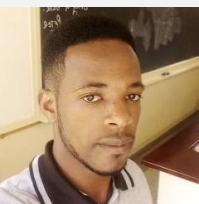


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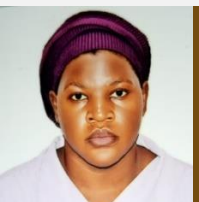
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I joined the ICHAD family in 2014 as an interviewer. I received various training sessions from which I acquired interviewing skills and knowledge about research ethical standards. I further learned how to fill formal documents like requisition and accountability forms, which helped me to develop a greater understanding of the importance of being accountable for every decision I make.

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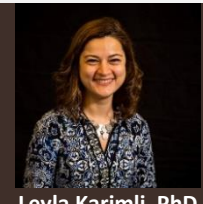
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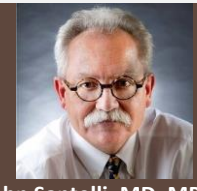
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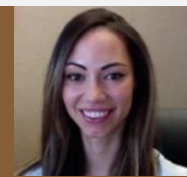
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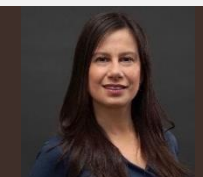
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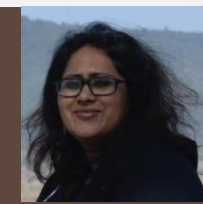
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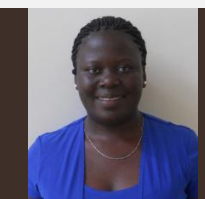
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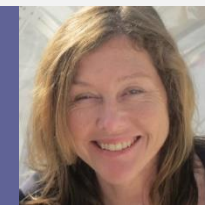
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