Nine years of the Tanzanian Region of the International Biometrics Society (2017 - 2025)

IBS Tanzania Leadership

President: Dr. Innocent B. Mboya

Secretary: Dr. Ola Jahanpour

Treasurer: Prof. Jim Todd

Communication member: Dr. Wende Safari

Meeting Chair: Dr. Sophia Kagoye

Executive Committee Members: Dr. Jacqueliene Materu, Dr. Neema Mosha, and Dr. Festo Mazuguni

IBS Tanzania Members

The Tanzanian IBS region was founded by 13 members (regular and student), who came together after the SUSAN conference in Lilongwe, Malawi, in 2017. Since then, the number of members has risen, reaching a peak in 2022/23. The drastic decline in the number of members from about 70 in 2023 to 25 in 2024 resulted from the regional efforts to retain only active members, based on their involvement in monthly meetings and other regional activities. In 2025, the number of active members nearly doubled, reflecting regional leaders' efforts to promote IBS locally in Tanzania across different academic and research institutions. The region anticipates an increase in new members between 2025 and 2026 as a result of the IBS symposium held on 12 November 2025, as well as the efforts of IBS Tanzania leadership to promote the region's activities through social media platforms such as LinkedIn.
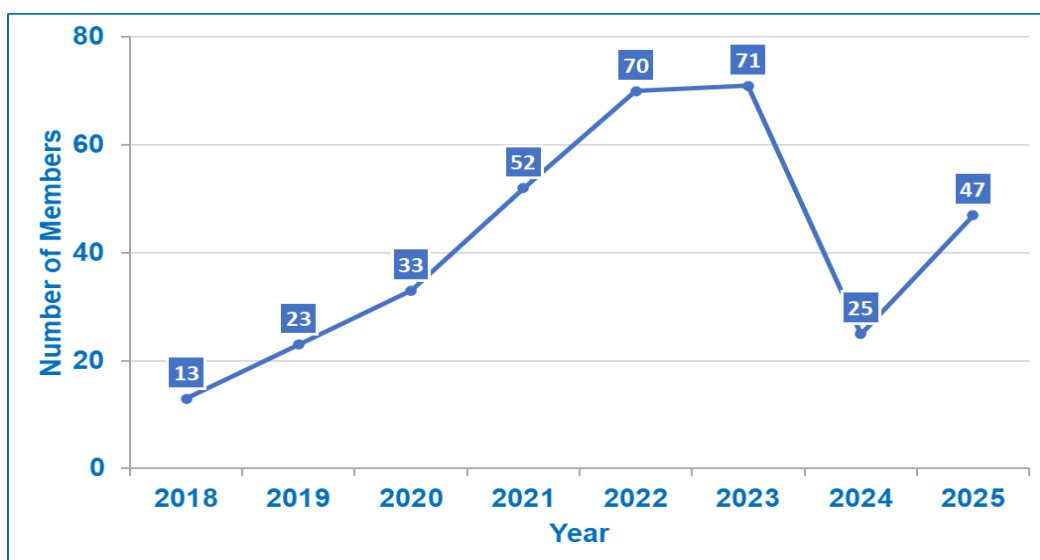

Figure 1: Trends in the number of members in the IBS Tanzanian region, 2018 to 2025. Note that the sharp drop between 2023 to 2024 was due to IBS Tanzania leaders' initiative to retain only active members in the region.

IBS Awards

IBS Travel Award

Since 2017, six Tanzanian scientists have been recipients of the prestigious IBS Travel Award, recognising their contributions to the field of biometrics and supporting their participation in international conferences. These awards have facilitated the development of sustainable networks with regional and global experts. Tanzanian recipients include:

1. Wende Safari – IBS-SUSAN Conference, Lilongwe, Malawi, 2017.
2. Innocent Mboya – IBS-SUSAN Conference, Cape Town, South Africa, 2019.
3. Jacqueline Materu and Gilbert Waria – IBS-SUSAN Conference, Kumasi, Ghana, 2023.
4. Sophia Kagoye – IBS-IBC Conference, Atlanta, USA, 2024.
5. Jovin Tibenderana – IBS-SUSAN Conference, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

This achievement highlights Tanzania's growing presence and active engagement in the IBS community as well as networking together with international scientists in biometrics.

