



NOGUCHI MEMORIAL INSTITUTE FOR MEDICAL RESEARCH

2022 ANNUAL SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH MEETING

NOVEMBER 17-18, 2022

REPORT



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The institute as a tradition organized its annual research meeting (ARM) in 2022 under the theme “***Epidemics, Pandemics and Diseases of Public Health Importance: Bridging the research-policy divide***”. The theme was apt following the global SARS-COV-19 pandemic, which affected human health, the economies etc. in many countries including Ghana.

The ARM was attended by over 350 participants that ranged from policymakers, decision-takers, collaborators, funders, and representatives from international and local non-governmental organizations, early career scientists, both graduate and undergraduate students and the general public. The luminaries who attended the two-day event included Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo, Vice-Chancellor, University of Ghana, Dr Anarfi Asamoah-Baah, former Deputy Director-General of the World Health Organization and currently the Coordinator for the Ghana-COVID-19 Response Support Programme, Dr Abdourahmane SOW (West African Health Organization), Professor John Gyapong former Vice Chancellor of UHAS, and a representative from the Africa Center for Disease Control (African CDC) in Ethiopia. The ARM, which took the form of lectures and poster presentations offered senior and young scientists, and students the opportunity to showcase their excellent research. Stands were also provided to pharmaceutical and medical companies to exhibit their wares. The climax to the two-day event was the debate on “***The global race against epidemics and pandemics is a hopeless case***” A major outcome of the ARM was the deepening of the collaboration with the Ghana Health Service, which in addition to COVID-19 control efforts has led to the Institute detecting emerging and

re-emerging diseases including recent Marburg and Monkeypox, yellow fever and meningitis outbreaks

The Institute expresses its utmost gratitude to the major sponsors; Illumina ISN Medical, Stanbic Bank, Carramore International, MES Equipment/Chemicals, Bank of Ghana, REVNA, MTN, Prudential Bank, Bethel Logistics, Vanguard Assurance, CalBank, Ghana, Divine Eagle Logistics, BELAQUA Ghana Limited and the Government of Ghana.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Organizing Committee and Terms of Reference

The organizing committee, which comprised of four sub-committees; Scientific, Finance, Logistics, and Publications was responsible for the scientific contents including identification of speakers etc., budget/fundraising, logistics arrangements, and all publications of the annual meeting.

Members of the Organizing Committee

1.	Prof. Michael Fokuo Ofori	Chairperson
2.	Prof. Michael David Wilson	Member
3.	Dr. Kwadwo A. Kusi	Member
4.	Dr Charles Quaye	Member
5.	Dr. Jewelna Akorli	Member
6.	Dr. Adwoa Asante-Poku	Member
7.	Dr Isaac Darko Otchere	Member
8.	Dr Evelyn Yayra Bonney	Member
9.	Dr Benedicta Ayiedu Mensah	Member
10.	Dr Terrel Sanders	Member
11.	Dr. Naiki Puplampu	Member
12.	Ms Afia Adoma Boakye	Member
13.	Mrs Evelyn Wilson Amoakoh	Member
14.	Mrs Gloria Obeng-Benefo	Member
15.	Mrs. Angelina Appiah-Kubi	Member
16.	Ms Angela Asantewaa	Member/Recorder
17.	Ms Gifty Wemakor	Member/Recorder

CO-OPTED MEMBERS

1.	Prof. Dzedzon de Souza	Member
2.	Dr Francis Ekow Dennis	Member
3.	Prof. Kofi Bonney	Member
4.	Dr. Kwabena Owusu Danquah	Member
5.	Dr. Irene Owusu Donkor	Member
6.	Dr Dorotheah Obiri	Member
7.	Dr. Nana Ama Amissah	Member
8.	Dr. Sellasie Pi-Bansa	Member
9.	Mr Joseph Mensah Adams	Member
10.	Mr. Abdul Razak Musah	Member
11.	Mr Michael Nartey Addy	Member
12.	Mrs Akogba Wematu Adams	Member
13.	Ms Lawrencia Odjeawo	Member

Theme

The theme for the ARM was “Epidemics, Pandemics and Diseases of Public Health Importance: Bridging the Research-Policy Divide”

Meeting Dates and Venue

The meeting was held from November 17-18, 2022 at the Noguchi Conference Facility, Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, University of Ghana, Legon, from 8:30 AM each day. A copy of the detailed programme is attached as Appendix I.

