



Making a generational impact and creating hope for the future

2022 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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Letter from Founding Director Fred Ssewamala

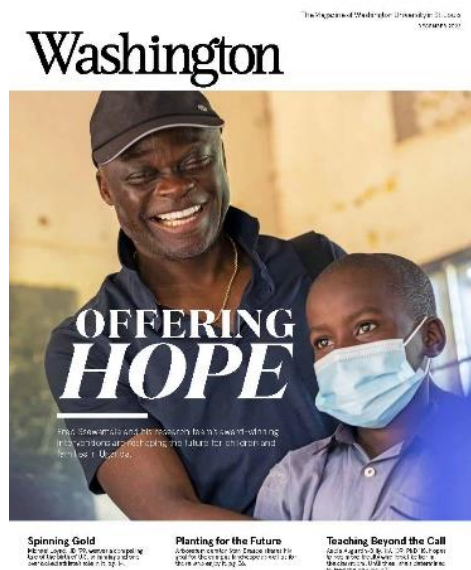
William E. Gordon Distinguished Professor
Associate Dean for Transdisciplinary Faculty Research
Director, SMART Africa Center
Founding Director, ICHAD

High-impact global health and social development research

Dear Colleagues, Partners, and Friends,

With the leadership of co-directors Dr. Proscovia Nabunya and Dr. Ozge Sensoy Bahar, and our team of over 70 staff in the US and Uganda, ICHAD is celebrating another year of significant growth and milestones. We have received NIH funding for four new research studies, several of which build on previous studies to explore deeper and more complex analysis of multiple factors impacting the health and social well-being of children in low resource settings. In addition, we were thrilled to be awarded the highly competitive Launching Future Leaders in Global Health (LAUNCH) research training grant, the NIH Fogarty International Center's flagship global research training program. With nine global institutional partners, we launched our training program, titled *Addressing the research capacity gap in global child and adolescence health disparities utilizing implementation and data sciences vulnerable populations in resource limited settings* (ACHIEVE), and welcomed the first ACHIEVE cohort of eight trainees from five countries.

In Summer 2022, we resumed our in-person annual training symposium and conference, presented as *the Forum on Child and Adolescent Global Health Research and Capacity Building*, in Uganda after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Forum provided the opportunity to gather for the first time with trainees from our four NIH-funded research training grants, as well as our implementing and funding partners, mentors, and our global staff. The learning, collaboration, and career development that were ignited during the Forum among our research trainees will continue to flourish as these scholars gain expertise and transition to independent researchers with their own funded studies and significant contributions to global health.



This past year also brought on unprecedented recognition of our work and its impact in global health and wellbeing. We had the honor of being featured in the December issue of the *Washington Magazine*, and a documentary film *Offering Hope* is forthcoming in 2023. The magazine article and documentary film highlight how our research team and collaborators in Uganda have been creating and implementing poverty alleviation and public health interventions that are making a huge difference in the lives of children, families and communities.

I was also humbled and honored to be recognized at the Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Awards in London and to be invited to deliver the keynote address at the National Dissemination of the National Child-Focused Research Agenda meeting and the Launch of the Knowledge Hub in Uganda. None of these accomplishments would be possible without the extensive network of supportive institutions and individuals that have contributed in innumerable ways to the impact we have had on the lives of children, adolescents, and caregivers.

As we look ahead to the coming year and prepare to celebrate ICHAD's tenth anniversary as a high-impact global health research center, I am humbled to reflect on the tremendous success the Center has had and the many partners that have supported our work along the way.



With sincere gratitude,
Fred Ssewamala

Letter from Brown School Co-Deans



Greetings Colleagues,

As co-interim deans of the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis, it has been a pleasure to witness and support the work of ICHAD this year. Led by founding director Dr. Fred Ssewamala, ICHAD has enjoyed tremendous growth and well-deserved recognition for the intervention studies that have had on the health and wellbeing of children and families across Sub-Saharan Africa, as well as research training programs that invest in training the next generation of social scientists. ICHAD's impact continues to embody the Core Commitments outlined in The Brown School Strategic Plan 2020-2030, and is felt right here at Washington University, at other institutions across the US, as well as across the Global South. Dr. Ssewamala was invited to give the Aaron Rosen Lecture sponsored by the Brown School, at the Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR) Annual 27th Annual Conference, in Phoenix, Arizona. His lecture, as well as the series of featured articles and the forthcoming documentary film featuring his work, serve as testaments to the passion and commitment of Dr. Ssewamala. We are proud to have ICHAD at the Brown School as a model of high-impact research in global health and social work.



Sincerely,

Tonya Edmond, PhD
Co-Interim Dean, Brown School

Rodrigo Siqueira Reis, PhD
Co-Interim Dean, Brown School



Save the Date

**ICHAD'S 10TH
ANNIVERSARY
CELEBRATION** 
TUESDAY, APRIL 11, 2023

**BROWN LOUNGE, BROWN HALL 208
WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS**

Virtual via Zoom

**Celebrating 10 years of high-impact global
health and social development research**

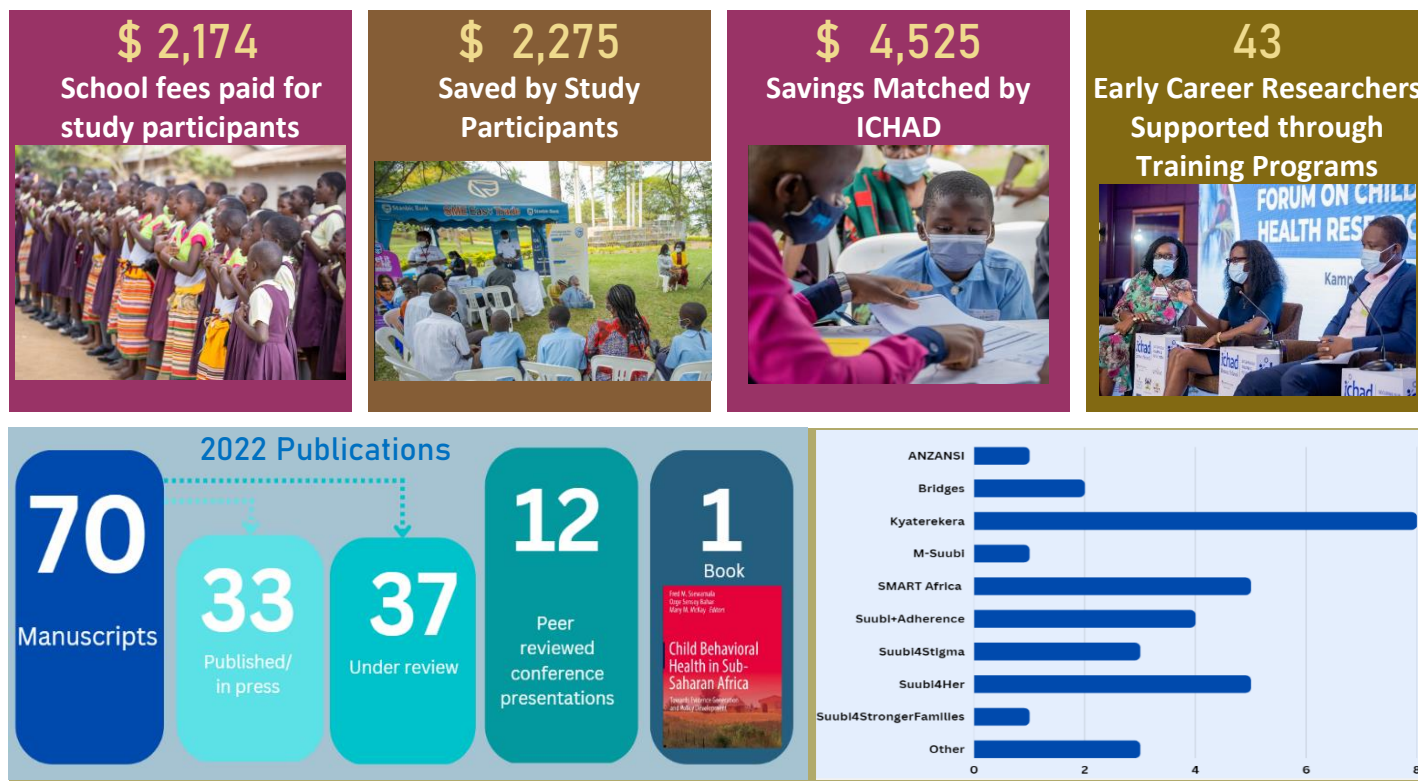
**Symposium & documentary film screening,
followed by a reception**

Screening of "Offering Hope"

For a complete list of anniversary events,
visit <http://ichad.wustl.edu/10th-anniversary-celebration>

ICHAD will bring together scientists, staff, collaborators, students, trainees, and research participants from across the Global North and Global South that have contributed at every stage towards our mission to reduce poverty and improve public health outcomes for children, adolescents, and families in low-resource communities. We look forward to celebrating with you!

