

4th annual Tanzania-Canada Research Partnership Symposium takes place in Moshi, Tanzania November 30th and December 1st 2017

The Kilimanjaro Christian Medical University and College (KCMUCo) hosted the fourth annual symposium of the Tanzania-Canada Research Partnership (TCRP), on the theme: “*Climate Change and Health in Tanzania – Research Challenges*”, supported by a grant from the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Participants included twenty-two (22) colleagues from seven Tanzanian universities, along with eight (8) Canadian partners and a Canadian collaborator based in Glasgow.

After a warm welcome highlighting the importance of the climate change agenda to the government and people of Tanzania, KCMUCo’s Dean of Medicine officially opened the symposium. Outstanding young Tanzanian researchers presented their programs of research and identified their specific outcome expectations for the event. The most frequent expectations were:

- to strengthen collaboration and partnerships;
- to learn about climate change and health in Tanzania; and
- to learn about funding opportunities for collaborative research.

These expected outcomes became the guiding framework for the symposium.

Following brief reports from working groups that had been formed during the 2016 TCRP symposium, participants reflected on how current research projects focusing on maternal and child health, environment and health, One Health and anti-microbial resistance could be considered through the lens of climate change.

On the second day, to set the stage for further discussions by working groups, Vic Neufeld presented a summary of two key documents produced by the Government of Tanzania: a National Strategy for Climate Change (2012) and the 2017 National Adaptation Program of Action (NAPA). Jennifer Hatfield presented a summary of funding opportunities of Canadian agencies, and led a discussion about the broader “funding landscape” including Tanzanian and European agencies. The new Canadian government’s feminist agenda focused on empowerment of women and girls was shared. In addition the group heard about how the theme of climate change is increasingly being reflected as a priority by many funding agencies.

With this background information, small working groups then explored further collaborative research opportunities, building upon current research under the four topics reported on the first day of the symposium. In the case of two groups, these discussions led to ideas for new research proposals, along with specific plans for further group work. Three of the discussion groups (Maternal Health and Nutrition, One Health, and anti-microbial resistance) developed plans for other forms of collaboration. The importance of developing mechanisms of communication and collaboration between Tanzanian universities and organizations was emphasized by many at the symposium.

There was a strong interest expressed regarding the resources available through the CCGHR. Also, there were suggestions about how to increase the value of the TCRP website.

At the end of the Symposium, the TCRP steering group met to consider ideas for the coming year. Included were early plans for a follow-up workshop focusing more specifically on research proposal and grant development skill building. A plan to engage IDRC in this health research capacity building was strongly endorsed.

All participants expressed appreciation for the symposium and the opportunity to meet, network and plan exciting new collaborations.