Participation

How many participants in total? 800

A total of 345 abstracts were received of which 261 were accepted and 41 selected for oral presentations. The

Summary of Activities

Opening ceremony

The morning of the first day of the meeting was the opening of the meeting which was chaired by the Vice Chancellor, UG – Professor Nana Aba Appiah Amfo and in attendance was the Provost of the College of Health Sciences, Professor Julius Fobil, the Registrar of the University of Ghana and other top officials of the University. Also in attendance were representatives from JICA, the Embassy of Japan, Disease Control Managers from the Ghana Health Services and many more. The ceremony was concluded with the keynote address by Dr Anarfi Asamoah-Baah who spoke on the strategies for ensuring uptake of research data for policy formulation.



The panel of speakers at the opening ceremony. Left to right Prof Yeboah-Manu (Institute director), Prof Amba Amfo (VC, University of Ghana), Dr Anarfi Asamoah-Baah (Guest Speaker), Prof John Gyapong (former VC, UHAS) and Prof Julius Fobil (Provost, College of Health Sciences)



Professor Nana Aba Amfo VC, University of Ghana delivering her welcome address during the opening ceremony



The Representative of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) delivering his opening remarks



Dr Anarfi Asamoah-Baah, the special guest speaker at the podium during the opening ceremony

Scientific Sessions

There were 12 plenary speakers of which six were senior researchers from the Institute strategically selected to align with the theme of the meeting. Six scientific sessions included 30 oral presentations on a wide range of topics with policy implications, which ended with the iconic debate.

The first session was dedicated to pandemic preparedness and emerging health threats and the speakers were Dr Abdourahmane Sow from the West Africa Health Organization (WAHO). Dr Sow spoke on the West African Regional Public Health agenda in the context of pandemic preparedness and response. The session was concluded with a talk by Professor William Ampofo who elaborated on NMIMR's contributions towards epidemic outbreaks in Ghana. The session was chaired by Professor Fred Binka, former

Vice Chancellor of the University of Health and Allied Sciences.

The second plenary session on epidemics and pandemic diseases and interventions was delivered by Professor Sebastien Gagneux on the evolution and spread of multi-drug resistant tuberculosis, which was followed with presentations by Noguchi scientists on viruses, tuberculosis, Buruli ulcer and rotavirus research at the Institute. There were also parallel sessions where 20 oral presentations on viral infections, drug discovery, bacterial Infections, malaria and other protozoan infections to conclude Day 1.



A section of the audience during the opening ceremony

The other four plenary sessions were covered on the second day 18th November 2022 and plenary session three was on vector-borne diseases that was kick started by our special Guest Speaker - Prof Gyapong who gave an excellent talk to participants on the Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) research landscape and challenges with elimination programmes. This session also

highlighted the Institute's contributions to Entomology, Neglected Tropical Diseases and Malaria research. Day 1 concluded with a session for 10 selected posters of young scientists to give two-minute turbo oral presentations of their research.

Day 2

Two parallel scientific sessions on NTDs, Climate Change and Health Systems, were followed by plenary session 4 on non-communicable diseases delivered by Professor Dwomoa Adu on Trypanosomiasis and Kidney Failures.

Plenary session 5 was dedicated to the AMED/NMIMR project on viral haemorrhagic fevers and diarrhoeal diseases, antimicrobial resistance, and entomology and concluded the session with a presentation by JICA on a project in supporting NMIMR Quality management systems (QMS).

Debate

The last scientific activity of the day, which was the debate. The motion for the 2022 ARM was ***“Global race against epidemics and pandemics is a hopeless case”***. Drs Isaac Otchere Darko and Peter Quashie spoke for the motion and Drs Ivy Asante and Paul Owusu-Donkor spoke against it. The Judges were Professor Kwadwo Koram, Professor William Ampofo and Dr Justice Yankson from the Ghana Medical Association. The debate was excellent and very educative and those who spoke against the motion won the day.



