

Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of the DELTAS LRP newsletter and a belated happy new year to all. In this newsletter, we provide brief updates on the inception phase report, recruitment and project budget, introduce the DELTAS LRP PhD students and overview key activities and outputs for 2017.

Inception Phase Report

The DELTAS LRP Inception Phase report submitted to Wellcome Trust and DFID in August 2016 has been formally approved. As such, the DELTAS LRP has now moved into full programme mode (i.e. implementation of learning research activities). Key activities for 2017 are listed further below. The DELTAS LRP Inception Phase report is available via the following link:

<http://www.lstmed.ac.uk/research/centres-and-units/capacity-research-unit-cru/our-projects/deltas-learning-research>

Recruitment

Interviews for the research assistant position to support learning theme 2 'Research Training' have been completed and an offer of employment made. The preferred candidate has accepted the offer and is currently awaiting a work visa before he can commence employment. His provisional start date is March 13th, 2017. A full profile will be presented in the next DELTAS LRP newsletter.

All positions on the DELTAS LRP have now been successfully filled (pending work visa approval).

Supplementary Budget

Wellcome Trust have approved a supplementary budget for the DELTAS LRP to support travel for DELTAS LRP staff and advisory panel members to attend key meetings. This includes support to attend annual DELTAS meetings, to present DELTAS LRP findings at relevant international conferences, to share learning from the DELTAS LRP with other capacity strengthening programmes (e.g. Royal Society–DFID Africa Capacity Building Initiative) and to convene meetings between DELTAS LRP partners and advisory panel members. We gratefully acknowledge this support from Wellcome Trust which we believe will allow us to more fully engage with DELTAS Africa activities and enhance the outcome and impact of the DELTAS LRP.

DELTAS LRP PhD Students

The two DELTAS LRP-funded PhD students – Ms Millicent Liani and Ms Violet Murunga – completed their formal PhD registrations at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine in the last quarter of 2016. The two PhD candidates are profiled below:

Ms Millicent L. Liani



Millicent's PhD project is titled: "**Examining barriers and enablers to gender equitable scientific career pathways in African research institutions**". She is supervised by Dr. Rachel Tolhurst (LSTM), Dr. Stefanie Gregorios (LSTM) and Prof. Isaac K. Nyamongo (University of Nairobi, Kenya) and will be based at the University of Nairobi, Kenya, for the duration of her PhD. Her interest lies in the application of anthropological and gender and development knowledge in research and development work.

Millicent has over six years' experience in qualitative research as well as gender and development practice having worked in the fields of public and global health, climate change, agriculture and human nutrition. Prior to joining LSTM, she was working as an Associate Research Scientist-Gender, at the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) in the Eastern and Southern Africa Regional Office where she was in-charge of implementing gendered research activities by working together with a multi-disciplinary team of scientists. Previously, she also worked with International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) as a Research Officer-Gender, and has consulted for various health-based research organizations such as African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC), Family Health International (FHI 360) and Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) among others in the capacity of a qualitative researcher.

Millicent has a Master of Arts degree in Medical Anthropology and Bachelor of Arts degree with first class honors in Anthropology and Gender Studies, all from the University of Nairobi, Kenya.

Ms Violet Murunga



Violet's PhD project is titled: **"Exploring the research uptake strategies being used by African researchers to promote evidence-informed decision making"**. She is supervised by Prof. Imelda Bates (LSTM), Dr Justin Pulford (LSTM) and Dr Rose Oronje (AFIDEP) and will be based at the African Institute for Development Policy (AFIDEP), Nairobi, Kenya for the duration of her PhD. Violet has over 10 years' experience in research and knowledge translation in Kenya and the United States. Her research and knowledge translation work has primarily been focused in the fields of sexual and reproductive health, maternal and child health and education.

Violet has been employed at AFIDEP since 2011, most recently in the role of senior research/knowledge translation officer. Key projects she worked on during this time include: leading monitoring and evaluation activities for a DFID-funded capacity building programme focused on reducing bottlenecks in use of research evidence and data in Kenya's Ministry of Health and Parliament; and managing a Norad-funded programme aimed at promoting the use of research evidence and data by policymakers focusing on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. She also has experience managing a range of policy and programme environment assessments on various health and development issues of importance in Africa mainly focusing on reproductive health and education.

Violet has a Master of Public Health in Epidemiology, Florida International University, USA and Bachelor of Science in Biotechnology, University of Newcastle, Australia.

Ms Nadia Tagoe

A third DELTAS LRP-related PhD studentship has been offered to Ms Nadia Tagoe within the context of the DELTAS Africa Initiative to Develop African Research Leaders (IDeAL) consortium. Ms Tagoe will formally register for her PhD, with the Open University UK, in March 2017 and will be supervised by

Dr Samson Kinyanjui (KEMRI-Wellcome Trust), Prof. Sassy Molyneux (KEMRI-Wellcome Trust) and Dr Justin Pulford (LSTM). Her provisional PhD title is: **“A systematic examination of the process and experience of establishing and managing research capacity strengthening consortia”**. A full profile on Ms Tagoe will be presented in the next DELTAS LRP newsletter.

2017 Workplan

Key DELTAS LRP activities scheduled for 2017 are presented below by thematic area. All partners and relevant consortia will be advised well in advance of any scheduled data collection activity.

Theme 1: Equitable Careers

March 31: Protocol development completed
 June 30: Ethics submission approved
 July 1: Data collection commences (surveys and/or in-depth interviews)
 August 31: Literature review completed

Theme 2: Research Training

March 13: Research assistant commences
 March 31: Workplan completed
 April 1: Data collection commences. Priority activity will be the development of an updated register of all post-graduate health research-related training programmes provided by African higher education institutions (inclusive of Francophone and Anglophone programmes)
 Dec 31: Register of post-graduate health research-related training programmes completed

Theme 3: Research Uptake

Jan 31: Protocol development completed
 June 30: Ethics submission approved
 July 1: Data collection commences (surveys and/or in-depth interviews)
 August 31: Literature review completed

Scheduled DELTAS LRP outputs for 2017 include:

March 31: Submission of annual DELTAS ‘learning’ report
 July: DELTAS LRP update at DELTAS AGM
 August 31: Submission of two literature review manuscripts for publication: 1) Enablers and barriers to equitable career advancement in science: A review of the international literature; and 2) Enablers and barriers to research uptake in Africa: A review of the published literature. Key findings from both reviews will be shared with DELTAS consortia members prior to publication.

I look forward to working with you all more closely this year as we implement the DELTAS learning research themes. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Justin Pulford, Deputy PI, DELTAS LRP
 justin.pulford@lstmed.ac.uk

CRU, LSTM.