

## Summer 2019 | News

Welcome...

to our CORDS Summer 2019 newsletter. CORDS is comprised of six regional networks, working to reduce and prevent the spread of diseases by exchanging information and best practice. Our vision is a world united against infectious diseases. Early detection of outbreaks helps keep disease transmission to its area of origin, which, in our increasingly mobile world, is vital to stopping life threatening diseases such as Zika, Ebola and Yellow Fever. The collective expertise of the CORDS networks and their close relationships with local communities facilitate timely detection and response to outbreaks.

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### A new home for CORDS at Ending Pandemics

The team at Ending Pandemics is very excited to be 'adopting' CORDS as a program within its organization. As a long-term partner of CORDS, Ending Pandemics understands the *friendship and trust* necessary to confront global health threats and to advance our collective efforts toward greater national and global health security. Ending Pandemics believes in the vision and mission of CORDS and hopes to sustain this valuable enterprise going forward.

Adjusting to any new home will take some time. The team at Ending Pandemics is ready, willing and able to work with all of you in the greater CORDS community to ensure its continued success. Network members have reiterated that the key values of CORDS include:

- sharing best practices for innovations in surveillance,
- fostering a One Health approach, and
- expanding regional collaboration to other parts of the world.

Adopting CORDS as an internal program of Ending Pandemics allows us to be more cost efficient while still upholding these key values. The existing CORDS website will be maintained as a central location for all to connect as the main vehicle for sharing information among member networks. We have also linked the [CORDS website](#) to the [Ending Pandemics website](#) under 'What We Do.'

As we reflect on the milestones and achievements since the inception of CORDS in 2012, it is clear that much work remains to be done. The potential for real impact, however, is endless if we continue to build on the strong foundation of CORDS. Together we have the ability to stop the spread of infectious diseases and save lives. The team at Ending Pandemics proudly extends a warm "welcome home" to our friends and family at CORDS.

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INP Field Trip visit to Tanzania December 2018

### **InterNetwork Project update**

The InterNetwork Project (INP) is a global collaboration involving the six CORDS member networks, covering 14 countries, including 53 cross-border sites. The objective of the project was to assess Event Based Surveillance (EBS) systems and practices in selected cross border sites. The project was supported by a grant from The Rockefeller Foundation, with technical support from Ending Pandemics.

A standardised assessment tool in online and paper-based formats was used. Supplementary data was collected through interviews with key stakeholders, a document review, and observations of surveillance systems. The assessment captured information on the quality of data and systems with a focus on current practices.

After the data was collected and analyzed, each of the networks reported on their findings, with two networks, the Mekong Basin Disease Surveillance Consortium (MBDS) and the SACIDS Foundation for One Health sharing their experiences of cross border areas in the Mekong Basin and between Tanzania and Kenya during an exchange visit.

The South East European Center for Surveillance and Control of Infectious Diseases (SECID) who represented the assessment in Albania, North Macedonia and Kosovo\*, presented the project results at the International Meeting on Emerging Diseases and Surveillance (IMED) conference in Vienna, Austria, in November 2018.

The results showed that there are still gaps in EBS in cross-border areas despite efforts to address them. Overall it was clear that the use of mobile applications in digital EBS is vital, particularly in countries with a lack of resources. CORDS plans to publish a report with specific recommendations on how the tools available in EBS can be improved in the fight against the spread of infectious diseases.

*\*This designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.*

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## Improving your network's visibility via your website

Many of the CORDS member networks have well-established websites which they use as a powerful communications tool. We are always looking for ways to amplify the visibility of our accomplishments, below are some ideas to further enhance your network's offering:

- Make sure your website content is up to date
- Provide current contact details and information on key members such as spokespeople
- Direct visitors to your latest news by linking from the homepage
- If you don't already, include a link on your homepage to the CORDS website [www.cordsnetwork.org](http://www.cordsnetwork.org); this can be done quickly and easily and helps with cross promotion
- Use relevant keywords for search engine optimization
- Ensure your network logo is high quality (at least 300 pixels per inch)
- Include click through social media links on your homepage
- Position the sign up button for your network newsletter (if you have one) prominently
- Showcase your promotional videos and photos
- Share your milestones and updates to include in the CORDS newsletter which reaches over 800 people globally



Image courtesy of the World Health Organization [www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/doubling-down-on-ebola](http://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/doubling-down-on-ebola)

## July Update: Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

As of July 14, 2019, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported 2501 cases of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2407 confirmed) and 1668 deaths (1574 confirmed). Authorities have also confirmed an Ebola case near the Democratic Republic of the Congo's (DRC) border with South Sudan, a country vulnerable to the potential spread of the deadly virus due to a healthcare system weakened by years of civil war.

