

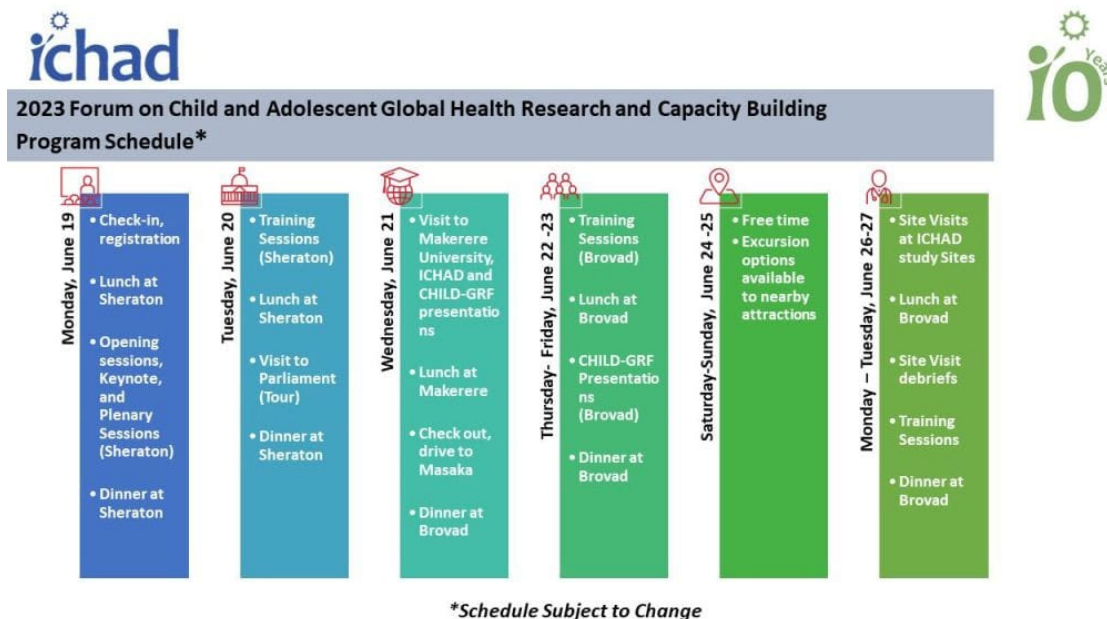
2023 Forum on Child and Adolescent Global Health Research and Capacity Building: Ten Years of Creating Realistic Hope (Suubi) and Real Impact through Research and Capacity Building

June 19-27, 2023

CONCEPT NOTE

The International Center for Child Health and Development (ICHAD) will host the in-person 2023 *Forum on Child and Adolescent Global Health Research and Capacity Building* in Uganda on June 19-27, 2023. Designed to foster bi-directional learning in global health research, the Forum will feature innovative and interactive trainings in health research topics and methodologies, as well as study site visits in Masaka and surrounding areas. Trainees from across our four NIH-funded global health research training programs ([ACHIEVE](#), [CHILD-GRF](#), [LEAD](#), and [RRT](#)) will gather to learn together and enhance their skills in global health research, as well as engage with local policy makers and stakeholders.

A tentative schedule for the Forum is provided below. Detailed agenda will be available on the Forum website at <https://sites.wustl.edu/childgrf/2023forum/>.



BACKGROUND

International Center for Child Health and Development (ICHAD)

ICHAD's mission is to contribute to the reduction of poverty and the improvement of health and overall developmental outcomes for youth and families in low-resource communities, particularly those in sub-Saharan Africa. The center conducts rigorous applied research focused on family-level economic strengthening and empowerment interventions that tackle the interactive effects of poverty, disease, and health-related risk factors for youth. ICHAD also seeks to increase public awareness and support for asset-based social programs, as well as to promote research-driven policy and programming.

ICHAD has several ongoing NIH-funded research studies across sub-Saharan Africa, including in Uganda, focused on improving life options and addressing risk-taking behaviors among children, adolescents and their families. These studies are implemented both schools, clinics and fishing communities. The studies include: Bridges-R2, Kyaterekera Project, M-Suubi, Obuvumu (Discrete Choice Experiment), Suubi+Adherence-R2, Suubi+Adherence4Youth (MOST), Suubi4Her, SuubiMHealth, and Suubi4Stronger Families. ICHAD also has four training programs (see below) that focus on training early-career researchers committed to careers in child and adolescent behavioral health, HIV, and other areas of global health.

