



COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES

KWAME NKUMAH UNIVERSITY OF
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

In Partnership with



5TH AfriNEAD & 7TH COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

THEME:

“Disability and inclusion in Africa:
The role of Assistive Technology”

DATE: 7TH - 9TH AUGUST, 2017

VENUE: SAARAH MENSAH AUDITORIUM
KNUST SCHOOL OF BUSINESS



African Network for Evidence-to-Action in Disability
(AfriNEAD)

Conference Report

5th Conference: 7-9 August 2017

Kwame Nkrumah National University of Technology, Kumasi,
Ghana

***“Disability and Inclusion in Africa: The Role of Assistive
Technology”***

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY BY THE AFRINEAD CHAIRPERSON	4
REFLECTIONS FROM THE ORGANISERS AT KNUST	6
1. PROGRAMME OF EVENTS	8
1.1 PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS	8
1.2 MAIN CONFERENCE PROGRAMME	8
1.3 POST-CONFERENCE EVENTS	11
2. SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL OPENING MESSAGES	12
3. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS	13
3.1 Commission A: Children and Youth with Disabilities	13
3.2 Commission B: Education: early to tertiary	13
3.3 Commission C: Economic empowerment	14
3.4 Commission D: Development processes in Africa: poverty, politics and indigenous knowledge systems	15
3.5 Commission E: Health and HIV & AIDS	16
3.6 Commission F: Systems of Community Based Rehabilitation	16
3.7 Commission G: Wellness, sports, recreation, sexuality and spirituality	17
3.8 Commission H: Research evidence and utilization	18
4. SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE OUTCOMES (RESOLUTIONS)	19
5. MINUTES OF THE CORE GROUP MEETING*	20
6. MINUTES OF THE TRIANNUAL GENERAL MEETING	23
7. LIST OF DELEGATES	25

- Please see Page 20

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY BY THE AFRINEAD CHAIRPERSON

Dear Friends and Colleagues

The joining of hands of the African Network for Evidence - to – Action in Disability (AfriNEAD) with the College of Health Sciences of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology (KNUST) in tabling the 5th AfriNEAD and the 7th College of Health Sciences Scientific Conference demonstrated a spirit of maturity and generosity from the College of Health Sciences of KNUST. To the AfriNEAD family, this was a gift as it saw that this action will further advance the dialogue that is needed between persons with disabilities (PWDs) and disability researchers in KNUST and beyond. The theme for this Conference was: ***“Disability and Inclusion in Africa: The Role of Assistive Technology”***. Assistive technology is one of the tools that can accelerate the promotion of inclusion of PWDs in society. We thank the delegates who came from both regional and international perspectives and gave dignity, substance and continuity, which this conference and AfriNEAD required. The abstracts and presentations again demonstrated the gravity and complexity of the area that this network is travelling through.

Congratulations for the job well done to KNUST Organizing Committee that worked hard to ensure that this conference became a success. AfriNEAD attempts to interface both at policy and practice using disability research evidence as a tool in realizing the rights of PWDs in Africa. It attempts to use this tool in bringing both government and PWDs closer together to work on tangible issues that will unlock some of the challenging issues facing PWDs. We are then grateful that this conference was supported by the presence of the King His Royal Majesty Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene and Chancellor of KNUST, His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, Honourable Madam Helen Zille Premier of Western Cape Provincial Government, Republic of South Africa.

Both the executive secretary of the National Council on Persons with Disability (NCPD) Mr. Kwamena Dadzie-Dennis and the President of Ghana Federation of Disability Organisations (GFD) Mr. Yaw Ofori Debrah extended warm greetings and welcomed the delegates on behalf of the entire disability community in Ghana. The leadership of the Southern Federation for the Disabled (SAFOD) was represented by Ms Rachel Kachaje and Mr Mussa Chiwaula. At our local level, Disabled People’s Organizations were represented by Mr Rustim Ariefdien from the Western Cape Network on Disability.

From the academic side, we thank the Vice Chancellor of KNUST Prof Kwasi Obiri-Danso, who agreed that under the leadership of the Provost of College of Health Sciences Professor E.T. Agbenyega the College of Health Sciences would host a successful event. The Provost made sure that AfriNEAD will again find a home in an African institution of higher learning and comfortably share its disability inspiration and vision. Stellenbosch University was

represented by Prof Usuf Chikte the Executive Head of the Department of Global Health from the Medicine and Health Science Faculty.

