



# West African Bioethics

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## WAB-Newsletter



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## About WAB

The West African Bioethics is program for teaching, service and research in

International Bioethics

The West African Bioethics training program is unique because it uses the opportunity afforded by its location in West Africa to research and train in Bioethics in English and French languages, both of which are widely spoken in the West African subregion.

## INSIDE NEWSLETTER

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## Research Ethics Training for Oyo State Journalists

**A** two-day workshop was organized by the West African Bioethics Training Program (WAB) and the Nigerian Medical Association, Oyo state chapter for journalists that are involved in health reporting in the state.

The training curriculum was accredited by the National Health Research Ethics Committee with training number NHREC/TR/25/02/2013. The aim of the workshop is to introduce research ethics to journalists and the role journalists play in disseminating information about research ethics in the society. The training came up between the 25th and 26th of April 2013 at the Centre for Bioethics, Ibadan. In attendance were 21 participants exclusive of the four facilitators.

The workshop started at about 9.30am each day with the conduct of formalities – welcome address, registration and introduction to the aim and objectives of the workshop. Six plenary sessions were taken (three each day) which include:

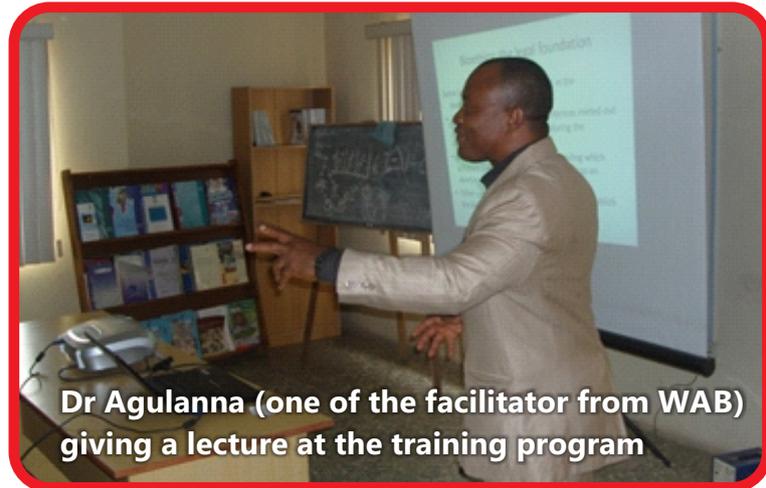
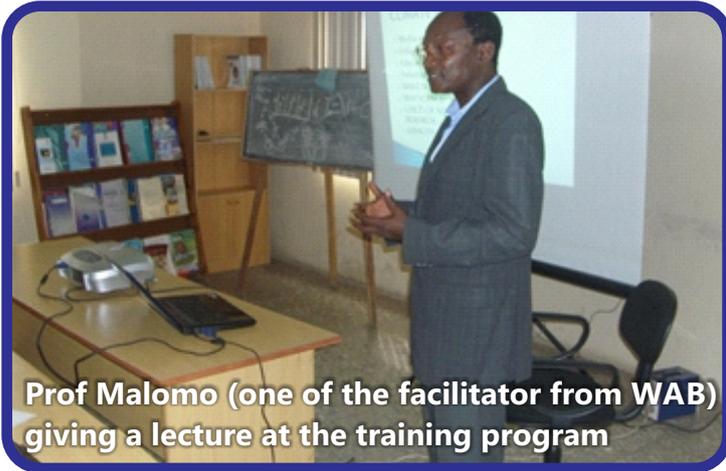
- History of Bioethics
- Research Misconduct and the Roles of the Media
- Legal, Moral and Philosophical Foundations of Bioethics
- Phases of Drug Trials and What Makes a Research Ethical
- NHREC, HRECs and their Roles in Human Research in Nigeria
- The informed consent
- Roles of the Society and the Press in Fostering good Research involving Human beings.

Various participatory mechanisms such as brainstorming, question and answer sessions were used to facilitate the training. The training ended at 2pm each day



## Research Ethics Training for Oyo State Journalists **Contd.**

# Photographs Session

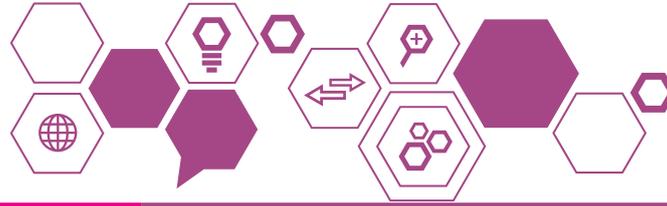




## Other Ethics Training that was recently conducted

### **Other Ethics Training that was recently conducted include;**

- 1.** Modern Research Ethics Training for members of newly formed Ethics Committee of the African University of Technology (AUST), Abuja. Held at AUST from 18th – 20th March, 2013.
- 2.** Refresher training course on Modern Research Ethics for members of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria, Abuja. Held at IHVN from the 16th – 17th of April, 2013.
- 3.** Research Misconduct training for members of staff of the Institute of Human Virology Nigeria (IHVN), Abuja. Held at IHVN on the 18th of April, 2013.



