

The Role of Research Administrators (RA) in the Translation of Research Findings: A case study of THRIVE

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Background:

THRiVE to research excellence is a research capacity building program implemented by a consortium of Universities and Research Institutions funded by the DELTAS (Wellcome Trust and UK aid). It is composed of six East African Institutions and 2 UK institutions: These include

Gulu University

Kilimanjaro Christian Medical College

Makerere University

National Institute of Medical Research

Uganda Virus Research Institute

International Centre of Insect

Physiology and Ecology (icipe)

University of Cambridge

London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine

Uganda

Tanzania

Uganda

Tanzania

Uganda

Kenya

UK

UK

THRiVE goal and Objectives

Goal:

To enhance the transformation of the East African Universities into world-class research hubs by building a pipeline of health research leaders.

Objectives

1. To implement high quality scientific research - training aimed at producing research leaders in East Africa through joint North – South and South – South supervision and mentorship
2. To conduct high impact scientific research that addresses African health research priorities through equitable (North-South) collaborative research that conforms to international standards and guidelines
3. To implement public engagement programs in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda that promote understanding the value and use of science among the lay public, policy makers, civil society and secondary school students
4. To cultivate professional environments to manage and support scientific research

Various efforts have been made by THRiVE program to ensure that the research done by THRiVE doctoral trainees impacts policy and practice.

The Role of Research Administrators in the translation of research findings

- Identify opportunities for public, community, policy, media and knowledge translation.
- Identify the niche in the research findings that can impact policy and practice.
- Participate in the process of drafting policy briefs, press releases
- Organize stakeholders meetings.
- Breaks down research concepts into plain language
- Act as a bridge between the researcher and the public, media and policy makers



Research work on musculoskeletal pain and school bag use among Ugandan pupils. The results of study influenced policy in Kampala where all school going pupils were mandated to carry pull bags.

Lessons Learnt

- Researchers need to interact and work closely with policy makers. This can only be achieved if researchers are supported by research administrators.
- Stronger emphasis should be given to translating research findings into action to improve public health
- Policy makers are open to considering research findings but this can only happen if they are reached out as early as possible to design relevant studies

Conclusion

Research administrators play a key role in the translation of research findings by supporting researchers to reach out to public, media and policy makers.

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