ICHAD by the Numbers (2022)



Acknowledgments

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 go 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 Institute on Minority Health and Health Disparities, Fogarty International Center, and Barbara and Marc Arnold in Colorado, Washington University's Africa Initiative Pilot Grant Program, and the McDonnell International 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, Mildmay-Uganda, Centenary Bank, Stanbic Bank, Equity Bank, Masaka Catholic Diocese, and the district leaders across the seven geopolitical districts in the Greater Masaka region, members of our Community Collaborative Board, and Data and Safety Monitoring Boards, along with the Uganda Ministries of Health and Education, Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda, the International Rescue Commission-Uganda, as well as Makerere University, University of Ghana, University of Makeni, University of KwaZulu-Natal, University of Nairobi, and University of Rwanda. We are also grateful for our domestic collaborating partners, which include the Institute for School Partnership at Washington University in St. Louis, Boston College, Columbia University, New York University, University of California-Los Angeles, University of California-San Francisco, University of Chicago, University of Illinois-Chicago, University of Michigan, and University of North Carolina.

Our work would not be possible without the support of the teaching and administrative staff at each of the 77 participating schools in the greater Masaka region, health care workers and clinic staff at each of the collaborating 44 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, youth, 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 workshops and seminars in 2022. They include Susannah Allison, Alice Boateng, Rachel Braithwaite, William Byansi, Patricia Cavazos- Reh, Britton Clapp, April Conroy, Thomas Crea, Abdallah Ibrahim, Sean Joe, Mike Jones, Agatha Kafuko, Joseph Kalisa, Sooyoung Kim, Joshua Kiyangi, Agnes Kiragga, Samuel Kizito, Chenyang Lu, Thomas Lutalo, Edna Madu, Muthoni Mathai, Mary McKay, Robert Motley, Martin Muddu, James Mugisha, Barbara Mukasa, Massy Mutumba, Celestin Mutuyimana, Able Mwebembezi, Proscovia Nabunya, Noeline Nakasujja, Janet Nakigudde, John Naslund, Tor Neilands, Timothy Opobo, Hadiza Osuji, Gary Parker, Satabdi Samtani, Cathy Sarli, Janet Sekandi, Ozge Sensoy Bahar, Vincent Sezibera, Amy Suiter, Mordecai Tayebwa, Yesim Tozan, April Thames, and Vetta Thompson.

Fred Ssewamala Delivers Keynote Address at National Dissemination of the National Child-Focused Research Agenda and the Launch of the Knowledge Hub in Uganda

In July, key officials and stakeholders dedicated to health, education, and well-being of children and youth in Uganda gathered for the National Dissemination of the National Child-Focused Research Agenda and the Launch of the Knowledge Hub in Uganda. The National Child Focused Research Agenda 2022-2026 is the result of collaboration between the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and AfriChild Centre at Makerere University. The purpose of the research agenda is to provide a framework and guiding principles to agencies, groups, and institutions conducting child-centered research aimed at advancing survival, development, protection, and participation of all children in Uganda. The research agenda is designed to be used across sectors of health and education systems and structures, and to ensure the coordination of research efforts.

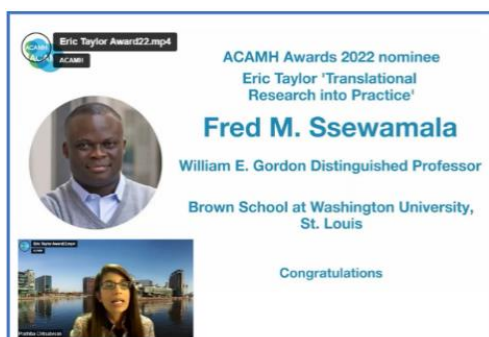


The keynote address was delivered by ICHAD Director Fred Ssewamala, who drew upon his experience growing up as an orphan in Uganda. He shared that his childhood inspired him to dedicate his life's work to understanding and alleviating the causes of poverty and related poor health and mental health outcomes among children in his country of origin. He spoke to the audience of government officials, university leaders, academic researchers, non-governmental organization leaders, and other advocates for child well-being about the issues faced by children in poverty in Uganda. He drew attention to the links between poverty and a host of health and developmental adverse outcomes and guided the audience through his approach to economic strengthening intervention research. Dr. Ssewamala also shared statistics illustrating the low percentage of funded research being conducted and published by researchers from Sub-Saharan Africa. He concluded with a call to the colleagues in the room to make a concerted effort to foster the development and capacity of the next generation of child and adolescent health researchers in Uganda and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Dr. Ssewamala's speech inspired a sense of urgency and instilled a new approach to addressing ongoing challenges for children and families in Uganda.

"Honestly speaking, all of us from all the Government Sectors were thrilled by the practical and very touching presentation that [Dr. Ssewamala] delivered. It brought the real practical issues that practically impact on children in Uganda that eventually derail them from excelling. Sincerely speaking, [his] presentation has since changed me. I now look at things from a totally different angle, my outlook is now beyond the policies and strategies that we put in place but the community and household interventions that directly benefit the vulnerable children and their caregivers."

**– Lydia Wasala Najjemba, Principal Probation Officer,
Department of Children and Youth Affairs, Uganda Ministry of Health**



The Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Award

In November 2022, ICHAD Founding director Fred Ssewamala was celebrated as a short list finalist for the Eric Taylor 'Translational Research into Practice' Award at the Association for Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ACAMH) 2022 Awards in London. He was further honored with the Highly Commended designation during the awards ceremony.

View the awards ceremony [video here](#).

Faculty Appointments of ICHAD Team

In 2022, ICHAD celebrated the promotion of three team members who received new faculty appointments. Dr. Proscovia Nabunya, ICHAD co-director, was appointed as an Assistant Professor on tenure track while Dr. Rachel Brathwaite, Senior Research Fellow and Data Analyst, and Dr. Nhial Tutlam, ICHAD Post-doctoral fellow, were appointed as Research Assistant Professors at the Brown School.



Dr. Proscovia Nabunya started as a project coordinator with ICHAD in 2004 in Rakai, Uganda. Originally from Uganda, she earned her MSW at St. Louis University in 2010 and her PhD in Social Work at University of Chicago in 2016. She completed the Provost's Post-Doctoral and Transitional Program for Academic Diversity Fellowship at New York University, where she held research and teaching positions. She has been a Research Assistant Professor at the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis since 2018 and co-director of ICHAD since 2019. She participated as a fellow in the inaugural cohort of

the Researcher Resilience Training (RRT) Program. With a global research agenda focused on HIV-stigma reduction interventions, mental health, family and community-based support systems as protective factors for the development and wellbeing of children and youth in low resource settings, she has authored or co-authored over 70 published manuscripts, and is an investigator on multiple NIH research studies and training grants.

"The past four years have been full of growth in terms of my scholarship, teaching and service. I look forward to building upon and extending this work, and most importantly, expanding my teaching and engaging with our students within the classroom and beyond."

– Dr. Proscovia Nabunya



Dr. Rachel Brathwaite is an alumna of ICHAD's RRT training program. She earned her MSc in Applied Epidemiology at University of Nottingham, UK and her PhD in Epidemiology and Population Health at London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine UK, in 2017, where she held a research assistant position. She has held postdoctoral positions at King's College London and the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis. Her academic research has offered

significant scientific contributions to improving the health of vulnerable populations, including developing models to predict future mental health challenges among adolescents in low- and middle-income countries including Nepal and Nigeria and Uganda.

"As a faculty member on the research track, I have the opportunity to develop and lead new research projects in my area of interest and use existing datasets to investigate and answer important research questions. I am grateful for this opportunity...to play a small role in advancing research that can contribute to improving mental and physical health among vulnerable youth in low-resource settings."

