

Title: Report of the Workshop on Valorization of ALERRT_FISSA Research Findings held in Abidjan from 27th November to 1st, December 2023.

1.0. SUMMARY OF REPORT:

This report provides an overview of the four-day training workshop on the valorization of research findings that took place at the Silver Moon Hotel in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, from 27th November to 1st, December 2023. The purpose of this report is to summarize the key highlights, outcomes, and learnings from the workshop. The training workshop was organized as part of the Africa Coalition for Epidemic Research Response and Training (ALERRT) activities, with a specific focus on promoting the data collected in the FISSA study. The FISSA study played a crucial role in exploring the management of Febrile Illnesses in Sub-Saharan Africa through comprehensive data collection and analysis.

Throughout the workshop, participants were exposed to various sessions and activities aimed at enhancing their skills and knowledge in the valorization of research findings. The workshop aimed to equip attendees with the necessary tools to effectively communicate research outcomes, identify opportunities for collaboration, and leverage research findings for practical applications within our organization. Representing our group by attending this workshop was privilege as the knowledge gained contribute to the advancement of research valorization in the context of ALERRT's activities. This report serves as a comprehensive summary of the workshop, highlighting its objectives, activities, key takeaways, and recommendations for future implementation within our organization.

In the following sections, we will delve into the specifics of the workshop, discussing the topics covered, challenges faced, meaningful experiences, and suggestions for optimizing our organization's utilization of research findings.

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE TRAINING WORKSHOP

The main objective of the training workshop was to valorize the data collected in the FISSA core study as part of ALERRT (Africa Coalition for Epidemic Research Response and Training) activities and explore ways to maximize its impact by effectively communicating and utilizing the findings.

Secondarily, this workshop sought to

1. enhance participants' understanding of research valorization: The workshop aimed to provide participants with a comprehensive understanding of research valorization, including the process of effectively translating research findings into tangible outcomes, such as policy recommendations or practical applications.

2. develop skills in research communication and collaboration: The workshop sought to enhance participants' skills in presenting research findings to diverse stakeholders through effective communication strategies.

3. Foster collaboration and networking among the different study sites by encouraging networking and preparations for potential collaborative projects or partnerships.

1.2. WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

During the five days of the workshop, a variety of activities were conducted to ensure comprehensive training and engagement among participants. The breakdown of the workshop activities by day is as follows:

Day 1: Monday 27th November, 2023

The workshop commenced with a welcome speech by the organizers, Gérard and Anani, who set the stage for the subsequent days of learning and collaboration. The participants, representing ten FISSA study sites and partners, were introduced to each other, fostering a sense of camaraderie and collaboration. The day also included the presentation of article drafts, where participants had the opportunity to share their work and engage in discussions surrounding their research findings. Later in the day, participants were grouped into five working groups based on common thematic topics, setting the foundation for focused discussions and collaboration.

Day 2: Tuesday 28th November, 2023

The second day of the workshop began with a presentation on authorship rules by Benard K., providing valuable insights into responsible authorship practices. This presentation aimed to ensure that participants understood the ethical considerations and guidelines associated with publishing the research findings using the FISSA dataset. It was highlighted that, the exploitation of FISSA data is unrestricted but prior approval will be required.

Following this, the statistician, Tansy presented the captured data sets available in the RedCap ALERRT_FISSA database. This session equipped participants with an understanding of the data available for analysis and paved the way for data-driven discussions and activities. The day also involved parallel group work, with participants splitting into their respective working groups to delve deeper into specific thematic areas.

Day 3: Wednesday 29th November, 2023

The third day focused on data retrieval and analysis. Tansy equally provided each working group with hands-on picture of the available data from the FISSA study database. Through practical presentation and individual/group analysis, participants gained valuable insights into working with research data and exploring key findings. This day allowed participants to deepen their understanding of the FISSA study and its implications within their specific thematic areas.

Day 4: Thursday 30th November, 2023

The penultimate day of the workshop consisted of presentations by group leaders. Each working group presented the selected draft papers, including tables and figures derived from their data discussion and analysis with the statisticians. These presentations provided the opportunity for participants to showcase their progress, receive feedback from their peers and facilitators, and engage in critical discussions surrounding their findings. The aim was to refine and improve the draft papers and gather valuable insights from the collective knowledge of the group.

Day 5: Friday 1st December, 2023

The final day marked the departure of participants. This day allowed for final networking opportunities, informal discussions, and the exchange of contact information to facilitate continued collaboration beyond the workshop. Participants were also given the chance to provide feedback on their workshop experience, enabling the organizers to assess the effectiveness of the program and identify areas for improvement in future trainings.

Overall, the workshop activities encompassed a range of interactive sessions, active group work, and practical exercises, ensuring participants had ample opportunities to engage with the FISSA study data and collaborate with their peers. By structuring the activities over the course of five days, the workshop provided a comprehensive and immersive learning experience for all attendees.

1.3. MAIN OUTCOME OF THE TRAINING

During the workshop, participants were segmented into five working groups to carry out specific tasks based on our thematic.