As the **Network** continues with its quest of being an African research network and unlocking the African story of marginalisation and exclusion of PWDs, we at the AfriNEAD Secretariat acknowledge the interrelatedness which enhances the opportunities for networking and mutual interdependence. From time to time we will draw experience from all the four (4) corners of the world. The conference delegates rightfully demonstrated their experience by using research evidence to show how far we are in attaining a just and equitable society for PWDs in Africa. *Kindly familiarize yourself with this report especially the outcome of the AGM at the end of the report as this combines inputs from both the think-tank of the governing structure of the network and the delegates that attended this conference.*

AfriNEAD has successfully accomplished the first round of tabling three (3) conferences beyond the South African borders: **Zimbabwe, 2011, Malawi, 2014, Ghana 2017. The 6th AfriNEAD conference in 2020 will be tabled in Cape Town.** Before this happens AfriNEAD secretariat will need to reflect on the lessons learnt from the journey this network has traversed since its humble beginnings in 2007. This **network** will forever be grateful to its Governing structure “**the core group**” that guided it from its conception and through its twists and turns. Now this **structure** as well as the AGM of the 5th AfriNEAD conference have emphasized on the following areas that require attention: (a) Consolidation of the AfriNEAD membership; (b) the model used for hosting both the AfriNEAD secretariat and conferences (c) the strengthening of disability research agenda in countries affiliated to AfriNEAD.

Our journal the African Journal of Disability (AJOD) (www.ajod.org) remains a beacon of hope that Africans too can bring their voices in these matters that transform our **Societies** to develop a consciousness with regard to human rights related issues. We will forever be grateful to our outgoing Editor-in-Chief, Prof Leslie **Swartz**. We welcome Dr Charlotte Capri our new Editor-in-Chief, and wish her all the success during her tenure. A clear call to all presenters from this conference to prepare their manuscripts for the 3rd special issue of the AJOD. Also take time to visit our website at www.sun.ac.za/AfriNEAD.

AfriNEAD completed on the 4th of November 10 years since its inception in 2007. I would like to convey thanks and appreciation to the AfriNEAD membership and the secretariat that is based at Stellenbosch University for sustaining the network and assisting it to achieve its objectives. Thanks to you ALL for travelling with this network on its momentous journey of being and becoming an African Network for Evidence –to – Action in Disability. Wishing you ALL a prosperous 2018.

Warm regards

Ass Prof Gubela Mji
AfriNEAD Chairperson

Director: Centre for Rehabilitation Studies, Stellenbosch University

REFLECTIONS FROM THE ORGANISERS AT KNUST

Introduction: The opportunity to host the 5th AfriNEAD Conference was offered KNUST after the 4th AfriNEAD Conference held in 'Sun and Sand' Hotel in Mangochi, Malawi, in 2014. Planning for the 5th AfriNEAD conference started in earnest from the beginning of 2015. Membership of the planning committee comprised a standing Scientific Committee appointed by the College of Health Sciences to plan its biennial Scientific Conference and other members comprising some members of the Department of Community Health of the School of Medical Sciences, and the School of Public Health, KNUST, and representatives of the Ghana Federation of Disability Organizations, Ghana Blind Union, National Council on Persons with Disability, NGOs in Disability and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection. The committee was co-chaired by Dr. T. B. Kwoffie of the College of Health Sciences, KNUST and Dr. Obeng Asamoah of the Ghana Blind Union. The activities of the local planning committee were fully complemented by the AfriNEAD chairperson and the Secretariat at Stellenbosch University in South Africa.

Organization: the conference was organized at the University campus of KNUST, which offered the opportunity to have reduced rates for facilities used. In total, sponsorship in cash received for the organization of the conference was GHS 3,500.00, the equivalent of US\$ 850. However, since the hosting of the 5th AfriNEAD conference coincided with the hosting of the 7th College of Health Sciences Scientific Conference, the two events were combined into one as the 7th College of Health Scientific Conference and the 5th AfriNEAD Conference with the AfriNEAD theme. It was indeed a great opportunity to have medical and allied health professionals meeting on a single platform to discuss DISABILITY as a human right and development issue.