– Dr. Rachel Brathwaite



Dr. Nhial Tutlam, former LEAD trainee and current ACHIEVE trainee, was appointed to a Research Assistant Professor position at the Brown School, effective January 2023. Dr. Tutlam earned his BSc degree in biology from Tennessee State University and both his MPH and PhD degrees from Saint Louis University. He was mostly recently the Chronic Disease Epidemiology Program manager in the Division of Health Promotion and Public Health Research at Saint Louis County Department of Public Health, where he oversaw chronic diseases and mental health surveillance. He also served as the Project Director for

Project RESTORE, a four-year, \$1.7 million minority youth violence prevention project funded by the Office of Minority Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"We know people affected by conflict experience serious mental health challenges and we also know that there is significant association between mental disorders and HIV risk and low adherence to HIV medication, particularly among refugees. Unfortunately, this is a population that has been neglected in terms of research. As someone who was once a refugee, developing interventions to improve health outcomes among youth affected by conflict is something I am passionate about."

– Dr. Nhial Tutlam

Forum on Child and Adolescent Global Health and Capacity Building

Kampala and Masaka, Uganda

June 20-30, 2022

ICHAD and SMART Africa Center at Washington University in St. Louis hosted its sixth annual conference, the Forum on Child and Adolescent Global Health and Capacity Building in Kampala and Masaka, Uganda. After a two-year pause from in-person conferences due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Forum brought together vibrant global collaborators and key community and governmental partners from across the globe. All had a common motive of celebrating the launch of new NIH-funded research projects and the ACHIEVE research training program, acknowledging the accomplishments of our research trainees, providing research training sessions, and sharing results from ICHAD's multiple ongoing research projects focusing on child and adolescent mental health in the context of HIV, education, and economic security.



There were over 30 trainees from ICHAD's four NIH-funded research training programs—ACHIEVE, CHILD-GRF, LEAD, and RRT. Trainees, co-investigators, featured faculty presenters, implementing partners, and stakeholders joined the Forum from across Uganda, United States, Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, and other nations. Esteemed guests from the Ministry of Health Makerere University, USAID Mission in Uganda, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and District-level local government offices. Community representatives including school teachers and head teachers, parents, and community healthcare workers (CHWs) from several ICHAD research studies, religious leaders, NGO representatives, researchers, and potential collaborators were in attendance as well. To view the full Forum Report, [click here](#).

In addition to keynote addresses and remarks by distinguished guests, Forum activities included:

- Scientific panels featuring trainees from our four training programs and final presentations by the first cohort of CHILD-GRF
- Launch of four new NIH-funded research studies and the ACHIEVE global research training program
- Stakeholder meetings in which the ICHAD team presented research findings for both school-based and clinic-based studies
- Panel discussions featuring the perspectives of study participants
- Site visits to schools, health clinics, and community sites where ICHAD conducts intervention research, and participation in a community collaborative board meeting.



Keynotes & Remarks

**Hon. Dr. Jane Ruth Aceng, Uganda
Minister of Health**

**Prof. Barnabas Nawangwe, Vice
Chancellor, Makerere University**

**Mr. Richard Nelson, USAID Mission
Director, Uganda**

**Dr. Kurt Dirks, Global Vice Chancellor,
Washington University in St. Louis**

**Dr. UnJa Hayes, Program Official, NIH
Fogarty International Center**

**Rt. Rev. Bishop Serverus Jjumba,
Masaka Diocese**

**Hon. Florence Namayanja, Mayor of
Masaka City**

Capacity Building

Research Training Programs

Research training programs are integral in growing opportunities for the next generation of scholars to implement evidence-based interventions that support children, families, and communities in underserved areas. ICHAD's four current NIH-funded research-training programs are:

- 1) D43 ACHIEVE
- 2) D43 CHILD-Global Research Fellowship (CHILD-GRF)
- 3) T37 LEAD Global Training Program (LEAD)
- 4) R25 Researcher Resilience Training Program (RRT).

We were thrilled to add to our training program portfolio the highly competitive research training grant Launching Future Leaders in Global Health (LAUNCH) this year. It is in the NIH Fogarty International Center's flagship global research training program. With nine global institutional partners, ICHAD launched its new training program, ACHIEVE, and welcomed the first cohort of eight trainees from five countries.



Each training program has a unique research focus and career level eligibility as outlined on the next page. All are dedicated to supporting the next generation of researchers from underrepresented backgrounds in gaining the skills and networks needed to lead multi-disciplinary, collaborative research teams. In 2022 we were able to provide in-person, global engagement while also continuing to meet and learn remotely. In addition to attending didactic training and career development sessions, each of our 43 trainees were matched with a mentor from Washington University in St. Louis or from our numerous global partner institutions to develop a research project, analyze data, draft a manuscript or apply for their own research funding. This multipronged approach allows our trainees to expand their research and strengthen their networking skills. Building on the success of the virtual programming adapted in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2022 summer training curriculum combined online and in-person trainings and featured ten weeks of training sessions consisting of:

- Workshops
- Webinars
- Discussion panels
- Site visits
- Trainee-led sessions
- Training Sessions
- Meetings with mentors
- Trainee networking
- Peer review sessions
- Publication working meetings

In response to trainee feedback, the 2022 Summer curriculum included more peer-to-peer learning and professional networking opportunities as well as more interactive panel discussions. At the end of the summer training session, trainees gave final presentations sharing their progress and next steps for the research they initiated with their mentors. Many trainees continue to work with their mentors and other trainees across programs even after the conclusion of the formal training period, building on the work initiated and strengthened during the training period in their capacity as a researcher. For a full report on ICHAD's training and capacity building programs, please read the 2022 ICHAD Capacity Building Report.



<div> <div>  <p>Researcher Resilience Training (RRT)</p> <p>https://sites.wustl.edu/rrtraining</p> </div> <div>  <p>LEAD Global Training Program</p> <p>https://sites.wustl.edu/lead</p> </div> <div>  <p>CHILD Global Research Fellowship Washington University in St. Louis Makerere University</p> <p>https://sites.wustl.edu/childgrf</p> </div> <div>  <p>achieve</p> <p>https://sites.wustl.edu/achieve/</p> </div> </div>				
Directors	Mary McKay, Fred Ssewamala, Sean Joe	Fred Ssewamala, Patricia Cavazos-Rehg	Fred Ssewamala, Mary McKay, Noeline Nakasujja	Fred Ssewamala, Mary McKay
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	Dissemination, implementation and data sciences research to address global child, adolescent, and family health disparities and other health focus areas
Region	USA and Sub-Saharan Africa	USA and Sub-Saharan Africa	Uganda	Ghana, Kenya, Kosovo, Malawi, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tajikistan, Uganda, Zambia
Career Level	PhD, MD, or other doctoral students, postdocs, fellows, residents, early career faculty (advanced degree completed within 5 years of program start); other advanced pre-doctoral students		Advanced graduate-level student through early career faculty (advanced degree completed within 5 years of program start)	USA: PhD, MD, or other doctoral students through early career professionals within 6 years of completing terminal degree SSA: early career professionals who have completed terminal degree within 6 years
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	USA: U.S. citizen/permanent resident, Under-represented background SSA: Citizen of Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, or Uganda
Duration	1-year appointment (April-March)	10-week appointment (June-August)	3-year appointment (begins each June)	April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2027 (1 year appointment)
Timeline	1 week in person; on-going research/mentorship for 1 or 2 years	4 weeks in the USA; 6 weeks in a SSA research site	6-week summer training in USA over a three-year period; on-going research/mentorship	USA: 10-12 months in LMIC SSA: 2-3 months in US, 9-10 months LMIC
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	Fogarty International Center and National Institute for Child Health and Development: D43TW012275

Post-Doc Corner

We are grateful to host postdocs through the LEAD and ACHIEVE training programs. These individuals are immersed in the labs of Dr. Patricia Cavazos-Rehg and Dr. Fred Ssewamala conducting research on global mental health disparities among children and adolescents. They are extremely productive and collaborative team members who have brought their own experiences and knowledge in expanding our Center's reach. Highlighted below are our current postdoctoral fellows:



Nhial Tutlam, PhD, MPH
LEAD postdoctoral fellow (May 2021- June 2022)
ACHIEVE postdoctoral fellow (June 2022 –June 2023)

Research Focus: Intersection of multiple adversities such as conflict and the risk of serious mental health outcomes among refugee youth; and the intergenerational impact of war trauma among resettled refugees.