The first working group focused on the main papers, where participants collaborated on refining and enhancing their draft papers, incorporating valuable information captured during recruitment. The second working group, dedicated to “pediatrics”, retrieved, discussed and analyzed data related to pediatric cases within the FISSA study, with the aim of producing a comprehensive paper focusing on pediatric epidemiology and management of febrile children in the study population. The university of Yaoundé 1 team was represented in the second group.

The third working group, centered around malaria, delved deep into the collected data regarding malaria cases, aiming to disseminate findings that would inform effective malaria management strategies. The fourth working group focused on the use of antibiotics, aiming to analyze data related to antibiotic prescriptions and case management patterns to contribute to evidence-based guidelines. Lastly, the Ghana paper working group worked specifically on analyzing data from the Ghana site, aiming to produce a comprehensive paper highlighting the practices in the Ghanaian context. These working groups allowed for focused discussions, collaboration, and progress towards refining and disseminating the gathered data effectively.

1.4. KEY TAKEAWAYS AND LEARNING POINTS

The training workshop provided participants with several key takeaways and learning points. These can be summarized as follows:

1. Understanding research valorization: Participants gained a comprehensive understanding of research valorization, which involves effectively translating research findings into practical applications or policy recommendations. We learned the importance of bridging the gap between research and field practices in the management of fever in SSA.

2. Collaboration and networking: The workshop facilitated networking and collaboration among participants from ten FISSA study sites and partners. The group work and discussions provided opportunities for participants to connect, share our experiences, and explore potential

collaboration on research or response initiatives. This emphasized the significance of collaboration and partnership in enhancing the impact and reach of research findings.

3. Research communication skills: Through presentations and discussions, we learned effective strategies for communicating research findings to diverse stakeholders. The presentation by Benard K. on authorship rules enhanced our understanding of responsible authorship practices, ensuring that research outputs are valid, ethical, and accurately represent the contributions of all involved. This instilled the importance of clear and ethical research communication within the participants.

4. Data analysis and utilization: The workshop provided hands-on guidance on data retrieval, analysis, and interpretation. We gained insights into the captured data sets available in the FISSA study database and learned practical skills for analyzing and utilizing this data effectively. This strengthened our knowledge and ability to derive meaningful insights from the data collected, enabling evidence-based decision-making and informing future research directions.

5. Refining draft papers: The workshop allowed participants to present draft papers, including tables and figures derived from the data analysis. Through these presentations and subsequent discussions, we received valuable feedback and suggestions for improvement. This exercise emphasized the iterative nature of research and the importance of refining and enhancing draft papers before dissemination.

6. Appreciating the significance of the FISSA study: We equally gained a deeper appreciation for the importance of the FISSA study within the ALERRT framework. This reinforced our motivation and commitment to contributing to the overarching goals of ALERRT and its impact on epidemic preparedness and control.

From understanding research valorization to enhancing collaboration, research communication skills, data analysis, and the significance of the FISSA study, participants left the workshop equipped with valuable knowledge and skills to effectively exploit the data collected in the FISSA study.

1.5. Challenges

During the workshop, some challenges were encountered which impacted the training experience. These challenges include:

1. Time constraints: With the packed agenda, it was be challenging to cover all topics of or areas of interest and activities within the allotted time. This resulted in rushed discussions, limited time for group work, or incomplete presentations.

2. Language barriers: As participants came from diverse backgrounds with different levels of proficiency in a common language, language barriers also hindered communication and understanding, affecting the overall learning experience.

1.6. Recommendations:

1. Ongoing support: Providing continued support and resources to participants after the workshop can help extend the impact of the training. This can include follow-up webinars, access to online

learning materials, or mentoring programs to assist participants in further developing their research or data analysis skills.

2. Interdisciplinary collaboration: Integrating more interdisciplinary aspects into the workshop can foster collaboration and knowledge exchange across different fields. This can facilitate a more holistic approach to addressing complex research questions and challenges.

1.7. CLOSING REMARKS AND PERSPECTIVES

At the end of the training sessions, the speaker (Anani) saluted and expressed gratitude to all participants and partners of ALERRT. He called encouraged the team to embark on the following:

- propose an authorship list to be validated by the ALERRT Executive Committee
- maintain the dynamic created during the workshop through regular meetings at which progress will be presented
- follow-up to ensure that the FISSA main paper is finalized within the first quarter of 2024
- target a conference in 2024 to submit abstracts
- identify the journals to submit the various papers to, starting with the main one

1.8. CONCLUSION:

In conclusion, the training workshop on promoting the data collected in the FISSA study as part of ALERRT activities provided us with a comprehensive learning experience, focusing on research valorization, collaboration, research communication skills, data analysis, and the significance of the FISSA study within the ALERRT framework.

We express our gratitude for the opportunity to represent the group in the training workshop and extend our thanks to the organizers, facilitators, and fellow participants for their valuable contributions and insights throughout the workshop. We look forward to utilizing the knowledge and skills gained to further contribute to the ALERRT initiative and its impact on epidemic preparedness and control.