The conference itself: The entire event comprised an impressive official opening, which was attended by dignitaries, including the representative of Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene and Chancellor of KNUST, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection, representing His Excellency Nana Addo Dankwa Akuffo-Addo, the President of the Republic of Ghana, AfriNEAD Chairperson, Prof. Gubela Mji, Pro-Vice Chancellor of KNUST, Ashanti Regional Minister, Mayor of Kumasi City, Honourable Madam Hellen Zille Premier of Western Cape Provincial Government, Republic of South Africa, Prof. Yusuf Chikte, representing the Vice Chancellor of Stellenbosch University, Prof. T. Agbenyega, Provost of the College of Health Sciences, KNUST, and several other dignitaries including some core group members of AfriNEAD.

The planned activities for the conference comprised keynote presentations, plenary and scientific sessions. The keynote addresses presented during the opening featured the perspective of a renowned educationist, a seasoned orthopaedic surgeon, an experienced disability and rehabilitation practitioner with a vast experience in orthotics and prosthesis,

and three key personalities from SAFOD with a wealth of experience on disability issues, as persons with disability themselves.

The conference also featured a workshop on Scientific Writing, facilitated by Prof. Leslie Swartz, as well as project meeting by researchers, and workshops by Foundation for Scientific and Industrial Research (SINTEF) Norway. There was also a workshop on Assistive Devices facilitated by Dr. Diane Bell from the WHO GATE Project.

The conference was a well-attended three-day event, fully packed with stimulating, educative and useful information that will propel the needed paradigm shift when it comes to the inclusion of Disability issues in human developmental agenda to facilitate the inclusive society we so desire.

Developments at KNUST following the hosting of the 5th AfriNEAD Conference:

1. The conference came as a special opportunity that brought together professionals from the medical, allied health, pharmacy, science, social science and engineering disciplines together with Organizations of Persons with Disabilities, Persons with Disability and Disability Advocates. This was a very useful meeting, because it has significantly improved the perceptions of most of these professional of disability issues.
2. It is heart-warming to note that following the conference, an advocacy group called 'Advocates for Disability-Friendly KNUST' – AforD-KNUST, has emerged in the university. Membership of the group comprises the core faculty of Centre for Disability and Rehabilitation Studies (CEDRES) and other lecturers and administrators from KNUST. The group has created a WhatsApp platform to promote effective communication among its members, and has already elected its executives.
3. The CEDRES is appreciative of the opportunity to facilitate the hosting of the 5th AfriNEAD conference by KNUST. Not only did it offer opportunity for the young graduates from the Disability and Rehabilitation Studies Programme to have a feel of an international conference, but also to participate as presenters of scientific papers from their original research work. This was so motivating for the majority of them.

Prepared by Dr Anthony Kwaku Edusei

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1. PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

1.1 PRE-CONFERENCE EVENTS

SUNDAY 06 AUGUST 2017

10:00–12:00 **Chairpersons and planning committee members meet.**

Chairing: Dr T. B. Kwofie

14.00- 17.00 **Beginning of registration**

All delegates encouraged to register and collect their conference bags

1.2 MAIN CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

MONDAY 07 AUGUST 2017

REGISTRATION AND OPENING

- 08:00 – 09:00 **Arrival and Registration of Delegates**
- 09:30 – 10:00 **Ghana welcoming event:** Music by CeCAST
- 10:00- 10:05 **Opening Prayer** by Rev. Fr. Dr. Peter Addai-Mensah, Catholic Chaplain, KNUST
- 10.05 – 10.20 **Introduction of Chairman:** Mrs Rose Odotei Adjei
- Chairman’s Response:** Provost of College of Health Sciences Professor E.T. Agbenyega
- Introduction of other Dignitaries:** Mr. Solomon Pamford
- 10.20 – 10.30 **Welcome Address by Chairpersons, Conference Planning Committee:** Dr T. B. Kwofie
- 10.30 – 10.45 **Welcome message by AfriNEAD President:** Prof. Gubela Mji
- 10.45 – 11.00 **Musical Interlude:** Garden City Special School Children
- 11.00 – 11.15 **Address** by Prof Kwasi Obiri-Danso, Vice Chancellor, KNUST
- 11.15 – 11.30 **Address** by Prof. Usuf Chikte, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 11.30 – 11.45 **Fraternal Messages:** Ashanti Regional Minister and Kumasi Metropolitan Chief Executive.
- 11.45 -12.00 **Address** by Premier of Western Cape Provincial Government,

Cape Town, Republic of South Africa: **“The role of government in supporting people with disabilities: Reflections from the Western Cape Government, South Africa”**