The panel of Judges of the debate. From left to right Dr Justice Yankson, Prof William Ampofo and Prof Kwadwo Ansah Koram



A section of the audience during the debate session. The debaters are seated on the front row.



Speakers for the motion; Dr Isaac Otchere Darko (left) and Dr Peter Kojo Quashie (right)



Speakers against the motion; Drs Ivy Asante (left) and Paul Owusu Donkor

CONCLUSION

The ARM was very successful and was attended by 800 participants, which was far more than the estimated 350. The participation of young scientists also exceeded our expectation evidenced by the 245 applications. The scientific contents were excellent and several positive feedbacks from policymakers, collaborators, funders, and the general public were received.

The chosen theme ***“Epidemics, Pandemics and Diseases of Public Health Importance: Bridging the research-policy divide”*** was apt recognising that the COVID-19 pandemic brought to bear key challenges encountered by the health authorities in Ghana. A key challenge of capacity in anticipation of future epidemics/pandemics has formed the basis of the theme for the next ARM in November 2023, which is ***“Strengthening Research Capacity to Mitigate Current and Future Disease Threats”***.

POSTSCRIPT

A major outcome of the ARM was the deepening of the collaboration with the Ghana Health Service, which in addition to the continued COVID-19 control efforts has led to the Institute identifying recent outbreaks of Marburg virus disease, monkeypox virus, yellow fever and meningitis.

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Meeting Programme

Theme: *Epidemics, Pandemics and Diseases of Public Health*
 Importance: *Bridging the research-policy divide*

PROGRAMME		
Day 1	Activity	Facilitator (s)
8.15 - 8:55	Arrival and Registration	
OPENING CEREMONY		
8:55 - 9:00	Call to Order	Dr Charles Quaye & Dr Evelyn Y. Bonney
9:00 - 9:05	Welcome Address NMIMR Director Professor Dorothy Yeboah-Manu	
9:05 - 9:08	Introduction of Chairperson Dr. Gloria Ivy Mensah	
9:10 - 9:15	Chairperson's Remarks UG Vice-Chancellor Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo	
9:15 - 9:20	Introduction of Special Guests	
9:20 - 9:25	Brief Remarks - JICA Mr Yashuwaki Momofa	
9:25 - 9:30	Brief Remarks-Japanese Ambassador	
9:30 -9:35	Remarks-Ministry of Education	
9:35 -9:40	Remarks-Africa CDC	

9:40 – 9:45	Remarks-Ministry of health		
9:45 - 9:50	Remarks- WHO Country Representative		
10:25 – 10:30	Chairperson’s Closing Remarks Prof. Nana Aba Appiah Amfo		
10:30 – 10:40	Group Photographs		
SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS			
PLENARY SESSION 1 (RESEARCH AND POLICY)			
10:40 – 11:10	Keynote Address Strategies for ensuring uptake of research data for policy formulation Dr Anarfi Asamoah-Baah		Prof Michael Wilson & Dr Irene Owusu Donkor
11:10 – 11:55	Plenary Session Contribution of Biomedical Research to West African Health Organization’s Regional Plans Dr Abduramane Sow Emerging Health Threats and the Contribution of NMIMR’s Research to Health Systems and Policy Prof William Ampofo		Prof Fred Binka & Dr Mary Amoakoh-Coleman
12:00 – 12:25	Poster Presentations (10)		Dr Beverly Egyir
12:25 – 13:20	Lunch Break/poster viewing		All
13:20 – 14:35	Parallel Session 1A Viral infections of public health importance (5 speakers)	Parallel Session 1B Drug discovery (5 speakers)	Dr George Kyei (1A)& Prof Regina Appiah-Opong (1B)

