Capacity development, training ans research uptake

OC - (8526) - THE RWANDA CLINICAL RESEARCH NETWORK (RWANDA-CRN): A MODEL FOR MIXED SOUTH-SOUTH AND NORTH-SOUTH COLLABORATIONS FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

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Background

Poor countries carry 90% of the global burden of disease, with access to only 10% of globally available health research funding and technical capacity. Fragile south–south collaborations hinder effective use of limited resources, career opportunities and funding to retain the insufficiently available quality scientists. The Rwanda Health System established a clinical research network involving academia, non-governmental organizations and private sector to accelerate generation of talented scientists, create enabling environment and incentives to retain scientists by establishing a local funding model.

Methods

Based on a baseline assessment, potential clinical trial Units were mapped and developed through adoption of Clinical trial management training model from European Universities. The Rwandan law for Public Private Partnership was leveraged to attract and engage local and international private players in a win-win approach. Countries such as Kenya and Sweden were so far engaged in the roadmap.

Results

From 2014 to date, a total of 285 scientists are trained on various clinical research components: Good Clinical Practice (28%), Research Grant writing (14%), systematic review and meta-analysis (9%) and scientific communication (8.7%). 10 Clinical Research Units and 1 center for evidence based health care were established. So far 13 health investigator-initiated projects in malaria, metabolic disorders and maternal health were funded through the local funding model. A process to empower 6 malaria sentinel sites into fully functioning clinical research sites is underway.

Conclusions

The creation of strong networks of excellence for clinical research among southern academic, research institutions and pharmaceutical and non-pharmaceutical industry is a promising strategic approach to promote sustainable clinical research capacity. The government vision that is beyond National boundaries, resource sharing and involvement of private players are key factors to mitigate the high burden of disease, nationally and promote regional integration.