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Regional Networks of Excellence in Africa



Workshop Report

What does it take to be a good Research Leader?

26 and 27 May 2022

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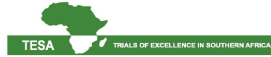


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Introduction

On the 26th and 27th of May 2022, The Global Health Network supported a two-day virtual workshop on “*What does it take to be a good Research Leader?*” with the different and diverse networks – ALERRT, CANTAM, WANETAM, EACCR, TESA, PANDORA as well as many other interested researchers around the world, with over 600 participants.

In the field of research, leadership skills are essential to gain better research evidence. Although all researchers want their resources, projects, and research to be managed well, this can be a challenge without positive leadership and a trusted and motivated team. Alongside managing multicultural and multidisciplinary research groups, good leadership skills are more essential than ever. This led us to ask, how we overcome the challenges that leadership brings, more importantly, “*what does it take to be a good research leader?*”.

The learning objectives were as thus:

1. Understand why becoming a positive leader will result in better research evidence
2. Reflect on your own experiences
3. Learn how to lead and manage multicultural and multidisciplinary research groups
4. Learn how to build trust within a team

At the end of this workshop, participants gained knowledge of the different types of leadership there are, understanding why leadership is a challenging competency, practical guidance on how to become a better leader, and ideas on how to unlock the inner leader within and confidence to take the next steps in their leadership skills development.

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Registration

A total of 2832 registered for this event, from 135 countries

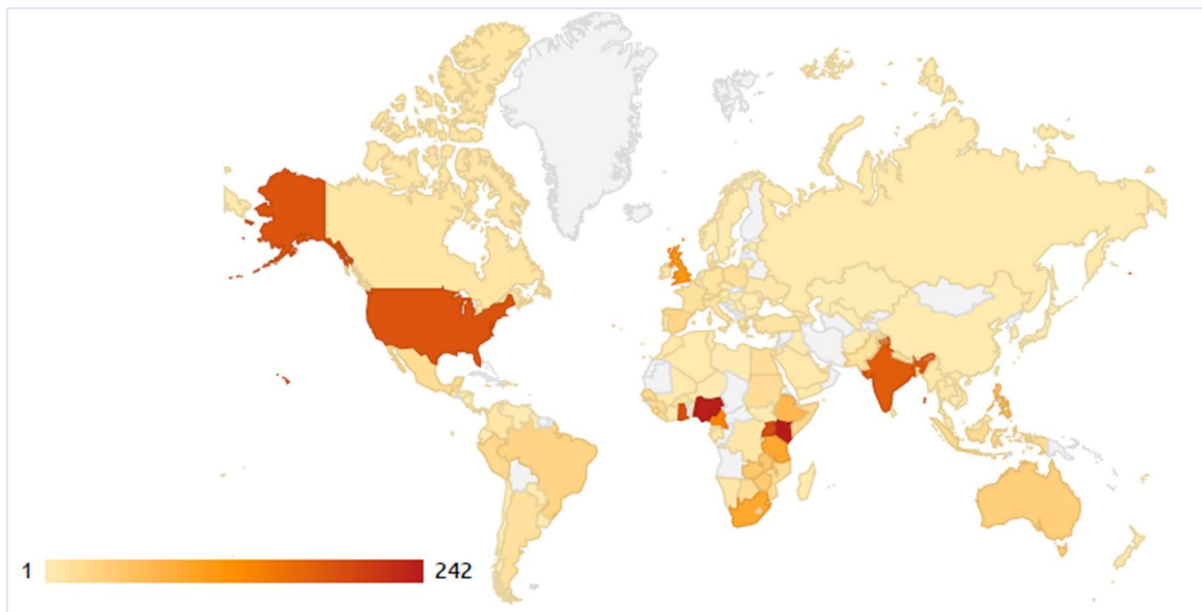


Figure 1: Map of webinar registrations by country

Summary of Activities

Day 1

- The first day was moderated by Jean Pierre Nguessan and chaired by Dr Pamer Netongo who indicated we have above 600 participants. During this first session, the chair presented our first speaker Dr John Amuasi, who talked about *what does it mean to be a leader and what types of leadership are there?* The bottom link and moral behind this session were that there need for preparation and mentorship to become a leader with the six different types of leaders sub-divided into three main categories (Adaptive leadership, Administrative leadership and Enabling leadership). The 3 fundamental elements within people are “LOGOS”, “ETHOS” and “PATHOS” It was then followed by interactive Q&A.
- The Chair presented the second speaker, Dr Sylvie Kwedi Nolna. She presented *how leadership in an African context differs from other contexts*. She demonstrated the gap between researchers in different regions in Africa indicates there’s a long way to go as compared to the Western continent. The different reasons vary with some examples as; stakeholders provide funding for research, poor research focus, inadequate mentorship and training in research for early-stage researchers, infrastructure and lack of African leadership in health research. There was the issue of gender dynamics and much more. She presented the African brand of



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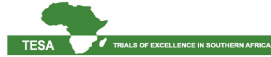


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leadership – “Ubuntu” (which means humanity) which was highly acclaimed as the African style and spirit. She concluded by saying that contextualised African leadership is essential to effectuate change for better health in African communities.

- The last session was a round table discussion and presentation that lasted slightly above an hour ‘*There’s a leader in all of us*’. The panel discussion was led by Dr Nafissatou Laye (Senegal), Dr Armel Batchi (Republic of Congo), and Dr Felix Koukoukila (Republic of Congo). It was very exciting and interactive with Q&A from participants that concluded day 1.

