STATUS OF HEALTH RESEARCH IN ETHIOPIA AND THE WAY FORWARD

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Health Research in Ethiopia

- Health research has a relatively short history: documented publications since 1935
- Development of health research in Ethiopia has been slow - recent proliferation of new universities and postgraduate education has increased the pace
- Health researchers have been largely conducted by expatriates and donor-driven historically - recent publications are predominantly authored by Ethiopian
- Health researches are mostly conducted in universities; very few health research institutes exists
- No clear agenda and system established to guide health research in Ethiopia
Scientific Publications...Growing

- First 100 publications almost 30 years (1935-1964)
  - No Ethiopian author/co-authors

- 203 publications in 2011 alone
  - 75% Ethiopian authors/co-authors

Source: ONLY Pubmed
1941: "IMPERIAL MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE."
1955: EHNRI

1966: Aklilu Lemma Institute of Pathobiology AAU

1970: Armauer Hansen Research Institute (AHRI)

1975: Ethiopian Science and Technology Commission

1986: Butajira Rural Health Program (more DSS later)

1994-2002: Ethio-Netherlands AIDS research project (ENARP)

1996: Private Research and Training Centers
Field Health Research Institutes

All established and run by universities with various partners and funders.
1954: Public Health College (University of Gondar)

1964: Faculty of Medicine (AAU)

1983: Jimma Institute of Health Sciences (Jimma University)

1996: Dilla Health College (later Hawassa University)

1996: Faculty of Health Sciences (Haramaya University)

2000: College of Health Sciences (Mekelle University)

Several health colleges/universities opened since 2000
Postgraduate Training in Health

- 1978: Clinical specialty training, AAU…currently also in universities of Jimma and Gondar
- 1984: Public Health Masters, AAU…currently in universities of Gondar, Jimma, Haramaya, Mekelle, Hawassa,
- 1989: Masters in Biomedical sciences at AAU
- 2003: PhD Training at AAU…currently in universities of Gondar, Haramaya and Hawassa
Ethiopian Health Related Scientific Journals

- 1963: The Ethiopian Medical Journal
- 1982: Ethiopian Pharmaceutical Journal
- 1984: Ethiopian Journal of health Development
- 2007: Ethiopian Journal of Reproductive Health
- 2008: Ethiopian Journal of Health and Biomedical Sciences

...challenged by high costs of publishing, lack of skilled production personnel, problem in motivating peer reviewers, no 'full-time journal editor’, and long delays in the review process
Significant improvement in the last two decades

- 1995: National Health Research Ethics Review guideline
- 1995 (since): Ethical review committees (boards) established in major academic and research institutes
- 2005: Ethiopia Bioethics Initiative established and supported training

Major challenges include:
- uneven awareness about health ethics among professionals
- delayed processing of ethical review requests
Some Major Challenges

- lack of research culture
- Limited qualified/trained researchers
- limited infrastructure for research
- Limited funding for research
- lack of properly defined research agenda
- lack of system and skills in research management
- lack of access to scientific publications and publishers
- lack of effective mentorship
- lack of incentive for researchers
- high level brain drain
- inaccessible recording and documentation
The Way Forward

- Strengthen the research culture in all relevant institutions
- Develop national research agenda to increase quality and relevance of research
- Promote actual allocation of government funds for health research - reduce dependency on external funding
- Improve research management and promote conducive working environment
- Strengthen the human resource production for research - by rapidly expanding the PhD level training
- Strengthen and expand research infrastructure
- Create effective incentive mechanisms for researchers and actively promote retention of senior researchers
Thank You!!