Lindsey Filiatreau, PhD, MPH
LEAD postdoctoral fellow (May 2021 - May 2023)

Research Focus: Mental health interventions to support improved treatment outcomes among people living with HIV in the Global South.



Melissa Reimer-McAtee, MD
ACHIEVE postdoctoral fellow (June 2022 - June 2023)

Research Focus: Management of persons living with HIV, parasitic infections, antimicrobial resistance, and the functioning of the microbiology lab in limited-resource settings.

ICHAD Staff Training, Professional Development, and Advancement

ICHAD-Uganda office saw a remarkable staff expansion of 11 new hires increasing our full-time staff total to 61. An exciting 18% growth rate. This accelerated growth is the result of Dr. Ssewamala tireless effort to encourage staff to further their education in pursuit of early research career development as seen below.

Throughout the year, the team participates in substantive training sessions and in social activities organized by collaborators, research partners and the community to foster strong team collaboration and community engagement.



ICHAD Uganda team members at a training meeting

2022 Educational achievements of ICHAD-Uganda staff

Number of staff	Advancement
1	Graduate fellow completion of PhD qualifying exam
2	Doctoral and Master's program enrollment at Wash U in St. Louis
4	Bachelors graduation from recognized Universities
4	Admission to Doctoral and Master's programs at Wash U for Fall 2023
9	Enrolled in Masters and Bachelors programs

Staff trainings during 2022 included performance enhancement sessions which were designed to address gaps in implementation of research activities and delivery of interventions, professional development training to equip staff with the relevant skills, career development at different levels and retreats to show case staff capabilities in their different roles and promote multitasking. Topics covered include:

Topic	Facilitator/Trainer
Good Clinical Practice on Human Subjects Protection	Dr. Samuel Kizito, PhD Student/Research Associate
Data Management sessions	Dr. Samuel Kizito, PhD Student/Research Associate
Conducting Qualitative Interviews, Translation and Transcription	Josephine Nabayinda, PhD Student/Research Associate and RRT Trainee, Scovia Nassaazi, Head of Qualitative Interviews
Coding Training	Dr. Ozge Sensoy Bahar, Dr. Proscovia Nabunya, and Dr. Samtani Satabdi
Financial Literacy Delivery Refresher Training	Jennifer Nattabi, PhD Student/Research Associate
Good Clinical Laboratory Practice	Mildmay Uganda
Counsellors' Refresher Training	Rebecca Walugembe, Training Programs Coordinator
Refresher Training on Administering Fidelity Assessment	Phionah Namatovu, Research Director, and Claire Najjuuko, Senior Data manager
Ebola Sensitization	Dr. Raymond Atwebembere, Study Coordinator
Refresher Training on Administering Ongoing Study Measures	Claire Najjuuko, Senior Data Manager
Refresher Training on Collection of Pill Counts and Clinic Records Data	Claire Najjuuko, Senior Data Manager, ICHAD Uganda
Obuvumu Study Sensitivity Training	Dr. Raymond Atwebembere, Study Coordinator
Good Clinical Practice on Human Subjects Protection	Dr. Samuel Kizito, PhD Student/Research Associate
Data Management sessions	Dr. Samuel Kizito, PhD Student/Research Associate
Conducting Qualitative Interviews, Translation and Transcription	Josephine Nabayinda, PhD Student/Research Associate and RRT Trainee, Scovia Nassaazi, Head of Qualitative Interviews

Research Projects

Newly Funded Studies

ICHAD was awarded funding for four new research studies in 2022. They offer a deeper and more complex analysis of multiple factors impacting the health and social well-being of children in low resource settings from previous studies.

Suubi+Adherence4Youth: Optimizing the Suubi Intervention for Adherence to HIV Treatment for Youth Living with HIV in Uganda (MOST) (2022-2027)

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) funded study Suubi+Adherence4Youth; will unpack and optimize the Suubi multi-component intervention using an engineering-inspired framework: Multi-Phase Optimization Strategy (MOST). The framework consists of:

- 1) Financial literacy training
- 2) Incentivized matched youth savings accounts with income-generating activities
- 3) Manualized intervention for ART adherence and stigma reduction
- 4) Engagement with HIV treatment-experienced role models who share lived experiences of HIV.

The study responds to calls for expanding differentiated care approaches for adolescents living with HIV (ALHIV) and new forms of HIV combination interventions by seeking to intervene in social and structural inequities that intensify the risk for high viral loads.

Principal Investigators: Fred Ssewamala, PhD; John Saucedo, PhD (University of California, San Francisco)

Project Team Members: Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Derek Brown, PhD; Rachel Brathwaite, PhD; Marya Gwadz, PhD (New York University)

Study Coordinators: Flavia Namuwonge, Allan Mugarura

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

Suubi-MHealth: A mobile health intervention to address depression and improve ART adherence among Youth living with HIV (YLHIV) in Uganda (2022-2024)

Funded by NIMH, Suubi-Mhealth will develop a mobile health intervention for use among Ugandan youth with comorbid HIV and depression taking into account their unique contextual, cultural, and developmental needs. The core of the intervention will be based on cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) tenets found to improve depression and treatment adherence among individuals living with HIV.

This study builds on a pilot study funded by Washington University's McDonnell International Scholar's Academy Global Incubator Seed Grant Program, awarded to Nabunya and Cavazos-Rehg, in collaboration with Makerere University in Uganda. It was implemented by the field office in Masaka, Uganda where the new study intervention will be implemented in two phases:

Phase I - Develop and refine the Suubi-Mhealth intervention protocol based on formative work to understand the needs of youth; and explore the feasibility and acceptability of implementing Suubi-Mhealth on a small scale.

Phase II - Pilot test the preliminary impact of Suubi-Mhealth on reducing depression, improving ART adherence and the mental health functioning of youth.

Principal Investigators: Proscovia Nabunya, PhD; Patricia Cavazos-Rehg, PhD; James Mugisha, PhD (Makerere University)

Project Team Members: Fred Ssewamala, PhD; Lindsey Filiatreau, PhD

Study Coordinators: Olive Imelda Namuyaba, Claire Najjuuko

In-Country Implementing Partner: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda)



Suubi+Adherence-R2 Administrative Supplement for Refugee Youth Population (2022-2024)

This study was awarded by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) as an administrative supplement that further develops the Suubi+Adherence-R2 study (2020-2025) in examining the longitudinal impact of HIV treatment outcomes among youth living with HIV (YLHIV) and transitioning into young adulthood in Uganda. While the parent grant led by Principal Investigators Ssewamala, Sensoy Bahar, and Nabunya focuses on Ugandan YLHIV, it does not include the refugee youth population. Yet, refugee youth in Uganda are at increased risk of both HIV transmission and infection due to settlement in high HIV prevalence areas, lack of knowledge about sexual and reproductive health in general, limited access to life saving antiretroviral treatment (ART), and mental health challenges from exposure to trauma in their native countries.

This added component aims to recruit refugee youth living with HIV (RYLHIV) to understand factors around access to and utilization of HIV treatment and adherence to treatment, trauma-associated disorders, psychological functioning, and sexual decision-making, which will contribute to our understanding of the dual public health threats of HIV and mental health among vulnerable refugee youth in Uganda.

Principal Investigators: Fred Ssewamala, PhD; Nhial Tutlam, PhD

Study Coordinator: Isaac Kwesiga

In-Country Research and Implementing Partners: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Noeline Nakasujja, PhD (Makerere University), David Opi (International Rescue Commission-Uganda)



“Although we have not worked with refugees before, we have been working with young people facing multiple adversities in Uganda for the last two decades. This funding will allow us to begin to understand the challenges facing this vulnerable population and to see how we can help address their particular problems through research.”
– Dr. Fred Ssewamala

Assessing the Feasibility of Economic Approaches to Prevent Substance Use among Adolescents (2022-2024)

Family-based economic empowerment interventions have the potential to prevent substance use among youths living with HIV by reducing poverty and its associated mental health impacts, and also bolstering youths’ and their families’ resources to overcome the challenges associated with HIV. However, few research studies have assessed alcohol and drug use among adolescents living with HIV in Uganda, yet this population is at higher risk for substance use. Substance use impedes adherence to anti-retroviral therapy, retention in care, and viral suppression.

