

Launch Event Report:

The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre "Strengthening Nigeria's Research Capacity Development"

Wednesday, 24th January 2024

Held virtually on Zoom.

Registration/Participation:

The event garnered 459 registrants from 51 countries, with 85 attendees.

Panel:

- Chair: **Godwin Pius Ohemu**, Hub/Media Coordinator, TGHN Nigeria Country Centre
- **Prof. Akanni Akinyemi** - Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Innovation and Development, Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), Ile-Ife, Nigeria.
- **Dr Ola Ibigbami** - Coordinator, TGHN Nigeria Country Centre; Senior Lecturer, Department of Mental Health, OAU, Ile-Ife, Nigeria
- **Goodness Odey** - Partnership & Advocacy Coordinator, TGHN Nigeria Country Centre
- **Prof. Babatope Kolawole** - Provost, College of Health Sciences, OAU, Ile-Ife, Nigeria
- **Prof. Trudie Lang** - Director, The Global Health Network (TGHN), University of Oxford
- **Christine Kirima** - African Regional Coordinator, TGHN.

Agenda:

- Welcome address
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research Innovation and Development Remark
- Introducing The Global Health Network (TGHN)
- Introducing The Global Health Network, Nigeria Country Centre (TGHN-Ng)
- Keynote address: TGHN Opportunities for Early Career Researchers in Nigeria and Beyond; 2024-2025
- Unveiling of Mentors
- Good will messages
- Vote of thanks

Welcome Address:

Following the opening formalities by the Chair, the session commenced with a welcome address delivered by Goodness Odey, Partnership & Advocacy Coordinator of TGHN Nigeria Country Centre. In her address, she

expressed her heartfelt gratitude to the institutions and individuals whose significant contributions played a pivotal role in realizing the launch of The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre. According to her, the idea of The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre all started after a long-walk that she, Pius and Dr. Ola had with Prof. Trudie in the beautiful Kirstenbosch National Botanical Gardens on November 24th 2022 during The Global Health Network Conference in Cape Town, South Africa. It was during this walk that Prof. Trudie challenged the trio to channel their efforts into creating a country centre for the network in Nigeria. The overarching goal was to bring research enablement within close reach of early career researchers and global health enthusiasts in Nigeria.

The Vice Chancellor of Obafemi Awolowo University the host institution in Nigeria was represented by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research, Innovation & Development (RID), Prof. Akanni Akinyemi. In his remark, Prof. Akanni Akinyemi on behalf of the Vice Chancellor and the entirety of the Obafemi Awolowo University appreciated The Global Health Network, University of Oxford for the corporation and goodwill in the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that led to the establishment of The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre domiciled in Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He appreciated Prof. Trudie Lang for her leadership of the network and pledged the University's commitment to supporting the ideals of the country centre moving forward.

Introducing The Global Health Network:

Prof. Trudie Lang, Director of The Global Health Network in her remark Introduced The Global Health Network as a research enabling institution that started in Kenya more than a decade ago to enable equity in where research happens, who leads & who benefits. She said The Global Health Network is a trusted facility used by researchers and research organisations for mobilizing knowledge and delivering capacity and abilities to teams over the long-term in the workplace; enabling research where evidence is lacking. She commended the Nigeria team and OAU for their role in establishing The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre, urging utilization of the network's resources to generate evidence and address health challenges.

Introducing The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre:

Dr. Olanrewaju Ibigbami, Coordinator of The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre and Senior Lecturer in the Department of Mental Health at the College of Health Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, officially presented a concise overview of the centre's aims, objectives, organizational structure, and the proposed timeline of activities for the year 2024.

In his comprehensive presentation, Dr. Ola outlined the primary objective of The Country Centre, emphasizing its commitment to collaborating with The Global Health Network to fortify Nigeria's and the

region's health research environment. He underscored the pivotal role of the Country Centre as an active leader in expanding access to The Global Health Network's resources, benefiting diverse research communities in Nigeria and other nations in the Global South. Through this collaborative partnership, country-level hubs gain access to a spectrum of e-Learning modules, resources, research support, skills-based training opportunities, career development initiatives, as well as the establishment of high-quality and competitive research teams, along with opportunities for supporting funded research.

Dr. Ola highlighted the major activities of the Country Centre, which include the identification of research priorities, needs, gaps, and challenges faced by researchers. The centre is committed to building proficient research teams, enhancing skills, promoting the training of young researchers, and strengthening research capacity and knowledge mobilization, all while eliminating institutional barriers and associated perceptions. The Country Centre aims to provide due recognition for high-quality local research and healthcare work conducted by the country's researchers, teams, and institutes on the neutral, trusted, and internationally recognized platform of The Global Health Network.

For the year 2024, the proposed activities of the Country Centre are outlined in the chart below.