IBS Rob Kempton Award

Also highlighted by the IBS, we are proud to have Prof. Jim Todd, among the founding fathers of the IBS Tanzania region, awarded the prestigious IBS Rob Kempton Award in 2018. The award recognised his contribution to the development of biometry in the developing world, particularly in the Eastern, Western, and Southern Africa regions of the SUSAN network.

Young Statistician Showcase Competition

We would also like to acknowledge the Young Statistician's Showcase Competition received by Dr. Wende Safari in 2020, where she represented the African region in the virtual IBC2020 Young Statisticians' Showcase session.

Grants and Short Courses

Application of Statistical Learning to Routine Data in Low- and Middle-Income Countries

In August 2022, our region successfully implemented an inter-regional workshop titled *"Application of Statistical Learning to Routine Data in Low- and Middle-Income Countries"* in collaboration with members from the IBS Kenya region. The workshop was held at the Mwanza Intervention Unit (MITU)-National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), Mwanza-Centre, and brought together 31 participants from Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia. The workshop was funded by the IBS Representative Council and the Inter-Regional Activities Funding Program. The chapter has also hosted a series of virtual events, including a career panel session held in September 2024 through the IBS Tanzanian region. Please see additional information about the IBS activities, including this workshop, on this link (page 7).
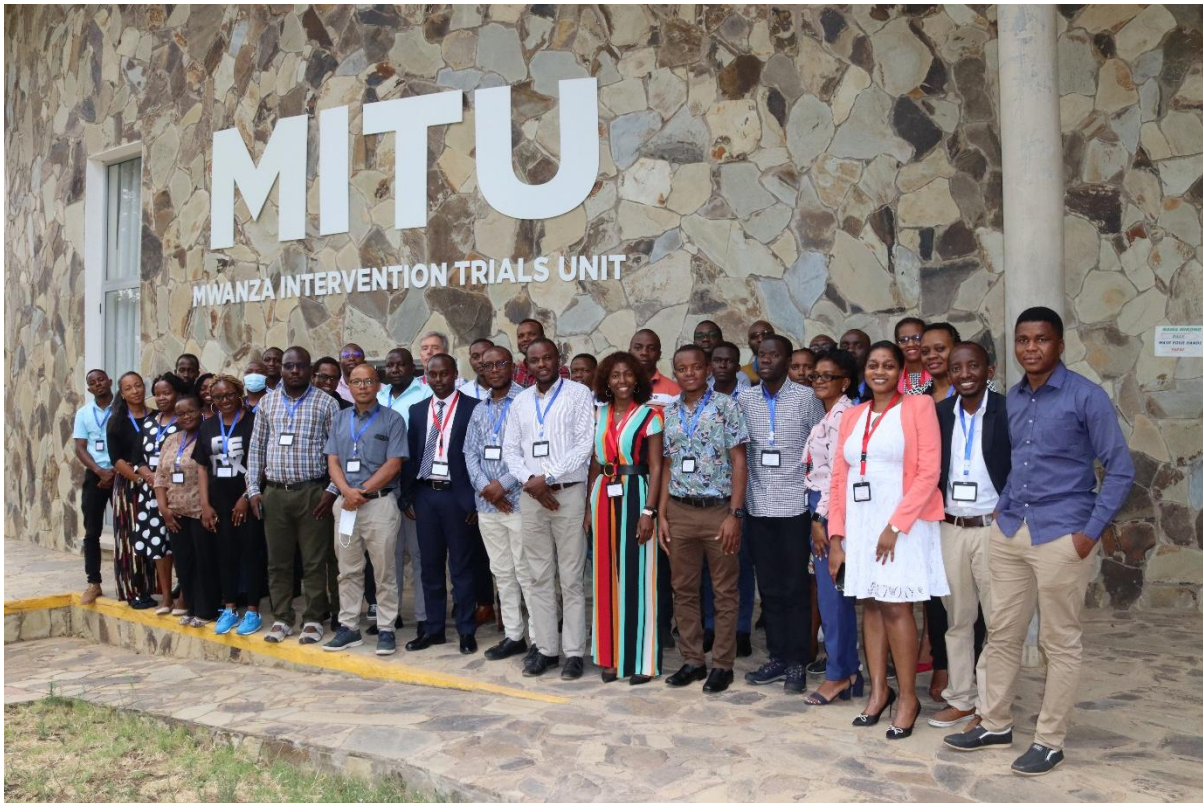
Figure 2: Workshop organizers and facilitators during the first R capacity building workshop in Mwanza, Tanzania, in 2022.