This study, funded by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), will examine the prevalence and consequences of substance use in a sample of 200 adolescents and youths (ages 18-24) seen at HIV clinics located in the fishing communities of southwestern Uganda. A mixed methods approach will be used to identify the multi-level (individual, interpersonal, community and structural) factors associated with substance use among adolescents and youths living with HIV. It will explore the feasibility and short-term effects of an economic empowerment intervention on substance use among adolescents and youths living with HIV.

Principal Investigators: Rachel Brathwaite, PhD, and Massy Mutumba, PhD (University of Michigan)

Project Team Members: Fred Ssewamala, PhD; Lindsey Filiatreau, PhD

Study Coordinators: Betina Nabisere, Phionah Namatovu, Claire Najjuuko, Herbert Migadde

In-Country Research and Implementing Partners: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); James Mugisha, PhD (Makerere University)

Say No to Stigma Round 2: Pilot Testing the Impact of Visuals Designed to Reduce Mental Health Stigma among Primary School Students in Uganda (2022-2023)

The widespread misconceptions on mental illness and mental health stigma among children negatively impact their health-seeking behaviors, self-esteem, and social inclusion. This fosters a social climate of stigma among youth, who are then reluctant to seek help. Using visuals, co-created with the target audience, can be effective communication tools to address mental health stigma within schools. However, no such interventions exist in schools in Uganda.



“Say No to Stigma-Round 2” is the second phase of Washington University’s Africa Initiative-funded study: Say No to Stigma Round 1. Round 1 involved a set of visual solutions focused on mental health awareness and stigma. It was created in collaboration with primary school students in Uganda. During the meeting, students engaged in developing environmental signage, posters, and comics related to mental health. The second phase is funded by the [Global Incubator SEED Grant from McDonnell International Scholars Academy](#) at Washington University in St. Louis. The goal is to pilot test the impact of the visual solutions developed during Round 1 on increasing mental health awareness and reducing mental health stigma among children in primary schools.

Principal Investigators: Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD, Penina Acayo Laker, MFA, and Proscovia Nabunya, PhD

In-Country Collaborator: Noeline Nakasujja, PhD (Makerere University)

Study Coordinator: Scovia Nassaazi

Collaboration on Book Publication

In February 2022, ICHAD, SMART Africa, and the Brown School at Washington University in St. Louis launched a groundbreaking book titled *Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: Towards Evidence Generation and Policy Development*, co-edited by Dr. Fred Ssewamala, Dr. Ozge Sensoy Bahar, and Vice Provost Mary McKay. The twelve-chapter book includes the work of more than 40 contributors from North America and Africa who have years of extensive research into child behavioral health in Sub-Saharan Africa. The book is the first to focus exclusively on child behavioral health in Sub-Saharan Africa and highlights the current state of policy and research evidence both in the region as a whole and in country-specific contexts. “Since the majority of Sub-Saharan Africans are under 21 ... this ‘youth bulge’ merits study to better understand the social and behavioral landscape of African children and adolescents, which will, in turn, dictate how this impressionable population becomes economic drivers and global leaders” (Read more [here](#)).



Ongoing Research Projects

Bridges-R2 (2022-2026)



Participants being assisted by Research Assistants in signing consent forms



A participant being interviewed at the ICHAD satellite site in Kampala

Bridges to the Future study (R01HD070727, 2012-2018) tested a family-based economic intervention among 1,383 primary school-going adolescents orphaned by HIV in rural Uganda. The subsequent study, 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, it will address two critical policy and programming topics related to HIV prevention and engagement in care continuum that remain unaddressed:

- 1) longer-term effectiveness of *Bridges* across 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 (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.

Bridges- R2 At-a-glance

1054 participants confirmed their re-engagement.

799 participants re-consented from 48 schools

794 assessments completed, including testing for biomarkers.

2 publications in 2022

"I wouldn't have studied beyond primary five if it wasn't for Suubi. Through the accounts, I had some money to pay school fees. I pray the almighty God blesses Professor Ssewamala for the support of the little English I can speak."
— Bridges R2 study participant

"When my mother passed on, I thought my world had ended but when Suubi came, I gained hope because they used to counsel us and those words have kept us moving. God bless you so much."
— Bridges R2 study participant

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 and Implementing Partners: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Barbara Mukasa, MBChB (Mildmay-Uganda); Noeline Nakasujja, PhD (Makerere University)

Field Coordinators: Winnie Kirabo, Phionah Namatovu

M-Suubi (2021-2026)



Educators from Kyotera District Meet with ICHAD Staff after a GED-HIVSR Session



Educators from Masaka District engage in a breakout discussion during a GED-HIVSR session

M-Suubi At-a-glance

462 adolescents (10-17 years) screened for eligibility

293 dyads recruited

53 Matched Savings accounts opened for participants

2 publications in 2022

M-Suubi (R01MH126892) is a five-year study (2021- 2026) funded by NIMH. It examines the impact of a multilevel intervention combining group-based HIV stigma reduction training for educators (GED-HIVSR), multiple family groups (MFGs) for HIV stigma reduction (MFG-HIVSR). The GED-HIVSR is a school level-intervention targeting educators (teachers, school nurses, administrators) in schools where adolescents in the treatment 2 arm of the study are enrolled. GED-HIVSR sessions seek to empower educators to reduce enacted HIV stigma and build supportive structures for adolescents living with HIV within their schools. The study also incorporates 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 was launched in the community in June 2022 at Kimaanya Catholic Church grounds in Masaka City, Uganda, where the study team hosted a stakeholders meeting. Stakeholders in attendance included the Bishop of Masaka Catholic Diocese, Masaka City Mayor, five Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), three District Health Officers, four District Chairpersons (LCVs) from the study districts (Masaka, Lwengo, Kyotera, Rakai, Lyantonde, and Bukomansimbi) and nine Community Health Workers (CHWs) and Parent Peers (PP) who facilitate the Multiple Family Group (MFG) Intervention sessions. The research team recruited participants, collected viral load data, and delivered 10 MFG sessions, 4 Financial Literacy Training sessions and 5 Group-Based HIV Stigma Reduction (GED-HIVSR) sessions.

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

Study Consultants: Torsten Neilands, PhD (University of California – San Francisco); Yesim Tozan, PhD (New York University); Dr. James Mugisha, PhD (Kyambogo University); Deborah Padgett (New York University)

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

Study Coordinators: Rashida Namirembe, Jennifer Nattabi



An MFG Session being delivered at Lwanda Health Center III

Suubi4Stronger Families (2022-2027)



Bishop Serverus Jjumba, Hon. Florence Namayanja and Dr. Fred Ssewamala witnessing the accounts opening process for one of the participants in the Suubi4Stronger families study



A peer parent delivering an MFG session at Kyotera Primary School

Suubi4Stronger Families (R01MH128905) addresses child behavioral health by strengthening financial stability and parenting among families in Uganda. It is a five-year NIMH funded study that examines 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. This study utilizes 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 interventions will be provided for 12 months; and assessments will occur at baseline, 12, 24 and 36 months. The three study conditions are:

- 1) EE only
- 2) MFG-based FS only
- 3) Combined EE+MFG-based FS

A stakeholder meeting for the study was held in July 2022, which was attended by various community partners, government officials, and 50 study participants and their caregivers/parents, head teachers and classroom teachers from 13 study schools, and 9 Community Health Workers (CHW) and parent peers (PP) who will be facilitating the Multiple Family Group (MFG) intervention sessions.

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)

Study Coordinators: Phionah Namatovu, Joshua Kiyangi

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

Suubi4Stronger Families At-a-Glance

778 participants screened for recruitment

350 participants recruited across 9 schools

\$976 saved by participants

\$1,735 in matched savings disbursed

238 bank accounts opened for participants

1 publication in 2022

Kyaterekera Project (2018-2023)



A CCB member sharing their views during a CCB meeting



Women representatives and ICHAD Staff Members during a CCB Meeting

Through a combination of economic empowerment and HIV Risk Reduction (HIVRR) sessions, the Kyaterekera Project aims to reduce new incidences of sexually transmitted infections and HIV among women engaged in sex work in Uganda.

