

October 31, 2023

The Panel Members  
National Science Technology and Innovation Council (NSTIC)  
Ministry of Technical and Higher Education  
Government of Sierra Leone

Dear Panel Members,

**Statement supporting Dr Sulaiman Lakoh's application.**

I write in support of Sulaiman's application for the NSTIC call for grant application on health and wellbeing of the population in Sierra Leone.

My research engagement with Sulaiman goes back about 5 years, when he conducted a study on the healthcare associated infections in the national referral hospital of Sierra Leone. Sulaiman was instrumental in getting the job done. This work provided clinicians and policy makers in the country with detailed understanding of burden of antimicrobial resistance in patients with healthcare associated infections, educate them on the need for appropriate antibiotic prescribing and lays the groundwork for institutionalizing antimicrobial stewardship in Sierra Leone.

In parallel with this, I worked with Sulaiman and other colleagues within Sustainable Health Systems on several other studies on antimicrobial resistance, HIV, tuberculosis, and viral hepatitis in Sierra Leone, with more 74 manuscripts published to date

(<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=Lakoh+S>) and many more manuscripts in press.

Sulaiman has the ability to initiate ideas. One of the numerous ideas he has initiated is the establishment of a data management system to track antimicrobial consumption in hospitalized patients in Sierra Leone. He is a focused individual and has a strong drive to support the improvement of the health system in Sierra Leone and similar countries in sub-Saharan Africa. I believe this was one of the main reasons why he decided to apply for this call for proposals. This grant will allow Sulaiman, along with other experts in antimicrobial resistance, to be properly equipped and positioned to guide efforts to address the challenges with antimicrobial resistance in the country.

Sulaiman's strength lies in his leadership qualities. He is very intelligent, hardworking, amiable, trustworthy, conscientious and highly resourceful with adequate motivation for academic activities. Sulaiman's demeanor demonstrates professionalism and exudes excellent communication and interpersonal skills to effectively connect with patients, colleagues and the public. He is respectful, inquisitive, pays attention to details and eager to engage in the process of learning.

He has shown a keen interest in tropical medicine research as he is currently engaged in many research and clinical activities related to this field. However, his interests go beyond clinical practice, as he has been actively involved in national public health activities on numerous occasions, including developing national policy documents and implementing strategies. Sulaiman is a member of the International COVID-19 Research Network, a team member of the African Research Collaboration on Sepsis (<https://www.arcsepsis.com/sierra-leone>) and the country Ambassador for the Global Action

For Fungal Infections (<https://gaffi.org/who/our-ambassadors/>). He has received several trainings on implementation research, including the World Health Organization Structured Operational Research Initiative (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FNwV3asNUTE>) and the Pan African Thoracic Society Methods in Epidemiologic, Clinical and Operations Research. He provides mentorship on several areas, such as mentorship of medical students on research ([https://issuu.com/slemsasl/docs/score\\_research](https://issuu.com/slemsasl/docs/score_research)). Sulaiman played a key role in the development of national policies on HIV, including the Consolidated Guidelines on the Prevention and Treatment of HIV in Sierra Leone (<https://www.nas.gov.sl/publication/164-consolidated-hiv-guidelines-on-hiv-prevention-october-2020>) and Guide to Differentiated Service Delivery (<https://differentiatedservicedelivery.org/wp-content/uploads/guide-of-differentiated-care-model-sierra-leone-final-version-may-2018.pdf>).

After consulting with me and several key partners in Sierra Leone, Sulaiman developed a plan on how to disseminate the knowledge gained from this grant. In short, Sulaiman will endeavor to share the knowledge gained from this project, appropriate to the needs of Sierra Leone, focused on providing leadership in antimicrobial resistance research in Sierra Leone. We expect that Sulaiman will be provided this opportunity to implement this grant.

Please accept my unreserved recommendation for Sulaiman Lakoh for the NSTIC Grant and do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information on Sulaiman's qualifications and competencies.

Sincerely,



Dr. Stephen Sevalie  
Director of Mental Health and Founder  
Sustainable Health Systems