

H3Africa Community Engagement Training Workshop

September 15-16, 2014, Accra - Ghana

Scope

Community engagement, in broad terms, is a multi-faceted process of working collaboratively with a specific group or groups of people on a shared goal or common interest. In the context of health research, this may involve a range of activities and interactions between researchers and members of communities that are affected by or involved in research (please see *H3A Community Engagement Guidelines*).

Genomics research in Africa raises a host of ethical issues, some of which are unique to the continent and its people, and others of which are similar to issues previously raised elsewhere in the world. One of the primary challenges facing H3Africa investigators relates to informed consent. However, community engagement can be equally critical for the ethical conduct of research. A specific H3Africa Working Group Working Group on Ethics, which is composed from representatives of each of the H3Africa funded research projects, has developed guidelines for Community Engagement to support researchers design an appropriate community engagement process. However, to build best community engagement practices across study performance sites, the H3Africa Consortium would like to hold a Community Engagement Training Workshop for study investigators in the Consortium.

Workshop objectives

The objective of this workshop is to provide a platform for H3Africa research projects to learn and share best practices of community engagement strategies and to work towards effective models that can support genomic studies on the continent.

The purpose of the training workshop is not, to prescribe a certain form of engagement for H3Africa investigators. Rather, the purpose is to introduce the basic principles and means of engagement to enable H3Africa investigators to develop an engagement strategy that is appropriate to their project and research setting.

Target Participants

Participants at the workshop will be investigators involved in community engagement activities in the H3A projects. Facilitators will be drawn from international speakers who have experience and expertise in community engagement in the context of genetic and genomic research in Africa.

Workshop Format

To achieve these goals in multiple sites, on a sustainable manner, the workshop is designed to be performed in a train the trainer format, so that the participants of the workshop will be able return and perform a similar training with members of their research team and thus leverage the training so that all members of the H3Africa Consortium receive the information given by the workshop.

The training workshop will include plenary sessions on community engagement, informed consent, ethical issues surrounding recruitment and biobanking. Selected H3A projects will be invited to make presentations on their community engagement strategies, what works and the challenges encountered. This will enable participants to shares experiences on how community engagement works in practice.

There will also be small group discussions, where participants will be split into groups to have in depth discussions on specific topics related to community engagement. At the end of each group discussion, representatives from each group will present a summary of the discussion for additional discussion and feedback.