



Researchers from Jos University receive grant for research on long-term outcomes following treatment in a Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme

In March 2016, researchers from the University of Jos were awarded a grant for a new research project to study long-term outcomes following treatment in a Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme in Jigawa State. The grant was awarded by ORIE (Operations Research and Impact Evaluation), a DFID-funded consortium of UK and Nigerian organisations [<http://www.heart-resources.org/tag/orie/>]. ORIE undertakes nutrition research and evaluation to generate evidence on the operationalisation, cost-effectiveness and impact of a major DFID-funded six-year programme to implement and scale-up nutrition interventions in Northern Nigeria, called WINNN [<http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-201874/>]. ORIE also invests in strengthening the capacity of nutrition researchers working in Northern Nigeria, by providing funding to enable researchers to design and undertake their own research project with the ongoing support and guidance of a group of experienced international researchers. The team was one of four successful bidders in a competitive bidding process in late 2014, which attracted thirty-two applications.

The project will generate valuable research findings on long-term outcomes following treatment in a Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme

Every year about one million children under five years of age die in Nigeria. Malnutrition contributes to nearly half of these deaths.

The CMAM (Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition) programme is recognised as a cost-effective way of treating large numbers of children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) without needing to admit them to a health facility or therapeutic feeding centre. It allows for proactive case-finding in the community, early treatment before medical complications develop, and high population coverage. As such, it has the potential to avert the deaths of hundreds of thousands of children in the Northern Nigerian context. But there is a lack of data on long-term outcomes and rising concerns over high post-discharge relapse and mortality rates.

The team will examine the survival, health and growth outcomes of a sample of approximately 500 children treated in WINNN-supported out-patient CMAM centres in two LGAs in the state of Jigawa. Survey data including information on maternal, paternal and household characteristics, and child anthropometry, health status and feeding practices will be collected for each child at enrolment, and then again in the home, six months after discharge. The data will allow for the analysis of risk factors associated with good and poor long-term outcomes. Focus group discussions will be conducted with service users (mothers, fathers and older women in the household) to explore factors in the home which may contribute to good or poor long-term child outcomes. This will include exploration as to whether there

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There have been changes in household knowledge and behaviour in relation to factors such as hygiene and child feeding practices as a result of the counselling received in the CMAM programme. Data collection activities are scheduled to start in May 2016. Findings are expected to be disseminated in early 2017.

The findings will be used to advocate for post-discharge follow-up programmes in the community. The team will use a targeted dissemination strategy to ensure that its findings and policy recommendations are widely communicated to policymakers, programme managers and other key nutrition stakeholders. Findings will also be disseminated to the scientific community via presentations at conferences and at least one article in a national or international peer-reviewed journal. Context-specific evidence such as this, generated by high quality research, is essential to underpin the Scaling-up Nutrition agenda in Nigeria.

Developing new research skills

The grant is accompanied by support activities, including ongoing informal support and guidance and formal training provided by ORIE's researchers. These support activities are designed to strengthen data collection and analysis and to provide a forum for trouble-shooting as and when problems arise. The formal program includes training in qualitative and quantitative research methods, the use of specialised software packages for data analysis, and general research skills such as writing research grant applications and scientific papers, and using electronic literature.



Right members of the Jos team participate in qualitative research training course.

ORIE and WINNN

ORIE is an independent component of the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) funded Working to Improve Nutrition in Northern Nigeria (WINNN) programme. WINNN is working to improve the nutritional status of 6.2 million children under five years of age in five states of northern Nigeria. ORIE is carrying out research to determine the impact of WINNN and generate important research on key evidence gaps regarding solutions to undernutrition in northern Nigeria.

The team

Dr Collins John (University of Jos) is the Principal Investigator and Dr Ruth Adah (Jos University Teaching Hospital) is the co-Principal Investigator. The other team members are: Mr O. Olosunde (National Primary Health Care development Agency), Dr J. Femi (Federal Ministry of Health), Dr J. Ajibuah (Nigerian Defence Academy, Kaduna), Dr K. Lasisi (Abububakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi), Dr Udochukwu Diala (University of Jos), Dr Luret Lar (University of Jos), and Dr Idris Adedeji (Abububakar Tafawa Balewa University Teaching Hospital Bauchi). Please direct any queries about the research to Dr Collins John at cchibunkem@yahoo.com. For more information on ORIE please contact Dr Vincent Ahonsi on vincent.ahonsi@orie-ng.org

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