

Training Health Researchers into Vocational Excellence in East Africa (THRiVE)



PARTNER MANAGEMENT MANUAL

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1.0 Background of THRiVE

THRiVE was established in 2009 with the underlying 10-year vision of developing a regional network of research excellence, including some of the best universities and research institutions in East Africa (Makerere University, Gulu University, Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University College, Uganda Virus Research Institute, National University of Rwanda (NUR), National Institute of Medical Research, Mwanza and International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology with support from two leading UK universities (The London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine and University of Cambridge). After the first 6 years of THRiVE NUR was dropped from the consortium because of its slow progress in the implementation of the consortium activities. Our current vision is that by 2030 Africa will lead research that has a major impact on health in the region and make significant contributions to world health.

2.0 Purpose of the Manual

The manual was prepared to guide the technical and financial management of the consortium and to ensure effective value for money in all partner activities that will be involved in the direct implementation of the program. The manual is designed to ensure that the program is administered with proper financial stewardship and that funds are put to the intended use and according to the requirements of the program to meet set targets as per the award.

3.0 Partner Selection process

Selection of consortium partners is a key activity that must be carried out with care. Every 5-year cycles which will align with our major funding cycle an assessment will be carried out by the secretariat to provide information to the THRiVE Steering Committee on which of the existing THRiVE partners have played a less than optimal role in contributing to achieving research excellence. Another key consideration is whether or not the partner has the capacity to implement THRiVE activities and also provide proper accountability for donor funds. In addition, the secretariat will provide information as to which other institutions in the region have expressed an interest to join THRiVE and have great potential to contribute to the realization of THRiVE's goals and objectives. Partner assessment should be based on a wide variety of factors including but not limited to the partner's financial management systems, educational and research track record. Document reviews such as audited financial reports, annual reports, and issues trackers will be used to assess the suitability of the partner. Findings from annual evaluation site visits, responses by institutional leaders and the co-applicants will also be factored into the discussions and decision-making processes.

Moving forward from THRiVE-2

The selection process for THRiVE-3 will take into account the institution's potential overall intellectual contribution to the network strategy. The lead applicant, Makerere University (MU) and the sub-grantees demonstrated adherence to the Wellcome Trust (WT) grant

terms and conditions, policies of their own institutions, national laws and statutes and standard international research guidelines will be evaluated in 2020. In case of conflicting policies, discussions between MU, the concerned partner institution and/or the WT will define an agreed position. A contract will be signed between MU and each partner stating the roles and responsibilities of both parties.

4.0 Partner management

The THRiVE secretariat must provide oversight responsibilities under the guidance of the Director and program manager to support partners through a number of processes for purposes of ensuring quality, value for money, capacity building, compliance and risk management. Below are the mechanisms for this:

4.1 Regular communication

The secretariat shall maintain regular communication between partners concerning the management of the day to day business of THRiVE. Communication with partners is guided by the Makerere University Communications policy supplemented by the THRiVE Communications policy. Various modes of communications should be used as appropriate and will include telephone, electronic communication, online discussions, monitoring tools, social media, THRiVE website, public media, site visits and face -to-face meeting. These are detailed in the THRiVE communications strategy, annual conferences and workshops.

4.2 Committee Meetings

THRiVE has established various committees to be in charge of different operations of the project.

The committees are:

4.2.1 Steering Committee (SC)

The SC will provide overall governance of the programme, policy making and setting the strategic direction. The SC is composed of one senior researcher per partner institution and will manage potential programme risks. The risk management matrix developed in THRiVE-1 to identify, assess and manage risks that may hinder achievement of THRiVE-2's objectives will be revised and approved by the SC. Our business continuity plan that prioritises services in case of a significant event will be revised. The committee meets quarterly.

4.2.2 PhD/Post-doctoral and Masters Committee (PPMC)

This committee is composed of a member per partner institution. It is in charge of selection of PhDs, Post docs and masters fellows. It also ensures the smooth running of training programs. The committee meets bi annually.

4.2.3 Career Development Awards Committee (CDAC)

CDAC is composed of a member per partner institutions. It is in charge of coordinating short courses, small grants and interns. The committee meets quarterly.