# Advancing Ethical Research (AER) Conference 2012

## How the Nigerian Research Community may benefit from current global trends

**M**any scientists including me received the travel scholarships from Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM & R) to attend the 2012 AER Conference in San Diego, California, US (December 3rd to 7th, 2012). The offer letter also was specifically used to communicate PRIM & R's recent decision and commitment to support young scientists who are dedicated to the field of medical research and bioethics. This time around, submission of an abstract was not a pre-requisite for me to get the full scholarship, perhaps because I had applied twice previously- each time getting a partial scholarship which I could not utilize for constraints of funds.

The trip to San Diego, California was an interesting one; I arrived on a Saturday 1st December, and was also invited to the Qualcomm Stadium on Sunday 2nd to watch the match between San Diego Chargers and Los Angeles Bengals. Three (3) other female participants attended from Nigeria; one from University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital, Federal Teaching Hospital Ebonyi State and University of Uyo, Akwa-Ibom State. Many Research Ethics Committees (RECs) Chairs, Administrators and members attended the conference from all over the world, but only two of us had been involved as members of REC before the meeting.

There were several pre-conference workshops, in addition to plenary sessions that were heavily attended by REC Chairs, members and researchers from many renowned institutions. I met a lot of senior bioethicists and investigators who acknowledged the work of West African Bioethics Training Program (WAB) in promoting ethics in Nigeria. I opted to participate in the Quality Assurance/Quality Improvement (QA/QI) track because of my interest in "creating structured QA/QI programs to improve performance and ensure" compliance of ethics committees and investigators to research regulations. Before this workshop, I had gotten involved with a new Ethics Committee (ZETA-12 Independent Research Ethics Committee - ZIREC) and was also instrumental to the formation of a Research Ethics Training (RET) Forum for Eastern Nigeria, based at the CEDR, University of Nigeria.



# Advancing Ethical Research (AER) Conference 2012 Contd.

How the Nigerian Research Community may benefit from current global trends

With this curiosity, as a “just-graduated WAB/NIH Bioethics Scholar”, who has been providentially positioned to encourage innovations in our REC and other collaborating organisations, I attended the workshop with zest and was amazed at what our immediate society needs to do:

1. While QA/QI program has been defined by some organisations to be an integral part of their Human Research Protection Program (HRPP), some have theirs affiliated or independent of the Ethics Committees. Each organisation or institution, or even ethics committee should consider developing a policy about the implementation of QA/QI program. Such a program if developed by a central IRB or REC could also render services to affiliate RECs and investigators/site.
2. Some of the prime goals of QA/QI programs including the improvement of regulatory compliance and facilitating of communication between the ethics committees and research community at large are some of the things required to be seen in our immediate society.
3. The QA/QI Program as an emerging field in research and ethics education would naturally witness hurdles in places like ours for obvious reasons; notwithstanding, developing and institutionalizing such programs will pay off in the near future. Formal training in principles of Quality Assurance/Auditing is recommended for the staff that will run QA/QI programs for their institutions, ethics committees and contract research organisations (CROs).

The main conference featured many plenary and break-away sessions one of which was on:

### **Comparative Effectiveness Research (CER): What Bioethicists Need to Know:**

CER “incorporates a multidisciplinary approach, drawing upon both biomedical and social scientific disciplines. The purpose of CER is to provide information on the safety and effectiveness of different approaches to addressing health care issues and inform health care decision making.



# Advancing Ethical Research (AER) Conference 2012 Contd.

## How the Nigerian Research Community may benefit from current global trends

CER can involve reviewing existing data (observational research), as well as conducting innovative prospective research to compare, drugs, diagnostics and medical devices, surgical interventions, or behavioral methods and other approaches.” The importance of CER to the bioethics community, given the expectation that non-conventional research proposals will need to be reviewed was discussed. The United States has also gone ahead of others in providing \$1 billion to fund this emerging research area. Nigerian institutions and research community could do well in designing projects that will align with CER.

Other plenary lectures exhaustively delivered include:

- Private Sector Concerns Regarding Biorepositories and Tissue Banking
- Flexible Adaptive Clinical Trial Designs: Implications for IRB Review and Informed Consent
- Collecting and Analyzing Metrics for Quality Improvement.