The research team conducted follow-up interviews with participants. They also held three meetings with the Community Collaborative Board (CCB) to receive feedback regarding three separate manuscripts being developed out of the Kyaterekera study. The CCB consists of community leaders and women engaged in sex work. The team held a fourth annual meeting with the Data and Safety Monitoring Board (DSMB) to update members on the progress of the study.

Funder: National Institute of Mental Health
Principal Investigators: Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD; Susan Witte, PhD
Project Team Members: Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Larissa Jennings Mayo-Wilson, PhD; Joseph Kagaayi, PhD; Proscovia Nabunya PhD; Yesim Tozan, PhD
Field Coordinators: Edward Nsubuga; Josephine Nabayinda, MSC
Research Collaborators: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda)

Kyaterekera Project At-a-Glance

347 participants completed follow up quantitative assessments in wave 4
732 boxes/cartons of condoms distributed
80% of participants among 154 had viral load suppression
120 face masks distributed
\$3,875 saved by participants
7 publications in 2022

Suubi+Adherence-R2 (2020-2025)

Suubi+Adherence-R2 At-a-Glance

573 participants from the original study re-consented
545 participants completed wave 7 assessments
538 participants completed cognitive functioning tests
3 publications in 2022

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. It includes cognitive functioning and their ability to access and refill prescribed medication, adherence to prescribed daily medication routines, and engagement in HIV care such as keeping medical appointments.

Pill count data has been collected for 476 participants, and 429 clinic data records have been obtained during the current wave 7 data collection.

The second phase of the study has also conducted qualitative interviews from 54 (Time 1) and 48 (Time2) returning participants.

Funder: Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institutes of Child Health & Human Development (NICHD)

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

Project Team Members: Rachel Brathwaite, PhD; Derek Brown, PhD; Shenyang Guo, PhD; Claude Mellins, PhD; Torsten Neilands, PhD; John Santelli, PhD; April Denise Thames, PhD

Field Coordinators: Phionah Namatovu

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



Obuvumu (2022-2024)

Obuvumu is a mixed methods study that sets out to improve health services uptake for survivors of sexual violence. The study seeks to understand the barriers to using health services by survivors of sexual violence, which will inform a Discrete Choice Experiment in order to guide the co-design of a user-centered intervention.

Prior to study implementation, the team carried out site visits with 37 selected local councils to meet with stakeholders. This included local council chairpersons, secretaries for women and children's affairs, officers in charge of child and family protection unit, and officers in charge of Stations.



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



ICHAD Staff members meet with women secretaries after the Sensitivity Training

The study team conducted a staff sensitivity training to equip the field team with the necessary ethical knowledge and skills required to work with the vulnerable population of sexual violence survivors. The training was attended by 3 women secretaries, the officer in charge (OC), child and protection unit, Masaka District, and 43 ICHAD staff members. The women secretaries and OC attended the training to provide a contextual input of how to interact with survivors of sexual violence.

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)

Field Coordinators: Raymond Atwebembere, Gertrude Nabbosa

"There is a lot of violence in homes, caused by poverty, hunger and alcohol abuse. It escalated during COVID-19 period-and it has not calmed down since then. Men neglected their homes, fights every now and then resulting into a lot of failed marriages."

– Obuvumu Women Secretary Participant

Concluding Research Projects

Suubi4Her (2017-2023)



The Suubi4Her is a 5-year study that examined 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 sought to reduce the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for this critical demographic.

In June 2022, the team held a stakeholders meeting to disseminate study findings. The meeting held at Hotel Brovad, Masaka was attended by the Bishop of Masaka Catholic Diocese, Masaka City Mayor, three Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), three District Education Officers (DEOs), and three District Chairpersons (LCVs) from the study districts (Masaka, Rakai, Kalungu, Lwengo and Kyotera). Study participants and their caregivers/parents, head teachers and contact teachers from participating schools and Community Health Workers (CHWs) participated. Parent Peers (PP) who facilitated the Multiple Family Group (MFG) intervention sessions along with study teams from USA and Uganda also attended.

“People in our communities faced a lot of family violence during the COVID-19 period, but no family in our group of Amaka Amasanyufu registered any violence, we are so grateful. The Amaka Amasanyufu sessions, enabled respectful communication in their home and improved family relationships.”
– Guardian from Suubi4Her Study

Suubi4Her At-a-Glance (2017-2022)

1,260 participants across 47 schools

690 opened matched savings accounts

\$19,670 saved by participants

\$16,382 in matched savings

4 publications

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

Study Coordinator:

Flavia Namuwonge

In-Country Research & Implementing Partners

Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda); Rev. Fr. Kato Bakulu (Masaka Diocese); Gertrude Nakigozi, MBChB, PhD (Rakai Health Sciences Program)

Suubi4Stigma (2020-2022)



Suubi4Stigma examined the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary impact of two evidence-based interventions, group cognitive behavioral therapy (G-CBT), and multiple family group (MFG) in addressing HIV/AIDS-associated stigma among adolescents (aged 10-14 years) living with HIV in Uganda. This three-arm pilot randomized clinical trial was conducted across 9 health clinics in the greater Masaka region of Uganda. Clinics were randomized to one of three study arms:

- 1) Usual care
- 2) G-CBT intervention + Usual care
- 3) MFG intervention + Usual care.

"I learnt that even if I go through all kinds of stigma at school, I will not spend time crying because I realize that it's not only me living with the virus, there are other people like those in the book that are even older and still responsible and respected."

– Suubi4Stigma Study Participant

Suubi4Stigma At-a-Glance (2020-2022)

- 147** dyads screened for eligibility
- 89** child-caregiver dyads recruited
- 24** adolescents participated in G-CBT sessions
- 31** families participated in MFG sessions
- 2** publications

Funder: National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
Principal Investigators: Proscovia Nabunya, PhD;
Fred M. Ssewamala, PhD
Project Team Members: Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD; Jean-Francois Trani, PhD; James Mugisha, PhD (Makerere University)
Study Coordinator: Herbert Migadde
In-Country-Implementing Partner: Abel Mwebembezi, PhD (Reach the Youth-Uganda)



Anzansi Study (2019-2022)



In-country PI Alice Boateng presenting study results at the stakeholders meeting

The Anzansi Family Program is a two-year study that tested the feasibility of an innovative combination intervention program amongst adolescent girls at risk of dropping out of school in Northern Ghana. Anzansi means *resilience* in the local language of Northern Ghana. It sought to address the increasing numbers of unaccompanied minors migrating from rural to urban areas searching for better economic opportunities by promoting financial stability and strengthening family relations. Child development outcomes were also evaluated, including school attendance, intention to independently migrate, family financial stability, psychosocial and mental health functioning, and family cohesion.

Over the 9-month intervention period, participants saved 18,450 Ghana Cedis (USD \$3,000) in total and participants' total savings were matched at 30,980 Ghana Cedis (USD \$5,037). The ANZANSI Family Program was highly acceptable to both adolescent girls and their caregivers. A stakeholders meeting was organized in November and attended by the leadership of the ten schools that participated in the study, local policymakers, study participants, intervention facilitators, implementation partners, the bank representatives and the Northern Regional Queen Mothers Association President. All data collection was completed in June 2022.

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)

Anzansi Study At-a-Glance (2019-2022)

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

47 families receive MFG sessions and Family Economic Empowerment training sessions

95 percent attendance rate across 22 intervention sessions

\$3,000 saved by participants

\$5,037 matched saving

2 publications

Collaborations Corner

Youth Health SMS - Using Mobile Technology to Prevent HIV and Related Youth Health Problems: Sexual Health, Mental Health, and Substance Use in Southwest Uganda (2020-2025)

Youth Health SMS (YHSMS) examines the use of mobile technology to prevent HIV and related youth health problems such as sexual health, mental health, and substance use in southwest Uganda. This two-arm pilot randomized clinical trial is being conducted in 2 phases in secondary schools that participated in the Suubi4Her study. Phase II plans to recruit 200 participants based on the feedback from the Phase I FDGs. Participant access the study messages by dialing 161 for 5 days, after which they participated in focus group discussions and shared their experiences on the study messages. The participants assessed 5 categories of messages, which include messages about PrEP, depression, anxiety, HIV testing, and alcohol. In June 2022, the team shared preliminary research findings and progress at the Annual stakeholders meeting in Masaka, Uganda, attended by selected study participants, representatives from schools, religious leaders, health officials, as well as government representatives from the study region.