Training Programs

1. The D43 CHILD-GRF (Global Research Fellowship) program aims to train early career researchers from Uganda to serve as a Principal Investigators (PIs) on extramurally funded intervention studies focused on combination HIV prevention addressing persistent poverty, community violence, co-occurring child and adolescent mental health problems, and HIV care and prevention in HIV-impacted communities. The training program brings together a network of committed mentors from the Global North and the Global South to ensure quality training for promising new investigators. To date, the program has trained 18 trainees from Uganda, including medical doctors, social scientists, social workers and educators from Uganda. Learn more about CHILD GRF trainees here.
2. ACHIEVE is a transdisciplinary collaboration among public, private, and civil society institutions and includes mentoring teams of established investigators with global recognition in dissemination and implementation (D&I) science, data science, social work, psychology, biomedical sciences, economics, population health, environmental health, public health, and medicine. By leveraging ICHAD's NIH-funded research and training grants in the U.S., sub-Saharan Africa, and countries in Asia and Eastern Europe, ACHIEVE provides state-of-the-art methods training, mentoring, and "hands-on" application of D&I and data science. The program is designed for medical doctors (MDs) and post-doctoral (PhD) trainees from diverse backgrounds in the U.S. as well as trainees (post-professional degree graduates) from six countries in sub-Saharan Africa—specifically, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Uganda. To date, the program has trained 8 trainees, including 2 from Uganda. Learn more about ACHIEVE trainees here. Awarded in 2022, the Forum will welcome the second cohort of ACHIEVE, consisting of 15 additional early career researchers.
3. The T37 LEAD Global Training Program recruits and trains predoctoral students and postdoctoral trainees from diverse backgrounds across the United States, including groups underrepresented in biomedical, behavioral, clinical and social sciences research, interested in global mental health disparities research. The program provides trainees with the skills and experiences needed to lead multi-disciplinary, collaborative research teams focused on health disparities research in low-resource communities. To date, the program has trained 28 trainees, and will be welcoming six new trainees at the Forum. Learn more about LEAD trainees here.
4. The Researcher Resilience Training (RRT) program is designed to provide advanced doctoral students and early career investigators of African descent interested in child and adolescent behavioral health, with the necessary research skills to address the significant challenges that exist within resource-poor settings. These include obstacles related to: recruitment and retention of poverty-impacted, highly mobile youth and families; Collaboration with youth, families and providers experiencing high levels of stress and nested within overburdened communities and systems; Building and maintaining community, provider, academic partnerships. Since 2019, the program has trained 26 trainees, and will be welcoming nine new trainees at the Forum. Learn more about RRT trainees here.

Dissemination and Research Activities

The ICHAD research team facilitates learning across stakeholders to maximize use of the evidence generated through dissemination meetings. Specifically, the research team regularly organizes stakeholder meetings for health care workers, religious leaders, political leaders and participants to share study progress, outcomes and challenges as well as receive feedback from the community members. These gatherings provide an opportunity for the community to engage with the research team and maximize the use of evidence generated from the study. In addition, ICHAD publishes [various reports](#), policy briefs, annual reports and monthly newsletters highlighting the progress of multiple NIH-funded studies and shared with collaborators, center affiliates, and community partners. As part of its dissemination effort, ICHAD also regularly publishes results from various ICHAD studies in [top-tier peer reviewed journals](#) and outlets.

FORUM OBJECTIVES

1. To bring together trainees from across our four NIH-funded training programs (ACHIEVE, CHILD-GRF, LEAD, and RRT) to learn together and enhance their skills in global health research;
2. Foster bi-directional exchange among researchers from the Global North and the Global South interested in child and adolescent behavioral health, HIV, and other areas of global health to inform sustainable and scalable programs and policies in low-resource settings; and
3. Accelerate scientific progress in this area through written scholarly products;
4. Engage in meetings with policymakers to fortify existing and build new connections to ensure our results inform the policies that impact families.

PARTICIPANTS

We are anticipating approximately 200 participants including trainees, researchers, NIH partners, policymakers and practitioners from across the U.S. as well as Sub-Saharan Africa to join us for the Forum. In addition, there will be approximately 300 community stakeholders from Kampala and Masaka, as well as surrounding regions who gather in safe, socially distanced conference rooms to learn from study results as well as present on their own experiences in the program.

PRIOR CONFERENCES

ICHAD has established strong collaborations with researchers, NGOs, and government officials in Ghana, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda and the U.S. who come with a wide range of research, policy, and practice expertise. ICHAD and SMART Africa Center have held annual conferences on child behavioral health and economic strengthening in Sub Saharan Africa and economic strengthening both on the African continent and in the United States. The meetings have been attended by government officials and NIH representatives. Both centers provide a vibrant hub that shares evidence and collaborate on integrative and contextually specific programs and solutions for a range of social issues affecting children in the region. Past conferences that have hosted distinguished guests include:

July 12-15, 2016

First Annual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: Innovative Research and Interdisciplinary Partnerships to Scale Up Evidence-Based Practice in Uganda, Ghana, and Kenya

- Keynote by the First Lady of Uganda and Minister of Education, Honorable Janet Museveni.
- Attendance by researchers, NGOs, government officials, and other stakeholders from SSA and U.S.
- Launch of Global Child Health Fellowship Program for new investigators and PhD candidates committed to child health research in SSA
- Workshops and panels on child behavioral health; field visits in Masaka and Rakai for SMART Africa investigators and Global Fellows.