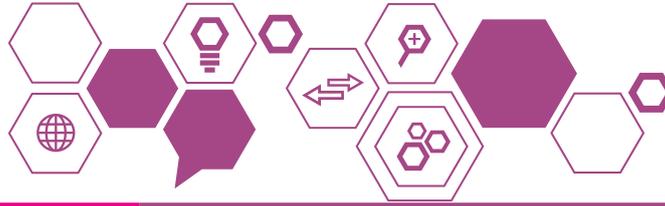
The Award I received as a PRIMR Scholar also gave me the opportunity to take part in:

- the poster presentation;
- the moderated poster presentation (the Community Engagement discussion session) &
- the post-conference symposium/site visit for scholars at the University of California San Diego. (UCSD)

My poster which was on the “Concepts of Community Harms in Developing Countries; a pilot study in Oyo State Nigeria,” attracted a lot of responses and remarks from many conference participants.

At the site visits we met with experienced university faculties and bioethicists. These made presentations on several issues including:

- Community-engaged research in a transnational context.
- Engaging communities and their representative organizations.
- Biomedical Research in Resource Limited Settings: Who Benefits?
- Survey Research in Failed States.



# Advancing Ethical Research (AER) Conference 2012 Contd.

## How the Nigerian Research Community may benefit from current global trends

While most of the discussions centered on the design and implementation of community-based participatory research (CBPR) in a way we are yet to witness in Nigeria, I was also intrigued by the presentation on how the UCSD researchers carried out surveys in states like Afghanistan. I recall an experience our study team had before the PRIM & R meeting, when the Boko Haram insurgency affected the nature of monitoring of a vaccine study in Jos, Nigeria. Would there be enough provisions and insurance cover for researches to continue in Nigeria even in face of unrest? Prospects of research in Nigeria have really been affected by a number of factors. There is need to address these issues.

The importance of organizing PRIM & R regional events was emphasized during the conference. I would like to end this piece by wondering aloud if any such event could be organised soon in Nigeria or any other part of West Africa. It would be very rewarding if all the Nigerian Research Ethics Committees make it a point of duty to ensure that their members attend PRIM & R events from time to time.

Dr Maduabuchi John-Moses Uwanduoma,

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# Advancing Ethical Research (AER) Conference 2012 Contd.

## Photographs Session



Some participants in the QA/QI workshop with Dr Maduabuchi John-Moses- fourth from left (with Eunice Newbert standing)



Nigerian team with the Faculty at the QA/QI workshop: (L-R: Maduabuchi John-Moses, Delia Wolf, Eunice Y. Newbert, Terry VandenBosch, and Ezenkwele Eziamaka).

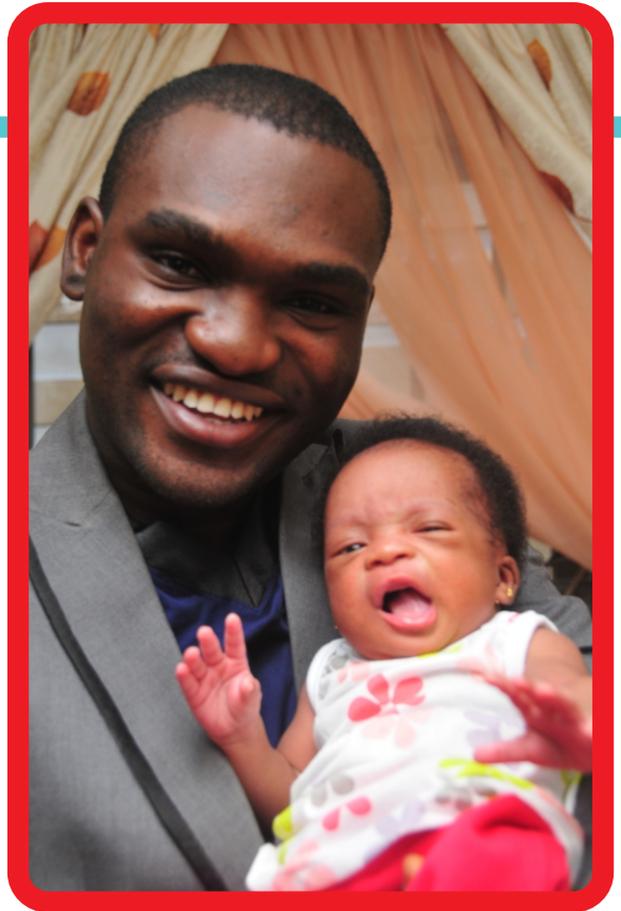


Some participants in the QA/QI workshop with Dr Ezenkwele Eziamaka-second from right (UNTH, Enugu, Nigeria)



## Bioethics Baby

The entire members of staff and students of WAB rejoice with our Web Master, Mr. Kunle Oyafajo on the birth of his baby girl who was born on the 1st of May 2013.





## CLOSING REMARKS

Thank you for taking your time to read the issue of the newsletter, Your comments about the current issue, and ideas for the next issue are what will keep the West African Bioethics Newsletter an interesting and lively newsletter!!

Please send contributions and suggestions to **[admin@westafricanbioethics.net](mailto:admin@westafricanbioethics.net)**

### CHECK US ON THE WEB

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