Funder:	National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)
Principal Investigators:	Philip Kreniske, PhD (Columbia University); Co-I: Fred Ssewamala
Field Coordinator:	Olive Imelda Namuyaba
Research Collaborators:	Reach the Youth-Uganda, Strong Minds and VIAMO

Ongoing and Concluded Collaborations

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

STUDY	FOCUS	COLLABORATORS
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)

Visiting Fellow – Dr. Leyla Karimli



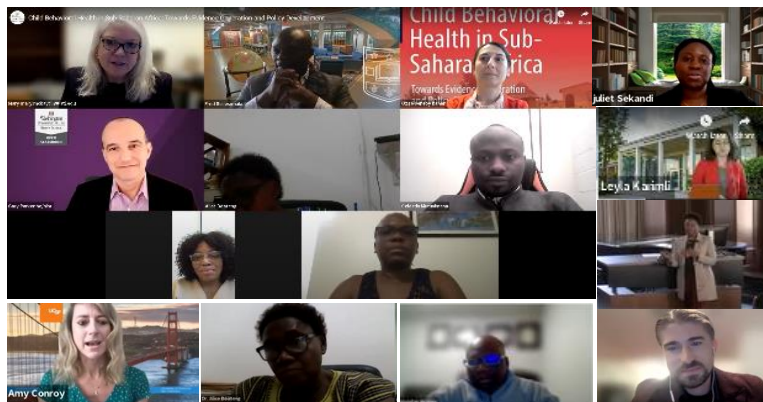
ICHAD welcomed visiting fellow, Dr. Leyla Karimli, Assistant Professor at the Social Welfare Department, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. She spent part of her sabbatical in residence with ICHAD, working on several collaborations with Dr. Fred Ssewamala and members of ICHAD's research team. Dr. Karimli has over 13 years of international research and practice experience focusing on poverty and social exclusion, including working with international development agencies in the former Soviet Union and Sub-Saharan Africa. She has multiple works produced in collaboration with colleagues from ICHAD, UCLA, University of Chicago, and University of Antwerp, aiming to understand the specific mechanisms through which economic strengthening interventions affect children's wellbeing.

“As a global poverty scholar, I feel very empowered by partnering with ICHAD and their stellar team. The ethos embodied by ICHAD – conducting research that transcends the rarefied world of academia and makes a real impact on children and their families – sets a standard for how vital and tangible our work is and can be.”

– Dr. Leyla Karimli

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. A talented host of faculty experts from the US, Sub-Saharan Africa, and other regions of the globe shared their work. Video recordings of their presentation are [available online](#).



2022 ICHAD/SMART Africa Speakers Series

<u>Interventions to Address Stigma and Mental Health Challenges among Children and Families in Low Resources Settings: Implications for Public Health</u>	Proscovia Nabunya, PhD Assistant Professor, Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis Co-sponsored with Brown School Public Health Speaker Series
<u>Digital Innovations for Improving the Lives of People Living with Mental Illness Globally</u>	John Naslund, PhD Instructor of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School
<u>Economic Strengthening Interventions among Caregivers in Sub-Saharan Africa: Underlying Mechanisms of Its Effects</u>	Leyla Karimli, PhD Assistant Professor, University of California, Los Angeles Visiting Fellow, ICHAD, Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis
<u>Harnessing the Power of Digital Technology to Support and Improve Treatment Outcomes in Patients with Tuberculosis Disease in Uganda</u>	Juliet Sekandi, M.D, M.S, DrPH Assistant Professor, the Global Health Institute and the Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of Georgia, College of Public Health
<u>Dropping the Head-Pan for Better Educational Opportunities: The Case of Girls in Northern Ghana at Risk of Dropping out of School for Child Labor</u>	Alice Boateng, PhD Senior Lecturer at the Department of Social Work, University of Ghana Abdallah Ibrahim, DrPH Senior Lecturer at the School of Public Health, University of Ghana
<u>Virtual Book Launch of “Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: Towards Evidence Generation and Policy Development”</u>	Fred Ssewamala, PhD William E. Gordon Distinguished Professor, Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis Mary McKay, PhD Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Initiatives, Washington University in St. Louis Ozge Sensoy Bahar, PhD Research Assistant Professor, Brown School, Washington University in St. Louis
<u>Leveraging the Couple Relationship to Improve HIV Treatment Outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa</u>	Amy Conroy, PhD Associate Professor, Division of Prevention Science and the Center for AIDS Prevention Studies, University of California San Francisco

Presentation

Dr. Proscovia Nabunya Featured in National Institute of Mental Health CGMHR Webinar Series

The National Institute of Mental Health's Center for Global Mental Health Research (CGMHR) hosted a webinar in September, focusing on establishing an independent career in global mental health research. The webinar included an overview of the CGMHR's funding priorities, current funding opportunities, and advice from researchers who have successfully transitioned to become independent researchers in global mental health research. Among the featured researchers was ICHAD Co-Director and Assistant Professor at Washington University in St. Louis, Dr. Proscovia Nabunya. Dr. Nabunya and other panelists shared advice to emerging researchers on a variety of topics including specific guidance on conducting mental health research in international contexts, working with mentors to advance one's career, and creating work-life balance. View the full recording of the webinar [here](#).



Presentations at Global Conferences

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



Title	ICHAD Study	Presenter
26th Annual Conference Anniversary Celebration - Society for Social Work and Research (SSWR)		
The Relationship between Family Cohesion and Depression Among School Going Children with Elevated Symptoms of Behavioral Challenges in Southern Uganda	SMART Africa	Josephine Nabayinda
The Longitudinal Impact of an Evidence-Based Multiple Family Group Intervention (Amaka Amasanyufu), on Child Behavioral Outcomes in Uganda: The SMART Africa Uganda Study (2016-2021)	SMART Africa	Rachel Brathwaite
Low Levels of Adherence to Antiretroviral Therapy Among Adolescents Living with HIV in Southern Uganda: Understanding Key Contributing Factors	Suubi+Adherence	Samuel Kizito
Self-Reported Adherence to Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Among Women Engaged in Commercial Sex Work in Southern Uganda	Kyaterekera	Joshua Kiyingi
Testing Reciprocal Relationships between Perceived Social Support, Self-Concept, and Depression Among Adolescents Orphaned By AIDS in Uganda: A Cross-Lagged Structural Equation Model	Suubi-Maka	Moses Okumu
Gender and HIV-Related Stigma Among Caregivers of Children Orphaned By HIV/AIDS in Uganda	Suubi-Maka	Proscovia Nabunya
Financial Diaries as a Data Collection Tool Among Women Engaged in Sex Work in Uganda	Kyaterekera	Lyla Yang
2022 APHA Annual Meeting in Boston		
Predictors of Mobility among Women Engaged in Commercial Sex Work in Uganda using Generalized Estimating Equations Model	Kyaterekera	Joshua Kiyingi
Inconsistent condom use among female sex workers: Findings from Kyaterekera study, a randomized control trial in Southwestern Uganda	Kyaterekera	Josephine Nabayinda
Other Conferences		
Mediation Analysis for the Effect of Family Responsibility on ART Adherence among Adolescents Perinatally infected with HIV in Uganda. The 17th International Conference on HIV Treatment and Prevention Adherence (Adherence 2022)	Suubi+Adherence	Samuel Kizito
<u>Impact of economic empowerment on ART adherence in HIV-positive adolescents in Uganda</u> (Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections Conference)	Suubi+Adherence	Samuel Kizito