Keynote Address:

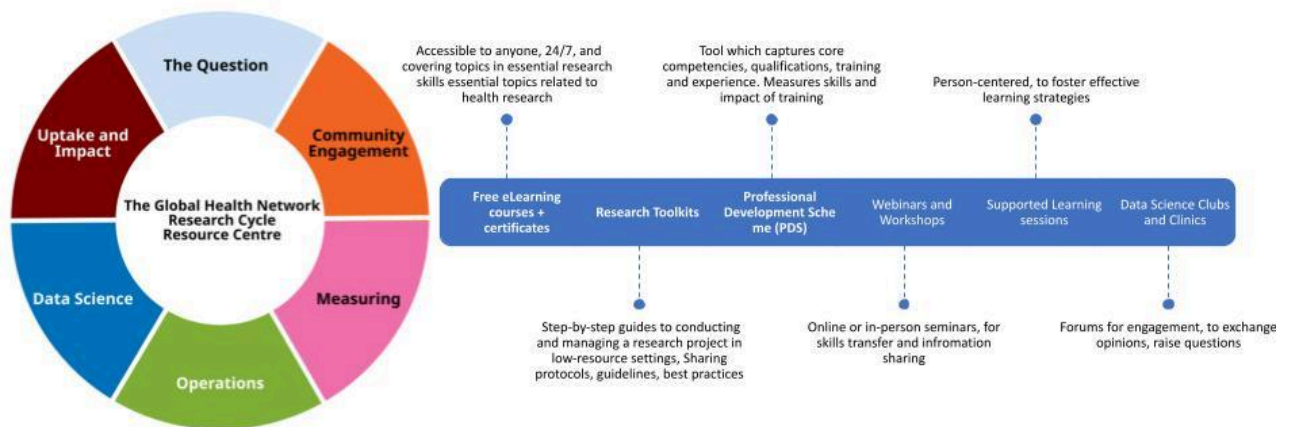
In her keynote address on the topic "**The Global Health Network Opportunities for Early Career Researchers in Nigeria and Beyond; 2024-2025,**" Christine Kirima, the Africa Region Coordinator of The Global Health Network, illuminated the significance of being a TGHN Country Centre and outlined the opportunities available for TGHN Nigeria Country Centre.

She emphasized that attaining the status of a Country Centre within The Global Health Network positions the centre strategically to connect with researchers, health research institutes, healthcare workers, and policymakers in the country. She underscored the pivotal role in supporting the exchange of knowledge and expertise, facilitating the sharing and dissemination of resources, and initiating comprehensive training initiatives. Highlighting the autonomy of each centre, Christine pointed out that they operate independently to secure funding, address local research focus, and bridge capacity gaps. However, they remain connected to one another, working collaboratively with shared standards and processes to maintain quality and access to resources.

Discussing the specific opportunities for TGHN Nigeria Country Centre, Christine outlined the remarkable benefits, including unrestricted access to resources and certified training programs. These opportunities, as illustrated in the accompanying chart, aim to benefit all stakeholders involved in the country centre's initiatives.



Opportunities; Access to Resources and Training



Unveiling of Mentors:

A major part of the launch event centered around the official unveiling of the mentors for the country centre. These mentors, individuals of esteemed intellectual prowess, graciously agreed to utilize their wealth of knowledge to provide guidance, advice, and support to The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre.

The meeting's Chair, Godwin Pius Ohemu, read the biographies of each mentor, sequentially introducing them to the audience.

The distinguished mentors, unveiled in no particular order, are as follows:

- **Prof. Morenike Oluwatoyin Folayan** - Professor of Paediatric Dentistry, College of Health Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University.
- **Dr. Antor Odu Ndep** - Senior Lecturer and Head of Department of Public Health, University of Calabar.
- **Prof. Godwin N. Aja** - Professor of Public Health, Babcock University, Nigeria, and Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies.
- **Prof. Adewale Adisa** - Professor of Surgery, College of Health Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University.
- **Dr. Kome Otokunefor** - Lecturer and Researcher, University of Port Harcourt.
- **Dr. Tochi Joy Okwor** - AMR & IPC Coordinator and Chair of Nigeria AMRCC, Nigeria Centre for Disease Control.

Mentors present during the call expressed their gratitude for the privilege to serve in this capacity and pledged their unwavering commitment to supporting the growth and development of The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre in any way possible.

Goodwill Message:

Goodness Odey, Partnership & Advocacy Coordinator of The Global Health Network Nigeria Country Centre, led the session of goodwill messages and receipt of congratulatory messages from principal officers of the University and other institutions present.

The Provost of the College of Health Sciences, Obafemi Awolowo University, Prof. Babatope Kolawole, expressed gratitude to The Global Health Network, University of Oxford, Director Prof. Trudie Lang, and all individuals who played pivotal roles in ensuring the success of the launch event for the Nigeria Country Centre.

Closing:

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks from the Chair who appreciated everyone for making it to the meeting.