4.2.4 Public Engagement Committee (PEC)

PEC is composed of a member at each partner institution. These act as CPE leads at their respective institutions. The committee meets quarterly.

4.2.5 Finance Committee (FC)

The FC is composed of Finance Officers at partner institutions. It is in charge of implementing consortium and institutional financial operations. The committee meets quarterly online using platforms like Zoom or Skype. The finance committee is also responsible for arranging the annual audits which are carried out by government auditors and at times external auditing firms. The audit firms are selected every year by the university top leadership and THRiVE is not involved in that process. The Steering committee has to review the audit reports to ensure leadership is in the know of progress being made.

4.2.6 Institutional implementation Committee (IIC)

Each institution has an IICs composed of all THRiVE staff at the institution. It ensures that the institution meets consortium obligation. At the lead institution, the committee meets weekly and each partner institution decides how regularly they should meet. The IIC at Makerere is one place where a lot of discussions take place to monitor the financial performance of individual partners and the consortium as a whole. Financial projections are carried out every two quarters and submitted to AESA for approval. The projections are based on the previous quarter's absorptions, the remaining uncommitted funds and the projected program activities for the subsequent two quarters.

4.3 Site visits

From proposal

The THRiVE secretariat shall ensure that site visits to partners are conducted annually using an updated site visit data collection tool. The site visits will provide further insights in how THRiVE-2 business is being implemented at partner institutions including institutional compliance with WT Grant Terms and Conditions.

The consortium M&E officer will oversee activities including: revision of data collection tools, data collection, summarization, and reporting. At each partner institution a dedicated person responsible for M&E activities has been identified and resources earmarked for the position. At the beginning of THRiVE-2, with technical support from an M&E consultant, we held a 5-day inception workshop to:

- Complete development of a logic model of THRiVE-2 activities
- Reflect on Consortium Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT analysis)

- Identify key risks and explore mitigation and management approaches
- Finalize baseline and evaluation indicators

To strengthen consortium capacity for M&E, annual refresher trainings are offered. Each year, we shall conduct an M&E meeting to assess progress towards set targets. We use M&E results for accountability to our stakeholders, continuous learning, improvement of the program and documenting our achievements and challenges. THRiVE has to communicate the results to:

- Consortium members (within the consortium)
- Wellcome Trust and other funders
- Other stakeholders e.g. the public, policy makers, academia, practitioners and NGOs

Communication between consortium members will help capture evolution and progress in meeting THRiVE-2 objectives and help develop an understanding of what is being achieved and why, whether milestones and expectations are being met or not. The learning that stems from evaluations is incorporated into THRiVE-2's on-going planning and management activities, and provides information which will inform any adaptations and modifications of action plans (e.g. during annual general meetings).

4.4 Annual general meetings

The annual general meeting is of great value in monitoring what takes place in institutions, the progress made and provides accountability in terms of program return for the funds invested in the previous 12 months. The meeting brings together faculty, mentors, fellows and the public from all partner institutions. The fellows present their research and receive detailed criticisms and suggestions.

4.5 Policies and guidelines

THRiVE has developed its project specific policies and guidelines which partners have adopted where they do not have the relevant institutional policy. These policies include: Human Resource Policy, Risk Management Policy, Whistle blower policy, antifraud and anti bribery policy.

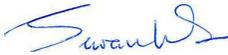
4.6 Online monitoring and Evaluation

THRiVE has developed an online monitoring and evaluation tool which must be used by all partner institutions to input or record in real time THRiVE activities undertaken at their institutions. The THRiVE Secretariat can access all entries from every partner in real time and therefore be able to monitor progress. A second online tool was developed to be used specifically by fellows and their supervisors/mentors. Similarly, the fellows record their activities in real time and enable the secretariat to monitor progress.

4.7 End of year Reports to the funders

At the end of each year, every partner must provide detailed information about their performance guided by the 4 pillars of the DELTAS Theory of Change. These reports

contribute to the final report which is submitted to the funders and University leadership. Data from the online monitoring tools (section 4.6) is also used in writing the annual reports.



14th August

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Chairman, THRiVE Steering Committee

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Date