On June 14, 2019, WHO released a statement on the meeting of the International Health Regulations (2005) Emergency Committee for Ebola virus disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The statement expressed its deep concern about the ongoing outbreak also noting challenges around community acceptance, security, a lack of adequate funding and strained human resources. It is the view of the Committee that the outbreak is a health emergency in DRC and the region, however, it does not meet all the three criteria for a Public Health Emergency of International Concern.

You can find the latest statements from the World Health Organization (WHO) here:

<https://www.who.int/news-room/statements>



Prof. Eson Karimuribo on stage at the Fondation Pierre Fabre Awards, 1 July 2019

### **SACIDS Foundation for One Health wins prestigious award**

The South African Centre for Infectious Disease Surveillance (SACIDS), which has recently undergone a change in Governance to become the SACIDS Foundation for One Health, has become the recipient of a prestigious award for its digital disease surveillance application 'AfyaData.' The team at Sokoine University of Agriculture was one of five 2019 Laureates who won for their 'AfyaData – the management of zoonotic diseases in Tanzania' project. AfyaData is a set of open source mobile and digital web tools developed through support from Ending Pandemics. The app is available for free and works by enabling users to collect details on signs and symptoms of suspected diseases in communities and send it back to the server where it is analyzed by experts.

The award was presented at the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference of the Fondation Pierre Fabre, a charity established to improve access to medicines and quality healthcare in the Southern Hemisphere. The award means the SACIDS Foundation for One Health will also receive a year of technical and financial support. This will enable the network to further its mission to harness innovation in science and technology to improve sub-Saharan Africa's capacity to detect, identify and monitor infectious diseases in humans and animals. **Project lead Prof. Eson Karimuribo, states:** "AfyaData has recorded amazing achievements in supporting disease surveillance in animal and human populations in Tanzania and East and Southern African regions. The Fondation Pierre Fabre award will be used to extend the use of AfyaData in promoting proper management of zoonotic diseases through e-based One Health Training of Frontline Healthcare Workers in Tanzania."

The SACIDS Foundation for One Health prioritizes long-term engagement with academic and research

institutions and meaningful engagement with communities and the public through meetings, workshops and outreach activities. The Foundation has recently collaborated with Southeast Asia's work on preparedness analysis and the use of mobile phones in disease surveillance and with Hokkaido University Centre for Zoonosis Control in Japan. To find out more about their work visit:

[www.sacids.org](http://www.sacids.org)

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### **10<sup>th</sup> TEPHINET Global Scientific Conference, Atlanta, 2019**

The 10<sup>th</sup> Training Programs in Epidemiology and Public Health Interventions Network (TEPHINET) Global Scientific Conference is on between 28 October and 1 November 2019 at the Evergreen Marriott Conference Center, Atlanta, USA. With the theme 'Applied Epidemiology in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century' sessions will include outbreak investigations in healthcare settings, finding outbreaks faster and achieving a One Health Approach in African countries. For more information visit:

<https://www.tephinet.org/events/the-global-fetp-enterprise-applied-epidemiology-in-the-21st-century-10th-tephinet-global>

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### **Association of Pacific Rim Universities, Global Health Conference, Hong Kong, 2019**

The Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) Global Health Conference, 2019, is taking place from the 17 to 20 November 2019 at the University of Hong Kong, with the theme 'Global Urban Health.' The abstract submission deadline has been extended to **1 August 2019**. Selected abstracts will be published in the Journal of Global Health Sciences. For further information visit:

<http://www.aprughc2019.org>

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### **19<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Infectious Diseases, Kuala Lumpur, 2020**

The 19<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Infectious Diseases is taking place from 20 to 23 February 2020 at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. The event will be hosted by the International Society for Infectious Diseases (ISID) and the Malaysian Society for Infectious Diseases and Chemotherapy (MSIDC) with the theme 'Global Challenges – Local Solutions.' Topics explored will include pandemic preparedness, global antimicrobial resistance control and infectious diseases management update. Abstracts are invited in all areas related to infectious diseases, including displaced populations, refugees and migrants, One Health and vector control. Abstracts should be submitted electronically, in English and be no more than 350 words. The deadline is **25 October 2019**. To find out more visit:

<http://www.icid.isid.org>

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### **6<sup>th</sup> One Health Congress, Edinburgh, 2020**

The 6<sup>th</sup> One Health Congress is taking place in Edinburgh, Scotland between 14 and 18 June 2020. The event co-organised by the One Health Platform, the University of Edinburgh and the SACIDS Foundation for One Health will take place at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The program will include Epidemiology and the clinical impact of newly emerging infections, biological threat reduction and the

cost-effectiveness of One Health intervention programs. To find out more about the call for Abstracts, which is now open, visit <https://onehealthplatform.com/wohc/home> to register.

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**CORDS**

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