



Rock Hyraxes About to Dive for Cover
(photo by E Kawira, Shirati, TZ)

Associations

How startled would you be to find out that your closest relative is the elephant?

These startled looking creatures in the photo at left have to deal with that very fact. Though there is a huge difference in size, not to mention furriness and length of nose, genetic studies have confirmed the relationship. Actually, these rock hyraxes (also known as coneys) and the elephant do have one other living relative, a marine creature known as the manatee, looking outwardly like a cross between a hippo and a dolphin, and residing not in Africa but only in Florida in North America!

Outward appearances can be deceiving. Fortunately, with the discovery of DNA and the genetic code, we can now unravel tangled skeins of relationships affected by eons of time and by the fractures from continental drift.

The EMBLEM study will bring to bear the power of genome-wide association studies in attempting to further delineate the causation of Burkitt Lymphoma from the genetic aspects. We know that BL does sometimes reoccur in the same family. Even now I am treating a BL patient who is a cousin of a patient from earlier this year! It may be that BL will prove to be more common within certain larger populations, for instance the Luo in Tanzania, Kenya, and Uganda, and a sister tribe, the Acholi, in northern Uganda. *Dr. Esther Kawira, Editor*

EMBLEM Uganda

Case and Control enrollment

There are currently 50 cases enrolled -thanks to the tireless efforts of BL case spotters. This number is slated to increase as we increase the effort to spot cases at other hospitals in the region. The Uganda Bureau of Statistics (UBOS) has embarked on census in the last set of 4 (out of 12) pilot villages. This involved one week (August 26 to 30th) training of 9 enumerators in basic methods to collect detailed census data followed by conducting the field work from September 1st to 9th. The EMBLEM Field team trained 10 Community Research Assistants (CRAs) from Kangude, Jungi, Burra, Ndriba and Orapi villages. The CRAs will work as community guides during Health Centre II (HCII) control enrollment and will provide BL community awareness support to strengthen BL spotting in villages and health centers. The CRAs also started collecting data about attendance of children to their local HCII (Arwa Health centre III, Dranya HC II, Pajulu HC Yibili HC II and Bondo HC II) on September 5, 2011.



Nile Region Trainees with some EMBLEM staff.



Members of the Community Advisory Board

Community Advisory Board to promote the EMBLEM in the community

To foster communication between EMBLEM and the community, EMBLEM has invited eminent members of the community to serve on its Community Advisory board (CAB). The first meeting was held on August 19th (see photo at left).

Other supporting activities

The EMBLEM team continues to give regular presentations to hospital staff about the study. The Kuluva laboratory is setup. The Study Monitor conducted a routine monitoring visit at Lacor and Kuluva on 12th August.

EMBLEM Kenya



1st Medical and Veterinary Virus Research in Kenya (MVVR-K 1) Symposium, 8-9 September 2011

The EMBLEM Kenya team attended a 2-day symposium in Nairobi, the first Medical and Veterinary Virus Research- Kenya (MVV-R). Three investigators attended the conference and presented 3 papers (2 posters and 1 oral). The session was a very interactive and included a wide range of scientists and researchers from various organizations (See above picture). The conference was sponsored by Walter Reed.

The EMBLEM Kenya study has so far registered one patient in the Pediatric Cancer Registry. He is responding well to treatment at Homa Bay District Hospital.

EMBLEM Tanzania



The EMBLEM Tanzania team convened at Bugando Medical Center in Mwanza to hold an informational session for leaders and

heads of departments. Photo at left shows Dr. Rogatus Kabyemera, EMBLEM study doctor at Bugando, right front, and seated just behind him is Mr. John Pemba, head of Pharmaceutical Services.

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Laboratory equipment arrived for Bugando and lab is being set up.