

**“EMBLEM – Empowering Local Scientists to Find Answers for Burkitt Lymphoma”**



**EMBLEM Steering Committee Meeting at Lacor**

In November 2010, Lacor Hospital in Gulu, northern Uganda played host to the first [Steering Committee Meeting](#) of the EMBLEM Research Study. The 17 participants present at the Lacor meeting approved the study to transition from a pre-implementation phase to the implementation phase of the study and supervised the enrollment of the first case in Uganda. Members from Kenya and Tanzania attended to observe and learn from the Ugandan team. This meeting was a watershed point in the plans to standardize, harmonize and empower local teams to conduct

a high-quality high-impact study on Burkitt Lymphoma (BL). In September 2012, the National Institute of Medical Research (NIMR) in Mwanza, northern Tanzania played host to the first [EMBLEM Status Update Meeting](#). The 60 participants reviewed EMBLEM study procedures, and learned about cancer research methods, research project management, ethics, and study monitoring. These sessions were designed to strengthen the theoretical understanding of the practical work being implemented by EMBLEM Staff.



**First EMBLEM Status Update and Scientific Meeting at NIMR**

In September 2014, the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) in Kisumu, western Kenya played host to the second EMBLEM Status Update Meeting. The 85 participants, including local and international experts in BL and related fields, received a report about EMBLEM, participated in scientific discussions about



**Second EMBLEM Status Update and Scientific Meeting at KEMRI**

the role of malaria and host genetics in BL, and learned advanced concepts in cancer research methods, research project management, ethics, and study monitoring. [Fogarty International Center](#) and [Center for AIDS Research in South Africa](#) sponsored 5 successful African scientists to orient EMBLEM PIs about the role and responsibilities of being an independent principal investigator.



**Successful African PIs shared tips with EMBLEM PIs**

## EMBLEM UGANDA

A total of 560 (356 males, 204 females) potential cases have been spotted. Of these, 308 were eligible and 292 (185 males, 107 females) were enrolled. Plans to finalize matched control enrollment in West Nile Region were completed.



Mr. Mark Ssenono

After a long wait, the EMBLEM Team was happy to welcome Mr. Mark Ssenono as the new EMBLEM Data Coordinator. Mark comes with a lot of experience from the Infectious Diseases Institute (IDI) in Kampala and he is expected to strengthen Uganda's EMBLEM team capacity to clean and verify data and perform some analyses locally. He will also support the teams in Kenya and Tanzania.

## EMBLEM KENYA

A total of 446 (280 males, 156 females) potential cases have been spotted. Of these, 165 (118 males, 47 females) were enrolled. Following their return from Uganda, where the team went to get practical fieldwork experience with the Ugandan team prior to completing their plans for control enrollment, the team spent the month developing detailed plans for matched control enrollment. The Kenyan teams are working to standardize and harmonize their work the experience in Uganda to increase comparability of results from the two countries.

## EMBLEM TANZANIA

A total of 410 (225 males, 185 females) potential cases have been spotted. Of these, 94 were eligible and 87 (52 males, 35 females) were enrolled.

Continuing in the spirit of collaboration and willingness to share their experience, the EMBLEM team in Tanzania recently welcomed Dr. Kristin Schroeder, a visiting scientist from Duke University who is interested in BL, to work with them. Dr. Schroeder will work closely with Dr. Masalu (EMBLEM co-PI in Tanzania) to strengthen diagnosis and treatment of BL at Bugando Medical Centre. Her presence at Bugando signals the increasing attractiveness of EMBLEM sites for collaborative research and the potential to improve capacity for research through posting of international scientists to support local scientists. We welcome her to the EMBLEM family and wish her all the best in her work.



Dr. Kristin Schroeder

## EMBLEM GOALS

The EMBLEM field motto is *"Together Everyone Achieves More"* or *TEAM*. We are grateful to the Director of KEMRI at Kisumu, Dr. Steven Munga (at right) and the entire staff of KEMRI for hosting the 2<sup>nd</sup> Status Update Meeting at the well-maintained and highly inspiring Kisumu Campus. This spirit of generosity made the EMBLEM meeting feasible and highlighted the strong support EMBLEM receives from the governments of East Africa.



Dr. Steven Munga

EMBLEM Newsletter is a monthly on-line publication based on contributions of the EMBLEM Study staff.

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