Day 2

- Day two session was chaired by Jean Pierre Nguessan with the first presentation prepared and presented by Dr Donald Kamdem on How to lead and manage multicultural and multidisciplinary research groups. He presented on who is a leader and follower and strategies on communication before diving into how to manage a multicultural and multidisciplinary research group, and the importance of mentor-mentee relationship. This presentation ended with Q & A session with Jean-Pierre concluding with the importance of humility in leadership.
- The second speaker prepared and presented on the topic “*Building Trust within a team*”, by Dr Brenda Okech. She demonstrated the benefits of trust, and she is where she is based on trust, and trust is important in building a relationship and without it, we cannot network and succeed and come out with solutions. The session ended with an interactive Q&A.
- The last part of day two was a panel discussion on “leadership challenges and the best leader you know and why?” the panel members were Dr Akindeh Nji (Cameroon), Dr Steve Wandiga (Kenya), Dr Linzy Elton (UCL), and Dr Junior Mutsvangwa (Zimbabwe). They all presented the stakes it takes to avoid or mitigate challenges and varied views of perfect leadership in a multidisciplinary and subjective setting. Some indicated the characteristics of good and bad leaders such as extreme individuals, balanced approach, friendliness, fairness and professionalism and much more.
- This session also ended with a series of questions and answers which was very enriching to all.



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Attendee Report

726 unique viewers

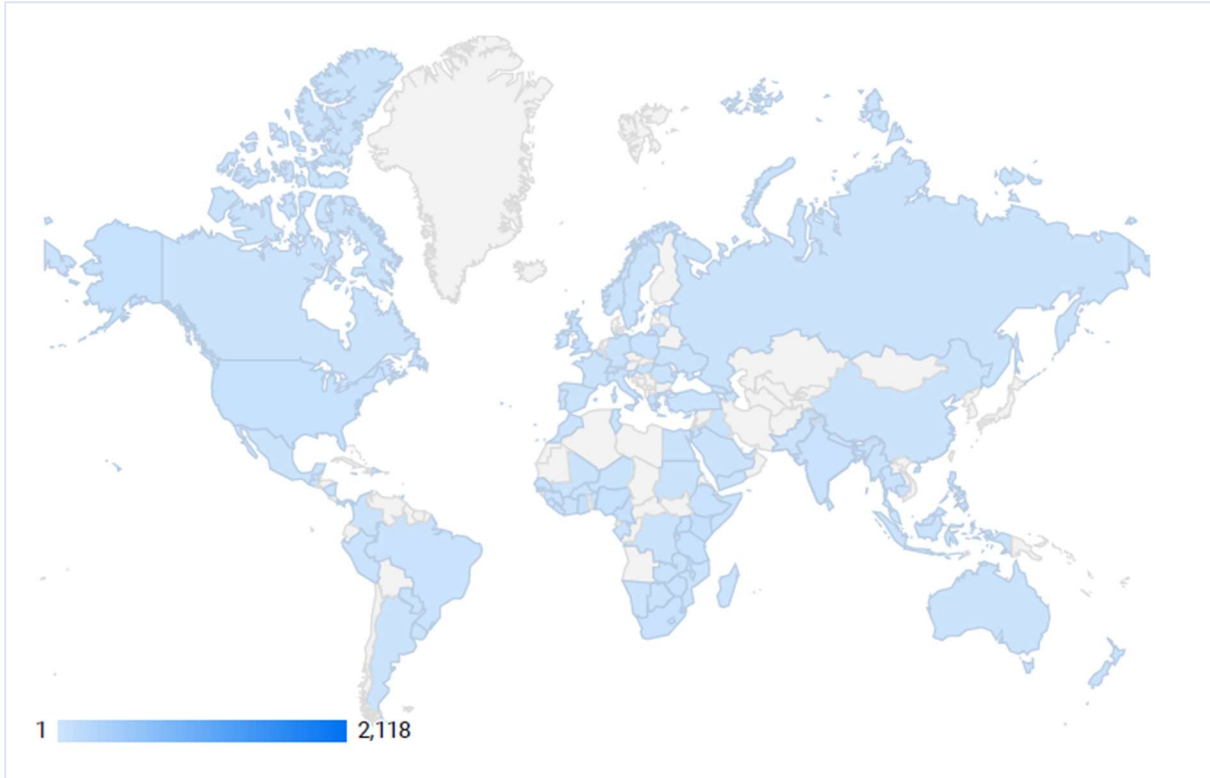


Figure 2: Map of attendees by country

| | | | |
|---------------|----|----------------|----|
| Kenya | 62 | Uganda | 43 |
| Ghana | 58 | Tanzania | 28 |
| Nigeria | 58 | United Kingdom | 27 |
| Cameroon | 55 | India | 26 |
| United States | 45 | Ethiopia | 19 |

Table 1: Top 10 country attendees

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Participants' feedback about the workshop

What were the main reasons for attending the workshop?

The majority of the participants mentioned they attended the workshop because it would help their careers, they had an interest in the topic, they had trust in the organisations involved, it was free, they would get a certificate, they had attended another course facilitated by The Global Health Network and other reasons as in the chart below



Figure 3. Participants' reasons for attending the workshop

Table 2 below shows further feedback on how participants found the workshop

| Feedback question | Strongly Agree | Agree | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|----------|-------------------|
| The workshop was a good fit for my needs | 320 | 135 | 3 | 1 |
| The concepts and skills presented were explained well | 314 | 143 | 1 | 1 |
| There is at least one thing that I will do differently or act on as a result of attending this workshop | 269 | 180 | 5 | 5 |

Table 2. Participants' feedback on the content of the workshop

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If there was at least one thing that participants would do differently or act on as a result of attending this workshop, that would be;

Leadership style, research conduct, team engagement, communication, appreciation, building trust, and others, were among the top words that came from more than 577 statements contributed by participants responding to at least one thing they would do differently or act on as a result of attending this workshop. Below is a chart with the top 200 words



Figure 4. What participants would change after attending the workshop