July 30-August 2, 2017

Collaborative Hubs Meeting for Global Mental Health Research & Second Annual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: Innovative Research and Partnerships to Scale Up Evidence-Based Practice in Uganda, Ghana, and Kenya

- Keynote by the Deputy Speaker of Parliament of Uganda, Hon. Jacob Oulanyah.
- Workshops and panels on child behavioral health; field visits in Masaka and Rakai for SMART Africa investigators and Global Fellows.
- Collaborative Hubs meeting: bringing together all five NIMH-funded hubs working in over 15 countries across the globe to discuss ongoing projects related to scaling up mental health interventions.

July 30-August 1, 2018

Third Annual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: Achieving Sustainable Impact on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa through Research, Policy and Stakeholder Engagement

- Keynotes by the Minister of Higher Education, Hon. Dr. John Chrysestom Muyingo and Hon. Florence Nakiwala Kiyingi, the Minister of Children and Youth.
- Attendance by 300 conference participants from SSA and U.S.
- Stakeholder accountability meeting and policymaker-research dialogue workshop
- Workshops and panels on child behavioral health; field visits in Masaka and Rakai for SMART Africa investigators and Global Fellows.
- Launch of poster session on child and adolescent wellbeing research in SSA and Junior Scholar Conference Travel Award

July 29th-July 31st, 2019

Fourth Annual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: *Bridging the Gap between Research, Implementation, and Policy*

- Keynotes by Her Royal Highness, Nnabagereka Sylvia Nagginda, the Queen of Buganda and Hon. Joyce Adiku, the Minister of Primary Health Care.
- Attendance by 450 conference participants from SSA and U.S.
- Stakeholder accountability meeting and policymaker-research dialogue workshop
- Workshops and panels on child behavioral health; field visits in Masaka and Rakai for SMART Africa investigators and Global Fellows.
- Launched the NIMH Researcher Resiliency training and engaging Junior Scholar Conference Travel Award

April 21-22, 2021

Fifth Annual Virtual Conference on Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa: *Building and maintaining sustainable programs for Child Behavioral Health in Sub-Saharan Africa*

- Virtual conference featured keynote remarks by NIMH Director Joshua Gordon, Vikram Patel from Harvard Medical School, Cornelius Williams Director of the Child Protection Programme at UNICEF, Florence Baingana, Regional Adviser for Mental Health, WHO Regional Office for Africa, and Chiara Servili from the WHO Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse (MSD).
- Key themes and takeaways included the need to strengthen our existing South to South collaborations by working with both local government, stakeholders and engaging multilateral agencies such as UNICEF and WHO.
- Conference participants also heard from NIH Program Officers Holly Rosen-Campbell and Geetha Bansal, as well as Washington University leaders Chancellor Andrew Martin, Vice Provost of Interdisciplinary Initiatives Mary McKay, and Kurt Dirks, Vice Chancellor for International Affairs
- SMART Africa-teams (Uganda, Kenya and Ghana) also shared progress, lessons learned and key findings from the studies in each country.
- Poster presentations.

June 20-30, 2022

Forum on Child and Adolescent Global Health Research and Capacity Building

- Keynote speech from Hon. Jane Ruth Aceng, Uganda Minister of Health
- Remarks by the Vice Chancellor Barnabas Nawangwe, Makerere University; Mr. Richard Nelson, USAID Mission Director, Uganda; Rt. Rev. Bishop Serverus Jjumba, Masaka Diocese; The honorable Florence Namayanja, Mayor of Masaka City
- Virtual Remarks by Kurt Dirks, Global Vice Chancellor, Washington University in St. Louis, and UnJa Hayes, Program Official, NIH Fogarty International Center
- Launch of the new ACHIEVE global research training program
- Final presentations by cohort 1 of CHILD-GRF trainees nearing the end of their three year appointments in the program
- Scientific panels featuring trainees from our four training programs
- Launch of four new NIH-funded research studies, including M-Suubi, Obuvumu, BridgesR2 and Suubi4Stronger Families
- Stakeholder meetings where the ICHAD team presented research findings for both school-based and clinic-based studies
- Panel discussions featuring the perspectives of study participants
- Site visits to schools, health clinics, and community sites where intervention research is conducted and participation in a community collaborative board meeting for the Kyaterekera study