



The African Reproductive Health Research and Training Network

We all seem to be doing very well

but.....

African Research Centres for SRH – What we Know

- We know that SRH is a major public health and developmental priority
- We know what the problems are
- We know what we should be doing
- We are trying to address the problems
- We know the research should be strongly linked to government/regional health priorities

However, our impact is variable

African Research Centres for SRH – the Challenges

Intrinsic

- Human resource constraints
- Financial
- Pure researchers or multi-skilled researchers /trainers/ advocates?
- Multiple demands on staff
- Ethical constraints

Extrinsic

- Political commitment
- ‘Safari’ research
- Control of research agenda through funding
- Demands of sustainability
- Low national priority on research spending
- RHR Priorities

African Research Centres for SRH

– What are We Asking For?

- Scientific excellence
- Ability to undertake research utilising all types of methodologies
- Ability to set a list of research priorities
- Ability to write: Scientific, popular, policy
- Advocacy
- Ability to fundraise
- Insight into national policy
- Strong links to government
- Ability to develop research capacity
- Ability to turn research into programmes
- Ability to run this centre with donors reluctant to fund 'core' costs

***How Can an African Reproductive Health
Research and Training Network Contribute to
Strengthening Research Capacity in the
Region?***



The Purpose of 'The Network'

To forge partnerships to develop, implement, and support RH research, research training and capacity building in the Africa region. The Network will also help to promote south-to-south collaboration, and strengthen linkages between research institutions within the region. The Network will also serve as a channel to share information, and disseminate research findings and lessons learnt

Objectives of 'The Network'

1. To provide technical support to research institutions and programmes
2. To enhance research training and capacity building
3. To promote the dissemination of reproductive health research findings and lessons learned
4. To advocate for research support and collaboration

Activities of 'The Network'

1. To provide technical support to research institutions and programmes
 - Database of consultants and research scientists
 - The African Reproductive Health Research Directory – Expand, update and maintain, disseminate

Activities of 'The Network'

2. To enhance research training and capacity building
 - Reproductive Health Research Methods Course
 - Research Training Internships

Activities of 'The Network'

3. To promote the dissemination of reproductive health research findings and lessons learned
 - The Reproductive Health Priorities Conference
 - State of the Art Symposia and Scientific Meetings
 - Network Website

Activities of 'The Network'

4. To advocate for research support and collaboration
 - Promote region specific research initiatives
 - promote multi-center clinical trials – serve as resource to identify interested institutions and potential study sites
 - Exchange of scientists

Plans for end 2003

- Identify interested research institutions especially the WHO collaborating/supported centers
- Identify existing Networks within the region
- Solicit ideas
- Visit few countries with centers/networks

Plans for 2004

- Develop database of RH research and training institutions and networks / Update Directory
- March/April meeting of a steering committee
- August first members meeting – pre conference symposium/meeting
- RH Priorities Conference – members submit papers for presentation
- Work with the African Reproductive Health Journal