



AFRICAN MALARIA NETWORK TRUST

Management for African Malaria Research Leaders Workshop

11-15 September 2006 Dar-Es-Salaam, Tanzania

Workshop Report

Dorina Kemilembe, Charles Wanga

The African Malaria Network Trust (AMANET) in collaboration with Phillips Consulting and Ifakara Health Research and Development Centre (IHRDC), organised a five-day (11-15 September 2006) workshop on Management for African Malaria Research Leaders Workshop which was held in Dar es salaam, Tanzania. The workshop aimed at imparting knowledge, providing opportunity for sharing leadership/management and related experiences, and promoting current and future networking among the participants. The twenty (20) participants (heads of malaria institutions) and five (5) facilitators came from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ethiopia, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and Tanzania.

The workshop combined interactive presentations with a series of practical learning exercises and discussions aimed at sharing and strengthening leadership and management experiences, and helping leaders of malaria research institutions across Africa to identify key challenges in management. Some of the topics discussed during the workshop included adoption of strategic planning in research settings; understanding leadership and management fundamentals; recruitment, mentoring, motivation and staff evaluation; delegating effectively and time management; capacity strengthening and collaboration with researchers and other partners; proposing and grants, and contract management; financial and budget planning; health research ethics; research monitoring, oversight and quality control; and dissemination of research results.

Day one

The workshop was officially opened by Prof Wen Kilama, Managing Trustee for AMANET, who gave a welcome note and introductory remarks on the background and justification for this workshop. The workshop then started with a short video clip on “The Business of Paradigms”. The emphasis on this warming video was on the need to be flexible to new ideas which may bring about positive changes to the way an individual, institution or business operates.

The Next presentation was on “strategic planning and performance management” by Mr Foluso Phillips of Phillips Consulting Ltd (PCL). In his presentation Mr Phillips highlighted on the need for organizations to set clear definitions of their vision and mission. He also insisted that organisation performance should focus on meeting external and internal “customers” satisfaction, employee empowerment and continuous improvement towards realization of immediate and long-term goals. External customers were said to comprise those with whom the institution or researcher(s) provide services i.e. the community, and all other stakeholders (the government, funding agents, media etc) whereas internal customers were said to be all those forming part of the team and these include doctors, nurses, pharmacists, other scientists, accountants, auxiliary workers; everyone in the team.

Dr Hassan Mshinda of IHRDC followed with a presentation on “setting a research agenda”. In this talk, Dr Mshinda stressed the need for research institutions to set their own research agenda through sound strategic planning, citing examples from various strategic plans including that of the IHRDC.

The day was wrapped up with a presentation from Prof. Kilama on “Capacity strengthening”. In his presentation, Prof Kilama stressed that the main focus on capacity strengthening is to improve capabilities of individuals and institutions to address health problems through sound research.

Day two

Day two started with a “management and organisation” skills test which was meant to identify leadership gaps. This was followed by a presentation on “concepts of management” by Ms Olayinka Adebessin of PCL. Ms Adebessin talk explored concepts of management which include planning, organising, directing and controlling. In this talk, a manager was said to be dependant on other people’s efforts for results; while a leader was said to get his/her results by influencing the activities of others through their behaviour. The two basic leadership approaches (trait and situational) were also described. The presentation concluded that a good leader should be able to challenge the process, inspire others toward a shared vision, enable others to act, and also be a good model.

A presentation on “understanding human behaviour” was then given by Mr Wole Ogundare, also from PCL. A Thomas International Psychometric Test formed part of this session and was given to all participants. This test looks at behaviour characteristics; Dominance, Influence, Compliance and Steadiness. The test also evaluates individual’s behavioural strengths and their effects in management.

Dr Hassan Mshinda returned with a presentation on “research collaborations”. He emphasized on the need for research institutions to reach out to other institutions sharing their vision and mission for strengthening research capacity through collaboration and networking.

Prof. Kilama then gave a presentation on “ethical perspectives on malaria research”. In this presentation the components of health research ethics which include informed consent, standards of care, and benefits and risks were discussed.

Other presentations for this day discussed board matters, coaching and appraisals.

Day three

Day three kicked off with participant presentations on “proposing and grants”. This presentation discussed various funding agents, their policies and strategies for effective fund-raising. Participant presentations were followed by a talk on time management and how to conduct effective meetings. Meetings were said to refer to a *team activity* where *select people* gather to *perform work* that requires *group effort*. Tips on running effective meetings were discussed and these included meeting preparation and timely circulation of agenda, control, agreeing on outcomes, actions and responsibilities, taking notes/minutes, and following up on action items agreed.

Two presentations then followed; contracts and grants writing. In the first, elements of a contract (offer, acceptance, consideration and intention to enter into legal relations) were discussed. In the latter presentation on grant writing elements of grant proposal were presented and discussed.

Understanding financial Management was the last presentation for the day and it included principles of financial management such as organizing financial systems, financial accounts structure, financial manual and a financial year planner. A subset of this discussion focused on strategic and operational financial planning process, types of budget, the budgeting process, and financial reports and their interpretation.

Day four

Day four kicked off with a presentation on “Good Clinical Practice (GCP) compliant laboratories” by Dr Roma Chilengi of AMANET. Dr Chilengi said that the principle aim of a GCP compliant laboratory is to ensure that analytical tests, reporting, interpretation and verification are accurate. The presentation discussed in detail the objectives, requirements, quality assurance (QA) and quality control (QC) policies, validations and standard operating procedures for a GCP compliant lab.

The next presentation was on “ethics committees (EC)” by Prof Kilama. Prof Kilama discussed responsibility, composition and role of ECs. The presentation also discussed the various documents to be submitted for EC review, monitoring and follow-up as being part of important activities by the EC.

A second presentation by Dr Chilengi was on “Research Monitoring and Oversight”. In his talk, Dr Chilengi discussed monitoring from sponsor and institutional perspectives, roles of internal and external monitors and how to deal with them, and grantsmanship. Financial accountability, training and mentorship and a sound publication policy were also discussed.

Other presentations in day four were on dissemination of research results and an illustration on final analysis using financial ratio analysis.

Day five

The last day started with a presentation on “Employee Relations and dealing with staff labour unions” by Ms Adebessin. This session provided suggestions on programmes and philosophies to increase an employee’s satisfaction and desire to stay with an organization, charted out new ideas and tools concerning relationship management, gave insight into some skills needed to be, and discussed effective Management of Trade unions and major types of industrial actions.

The Final presentation was on quality management tools. This presentation focused on different types of tools that managers can use in finding solutions for different situations/problems.