[Academy of Medical Sciences](#) (AMS) Networking Grant

Members of the IBS Tanzania Chapter were recently awarded a Networking Grant by the UK's Academy of Medical Sciences, totaling £25,000 for March 2025–March 2026. The project focuses on strengthening the linkage, management, and analysis of HIV and cancer registry data in Tanzania. Key aspects include:

- Collaboration between Statisticians, Epidemiologists, HIV and cancer data managers, and machine learning/AI experts from Tanzania, the IBS-SUSAN network, the National Bureau of Statistics (Tanzania), Ministry of Health, Tanzania, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (UK), University of Warwick (UK), and University of Witwatersrand (South Africa).
- Local coordination by the Africa Academy for Public Health (AAPH) in partnership with Catholic University of Health and Allied Sciences (CUHAS), Bugando Medical Centre (BMC), and Mwanza Intervention Trial Units (MITU).
- Workshops provided practical skills in data linkage, machine learning, survival analysis, and joint modelling.

This initiative builds on the success of the 2022 IBS Tanzania workshop, enhancing capacity for high-quality evidence generation and informing interventions for communities affected by HIV/AIDS and cancer in Tanzania.

Figure 3: Highlights from the AMS Networking Workshop, 10–14 November 2025, Aden Palace Hotel, Mwanza, Tanzania. Top-left: network partners and IBS members; top-right: all participants; bottom: lecture session

Monthly Scientific Meetings

Since its official establishment in 2017, the IBS Tanzania region has been able to organize monthly meetings, including both members and non-members. The meetings consistently provided opportunities for diverse presentations on theoretical and applied statistics by Master's and PhD students, early-career researchers, and guest speakers. Also, the talks covered diverse public health topics and career talks. On average, our regular monthly meetings have held about 20 to 30 members per meeting with consistent meeting schedules over the past two (2) years.

The first IBS Tanzania Symposium: 12 November 2025

The inaugural symposium "*Demystifying Statistical Methods for Routine Health Data*" held on November 12, 2025, at the Adden Palace Hotel in Mwanza, successfully engaged a hybrid audience of over 80 participants from Tanzania and beyond. Moderated by Dr. Witness Nyamuhuma and Dr. Justine Nasejje, the event was opened by Dr. Innocent Mboya, a founding member and regional president, who reflected on its formative journey and early successes. The program featured substantive keynotes from Prof. Jim Todd on *"Demystifying Population Health Data"* and Prof.

Michael Mahande on *"Demystifying Clinical Data"*. Ms. Sylvia Meku, from the National Bureau of Statistics in Tanzania, followed with a keynote on *"Demystifying Sampling",* dispelling common misconceptions such as the belief that random selection removes all bias. The Countdown to 2030 Tanzania team then provided a practical guide on deriving health indicators from DHIS2, an open-source software platform designed for the collection, management, analysis, and dissemination of health data. Method showcases followed, led by Dr. Jacqueline Materu (Data Quality), Dr. Neema Mosha (Handling Missing Data), Dr. Ola Jahanpour (Mixed Methods), and Dr. Bonny Mgawe (Machine Learning for Prediction). A Career Pathways Panel included Dr. Wilhellmuss Mauka's journey from medicine to biostatistics and Prof. Jessalyn Holodinsky's international perspective on the field. Dr. Wende Safari, a Wellcome Trust Early-Career Awardee, concluded the sessions by outlining professional networks like the IBS, IBS-SUSAN, SSACAB, ISEP, and other available grant opportunities.

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