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 2022
ANZANSI	“ANZANSI Program Taught Me Many Things in Life”: Families’ Experiences with a Combination Intervention to Prevent Adolescent Girls’ Unaccompanied Migration for Labor . Bahar, O. S.; Boateng, A.; Nartey, P. B.; Ibrahim, A.; Kumbelim, K.; Nabunya, P.; Ssewamala, F. M.; McKay, M. M. <i>Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health</i> .
Bridges	Self-Efficacy, Academic Performance and School Transition Among Orphaned Adolescents in Southern Uganda . Nabunya, P., Byansi, W., Damulira, C., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i> . Social Support Networks for Adolescents Orphaned by HIV: Definitions, Barriers, Challenges and Lessons from Uganda . Nabunya, P. <i>Vulnerable Children and Youth Studies</i> .
Kyaterekera	Economic abuse and care-seeking practices for HIV and financial support services in women employed by sex work: a cross-sectional baseline assessment of a clinical trial cohort in Uganda . Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Yen, B. J., Nabunya, P., Bahar, O. S., Wright, B. N., Kiyingi, J., Tozan, Y., Nabayinda, J., Witte, S. S., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>Journal of Interpersonal Violence</i> . “I expected little, although I learned a lot”: perceived benefits of participating in HIV risk reduction sessions among women engaged in sex work in Uganda . Bahar, O. S., Nabunya, P., Nabayinda, J., Witte, S. S., Kiyingi, J., Mayo-Wilson, L. J., Filippone, P., Yang, L. S., Nakigudde, J., Tozan, Y., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>BMC Women’s Health</i> . Self-Reported Adherence to Antiretroviral Therapy (ART) Among Women Engaged in Commercial Sex Work in Southern Uganda . Kiyingi, J., Nabunya, P., Kizito, S., Nabayinda, J., Nsubuga, E., Bahar, O. S., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Namuwonge, F., Nattabi, J., Magorokosho, N., Tozan, Y., Witte, S. S., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>AIDS and Behavior</i> . Factors Associated with Consistent Condom Use Among Women Engaged in Sex Work: Lessons From the Kyaterekera Study in Southwestern Uganda . Nabayinda, J., Kizito, S., Witte, S., Nabunya, P., Kiyingi, J., Namuwonge, F., Nsubuga, E., Bahar, O. S., Mayo-Wilson, L. J., Yang, L. S., Nattabi, J., Magorokosho, N., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>AIDS and Behavior</i> . Prevalence and predictors of HIV and sexually transmitted infections among vulnerable women engaged in sex work: Findings from the Kyaterekera Project in Southern Uganda . Kiyingi, J., Nabunya, P., Bahar, O. S., Mayo-Wilson, L. J., Tozan, Y., Nabayinda, J., Namuwonge, F., Nsubuga, E., Kizito, S., Nattabi, J., Nakabuye, F., Kagayi, J., Mwebembezi, A., Witte, S. S., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>PLoS ONE</i> . Does asset ownership influence sexual risk-taking behaviors among women engaged in sex work in Southern Uganda? A Mediation Analysis . Nabayinda, J., Kiyingi, J., Samuel Kizito, Nsubuga, E., Nabunya, P., Bahar, O. S., Magorokosho, N., Nattabi, J., Witte, S., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>BMC Women’s Health</i> . PrEP Acceptability and Initiation Among Women Engaged in Sex Work in Uganda: Implications for HIV Prevention . Witte, S., Filippone, P., Ssewamala, F. M., Nabunya, P., Bahar, O. S., Jennings Mayo-Wilson, L., Namuwonge, F., Damulira, C., Tozan, Y., Kiyingi, J., Nabayinda, J., Mwebembezi, A., Kagaayi, J., & McKay, M. <i>eClinical Medicine</i> .
M-Suubi	A Multilevel Integrated Intervention to Reduce the Impact of HIV Stigma on HIV Treatment Outcomes Among Adolescents Living With HIV in Uganda: Protocol for a Randomized Controlled Trial . Mutumba, M., Ssewamala, F. M., Namirembe, R., Bahar, O. S., Nabunya, P., Neilands, T., Tozan, Y., Namuwonge, F., Nattabi, J., Acayo Laker, P., Mukasa, B., & Mwebembezi, A. <i>JMIR Research Protocols</i> .
SMART Africa	Costing of a Multiple Family Group Strengthening Intervention (SMART-Africa) to Improve Child and Adolescent Behavioral Health in Uganda . Tozan, Y., Capasso, A., Namatovu, P., Kiyingi, J., Damulira, C., Nabayinda, J., Bahar, O. S., McKay, M. M., Hoagwood, K. & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>The American Journal of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene</i> . Family-level correlates of disruptive behavior challenges among children in Southwestern Uganda . Byansi, W., Namatovu, P., Bahar, O. S., Kiyingi, J., Nabayinda, J., Mwebembezi, A., Damulira, C., Nattabi, J., Namuwonge, F., McKay, M. M., Hoagwood, K. & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>Children and Youth Services Review</i> . The longitudinal impact of an evidence-based multiple family group intervention (Amaka Amasanyufu) on oppositional defiant disorder and impaired functioning among children in Uganda: analysis of a cluster randomized trial from the SMART Africa-Uganda scale-up study (2016-2022) . Brathwaite, R., Ssewamala, F. M., Bahar, O. S., McKay, M. M., Neilands, T. B., Namatovu, P., Kiyingi, J., Zmachinski, L., Nabayinda, J., Huang, K. Y., Kivumbi, A., Bhana, A., Mwebembezi, A., Petersen, I., Hoagwood, K., & SMART Africa - Uganda Field Team. <i>Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, and Allied Disciplines</i> .
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Suubi4Stronger Families	Suubi4StrongerFamilies: A study protocol for a clustered randomized clinical trial addressing child behavioral health by strengthening financial stability and parenting among families in Uganda . Ssewamala, F. M., McKay, M. M., Bahar, O. S., Nabunya, P., Neilands, T., Kiyingi, J., Namatovu, P., Guo, S., Nakasujja, N. & Mwebembezi, A. <i>Front Psychiatry</i> .
Other	What can academic researchers contribute to advancing adolescent wellbeing? Santelli, J. S., Rosen, G., & Ssewamala, F. M. <i>BMJ</i> .

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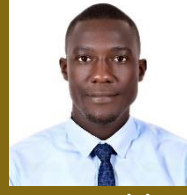
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"I am thankful for a year full of growth and learning. I have grown professionally, socially, and academically. I appreciate the opportunity I have been given to lead others and to manage the data activities at ICHAD. I am excited for the new journey as I head out to do my PhD in Data and Computational Science."

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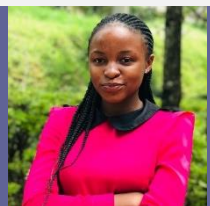
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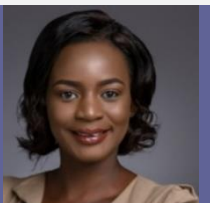
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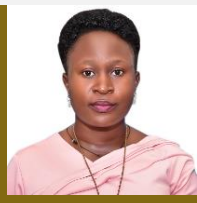
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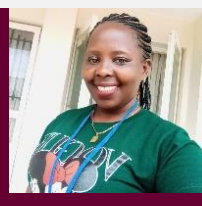
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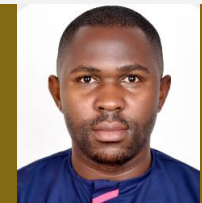
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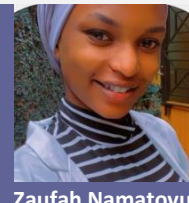
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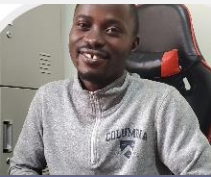
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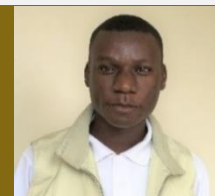
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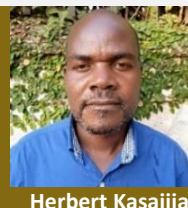
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I want to have a positive impact on those who need help. I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of a profession that reaches out to our most vulnerable populations and strives to make a difference in so many lives.

– Herbert Migadde, Study Coordinator

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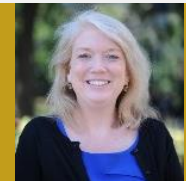
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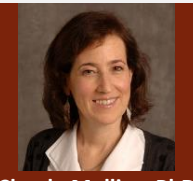
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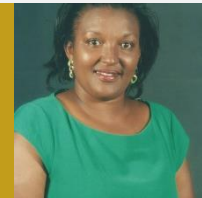
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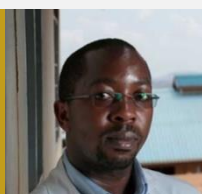
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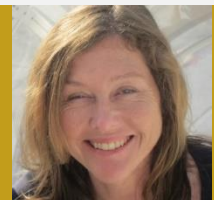
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