

Request #1756 2024 Reporting

Monitoring form: March interim report - March interim report

Early Career Grant interim progress report

Your project

Review and submit

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i All mandatory fields are completed.

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1. Progress

How is your project progressing so far?

My project, Capacity Assessment of Health Workers in Managing Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTDs) in Primary Healthcare Facilities, is progressing well according to the planned objectives and activities. So far, I have successfully drafted the research proposal and received approval from my supervisor, Dr. Atuhaire. I have also obtained ethical approval from St. Mary's Hospital Lacor Research Ethics Committee, ensuring that the study adheres to ethical guidelines. To facilitate data collection, I have engaged with the District Health Officer (DHO) of Nakivale, who has granted administrative permission to conduct the study in health facilities under his jurisdiction. This approval is critical for accessing the necessary healthcare settings and key health personnel. In preparation for data collection, I am currently conducting a five-session training program for research assistants. Three of these sessions are complete, covering:
Protocol Familiarisation: Introducing the research objectives, methodology, and ethical considerations.
Data Collection Tools: Training on administering structured questionnaires and using data recording instruments.
Qualitative Data Collection: Guiding research assistants on conducting in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). The final sessions will focus on refining qualitative interviewing techniques and addressing potential challenges in the field. I plan to commence data collection by the end of March, ensuring alignment with the project timeline.

Please provide an update on your progress, referring to the objectives and activities detailed in your project proposal.

My project is advancing steadily, with key preparatory activities nearing completion. The study aims to evaluate healthcare workers' capacity to manage NTDs, focusing on their knowledge, diagnostic capabilities, and available resources. The findings will inform strategies to enhance healthcare delivery in resource-limited settings. Part of my working objectives for this working period have been:
Objective 1: Obtain Necessary Approvals and Permissions
I have secured all necessary approvals, including research clearance from St. Mary's Hospital Lacor Research Ethics Committee and administrative permission from the District Health Officer of Nakivale. These approvals ensure compliance with ethical and regulatory requirements.
Objective 2: Develop and Validate Data Collection Tools
I have designed structured questionnaires and interview guides to assess healthcare workers' competencies in NTD management. These tools have been reviewed and refined for accuracy and relevance.
Objective 3: Train Research Assistants
I am currently leading a five-session training program for research assistants. The first three sessions have focused on:
Understanding the study protocol and ethical considerations.
Proper administration of structured questionnaires and data recording.
Conducting in-depth interviews and FGDs using best practices in qualitative research.
The remaining sessions will refine qualitative data collection techniques and prepare the team for fieldwork.
Objective 4: Pilot Testing
Before full-scale data collection, I plan to conduct a pilot test to ensure the reliability and validity of the research tools.
Objective 5: Data Collection
I aim to begin data collection by the end of March. This phase will involve engaging health workers in primary healthcare facilities to assess their knowledge, diagnostic practices, and resource utilization in managing NTDs.

2. Challenges

Have you had any challenges to your project progress?

Yes

If yes, what challenges have you encountered?

There have been budgetary fluctuations due to exchange rate variations and withdrawal charges for project-related expenses. In the initial budget, the exchange rate was set at 4,600 UGX per USD. However, upon withdrawal, the exchange rate fluctuates between 4,200 and 4,300 UGX, while the cost of goods and services in the local currency remains fixed at 4,600 UGX per USD. This discrepancy has led to a shortfall in available funds for some planned activities. Despite this, we are working on mitigating these financial inconsistencies through careful budget adjustments and exploring cost-effective alternatives to ensure the project stays on track.

3. Membership

Has your RSTMH membership been beneficial so far? 

Yes

Please tell us more about how you have utilised your RSTMH membership. 

So far, I have not yet fully utilized the RSTMH membership. However, I have explored available opportunities for publication and have started networking with relevant professionals, including Kirya Tevin Walter, the current RSTMH student ambassador. I hope to leverage the membership further as the project progresses.

4. Please upload any supporting evidence that you would like to share. 

Uploaded files:

 REC Receipt.jpg

 Laptop.pdf

5. Please update the budget against any spent items.

[Expand rows](#)

Group	Item	Planned	Period 1	
▶		200		Edit
▶		800		Edit
▶		500		Edit
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▶		300		Edit
▶		868	868	Edit
▶		165		Edit
▶		320		Edit
▶		327	25	Edit
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▶		200		Edit

Sum: 5,000

Sum: 893

[Edit as Table](#)

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