14:35 – 15:50	Parallel Session 2A Bacterial infections of public health importance (5 speakers)	Parallel Session 2B Malaria and other protozoan Infections (5 speakers)	Dr Yaw Adusei-Poku & Prof Eric Sampane-Donkor (2A) Dr. Kezia Malm & Dr. Linda Amoah (2B)
15:50 – 16:00	Snack break/Poster viewing		All
PLENARY SESSION 2: Epidemic and Pandemic Diseases and Interventions			
16:00 – 16:30	Invited Speaker Population Pathogen Genomics and the Control of Tuberculosis. Prof Sebastien Gagneux (virtual presentation)		Prof. Kwasi Addo & Dr. Adwoa Asante-Poku
16:30 – 17:15	Plenary Speakers Viral Research and Policy at Noguchi Dr John Odoom Bacterial Research and Policy at Noguchi Dr Anthony Ablordey Vaccine-related Research and Policy at Noguchi Prof George Armah		Prof Collins Ahorlu & Dr Evelyn Bonney
END OF DAY 1			

DAY 2		
08:30 - 08:50	Arrival and participant registration	
	Plenary session 3 (Vector-Borne Diseases)	
09:00 - 09:30	Keynote Address 2 NTD Research Landscape and Challenges with Elimination. Prof John Gyapong	Prof Daniel Boakye & Dr Irene Ayi
9:30 - 10:15	Plenary Speakers Entomology Research and Policy at Noguchi Dr Samuel Dadzie NTD Research and Policy at Noguchi Prof Dziedzom de Souza 1. Malaria Research and Policy at Noguchi Dr Benjamin Abuaku	
10:15 - 10:45	Invited speaker 2 Pathogen Genomics Initiative (Africa PGI) - Dr Sofonias K Tessema	Dr Bright Adu & Dr Anita Ghansah
10:45 - 11:00	Snack break/poster viewing	

11:00 – 12:15	Parallel Session 3A Neglected Tropical Diseases	Parallel Session 3B Climate Change and Disease / Health Systems: Equality, Equity and Access	Dr Sellase Pi-Bansa (3A) Dr Patricia Akweongo & Dr Daniel Arhinful (3B)
12:15 – 12:45	Plenary Session 4 – NCDs Research and Policy Prof Dwomoa Adu		Prof Michael Wilson
12:45 – 13:30	Lunch Break/poster viewing		All
13:30 – 14:30	Plenary Session 5 - AMED Symposium		
14:40-16:20	Plenary Session 6: The Debate The Global Race against Epidemics and Pandemics is a Hopeless Case		Prof Kwadwo Koram. Prof William Ampofo Dr Justice XXX
16:20 – 17:00	Awards & Recognitions,		Dr Charles Quaye Dr Evelyn Y. Bonney
CLOSING CEREMONY			

Appendix II: List of Sponsors

Table: List of 2022 Annual Research Meeting Sponsors

CATEGORY OF SPONSORSHIP	NAME OF COMPANY/ INDIVIDUAL	ADDRESS
PLATINUM (GHC 100,000.00)	Illumina ISN MEDICAL	40-42 Association Avenue, Ilupeju - Lagos, Nigeria
DIAMOND (GHC 50,000.00)	STANBIC BANK	Stanbic Heights, 215 South Liberation Link Airport City, Accra Ghana
	CARRAMORE INTERNATIONAL Ltd. / MES Equipment/ Chemicals	Miry Ln, Thongsbridge, Holmfirth HD9 7RW, UK
	Bank of Ghana	One Thorpe Road, Accra, Ghana
GOLD (GHC 35,000.00)	Revna Biosciences	Nii Kwei Mensah Street, Nmai Dzorn, Accra, Ghana
	MTN Ghana Ltd.	25 Independence Ave, Accra, Ghana
SILVER (GHC 20,000.00)	Prudential Bank Limited	8 John Harmond Street, Ring Road Central, Accra, Ghana
	Bethel Logistics	No. 179 Olusegun Obasanjo Street, North Ridge, Accra, Ghana

OTHERS (Less than GHC 20,000.00)	Divine Eagle Logistics Limited	Community 5 Station, Tema, Ghana
	Cal Bank Ltd	23 Independence Ave, Accra, Ghana
	Vanguard Assurance	25 Independence Ave, Accra, Ghana
	BEL AQUA (Products	4-6 Spintex Rd, Accra, Ghana