- 12.00 – 12.15 **Address** by His Royal Majesty Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, Asantehene and Chancellor of KNUST
- 12.15 – 12.30 **Address** by Special Guest of Honour: Her Excellency, Madam Otiko Afisa Djaba, Minister of Gender, Children and Social Protection
- 12.30 – 12.35 **Vote of Thanks:** Dr (Mrs) V. Bam
- 12.35 – 12.40 **Closing Prayer:** Rev. Dr. Joseph W. Acheampong - Protestant Chaplain, KNUST
- M.Cs. – Mr. Solomon Pamford & Dr. Frances Dufie

12:40-13:40 LUNCH

PLENARY SESSION 1/ KEY NOTE ADDRESSES

- 13.40 – 13:50 **Western Cape Network for persons with disabilities:** Rustim Ariedien
- 13:50 – 14:00 **Reflections from the Southern Federation for the Disabled (SAFOD):** Mussa Chiwaula
- 14:00 – 14:10 **Role of partnerships in disability Research:** Rachel Kachaje
- 14:10 – 14:20 **The past 10 Years: Reflections from the AfriNEAD Secretariat:** Dr Callista Kahonde
- 14:20 – 14:45 **Questions and Round table discussions**

15.00 – 17.00 SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS/ COMMISSIONS

Commission A: Children and Youth with Disability

Commission B: Education: Early to Tertiary

Commission C: Economic Empowerment

Commission D: Development Process in Africa: Poverty, Politics and
Indigenous Knowledge Systems

17:00-18:00 **Workshop** - SINTEF

18:00-19:00 **Networking**

19:00-21:00 **Dinner with the Vice Chancellor of KNUST**

TUESDAY 08 AUGUST 2017

08:00-08:15 **Recap of Day One Activities:** Paul Okyere

PLENARY SESSION 2/ KEY NOTE ADDRESS

08:15 -8:35 **Technological Advances in Assistive Devices; the Surgeon's perspective:**
Professor, Robert E. Quansah, Department of Surgery, School of Medical Sciences, KNUST

08:35 -8:55 **Inclusive education in Ghana: The role of Assistive Technology-** Lawyer
Anthony Boateng – Director of Special Education & Deputy Director-General,
Ghana Education Service.

8:55 – 9:15 **Disability Research on assistive devices: Perspective from Living conditions
& Equitable research projects:** Prof Arne Eide.

9:15 – 9:35 **Orthotics and Prosthesis Practice in Ghana:** Mr. Raphael Amuzu Dzameshie,
Orthotics and Prosthesis Training Centre in Ghana.

9:35 – 9:55 **Address on the GATE PROJECT:** Dr. Diane Bell

9:55 – 10:15 **Address on project of PERKINS'S INTERNATIONAL:** Mrs. Angela Affran
(African Rep.)

10:15 - 10:45 COCOA BREAK

10:45-11:45 **Feed back from COMMISSIONS A – D**
Chairperson: Prof Abraham Yeboah Mensah

11.45-12:30 **Questions and discussion on Feedback from COMMISSIONS A – D**

12:30-13:15 **Workshop on Appropriate Wheelchair Services and Individual Seating and
Posture Support – the benefits of a holistic approach:** Megan Giljam

13:15-14:00 **LUNCH**

14:00-14:30 Viewing of Poster Presentations/ Exhibition

14:30-17:00 **SCIENTIFIC SESSIONS/COMMISSIONS (E-H)**

COMMISSION E: Health and HIV/AIDS

COMMISSION F: Systems of Community Based Rehabilitation

COMMISSION G: Holistic Wellness: Sport, Recreation, Sexuality and Spirituality

COMMISSION H: Research Evidence and Utilization

17:00- 18:00 **Round Table discussion:** Bridging the Gap project (Sierra Leone, Zambia, Uganda and Kenya)

18:00-20:00 **AfriNEAD Core group meeting**

WEDNESDAY 09 AUGUST 2017

08:00-08:15 **Recap of Day Two Activities:** Paul Okyere

08:15-08:45 **Video on Disability and sexuality**

08:45 - 9:15 **African disability Scholarship: Reflections from Editor in Chief of AJOD**
Perceptions from disability writers: Prof. Leslie Swartz

09:15-10:00 **Chairpersons mapping of the next 10 years:** Prof Gubela Mji

10:00-10:30 **COCOA BREAK**

11:00-12: 00 **Feedback on commissions E-H**

Chairperson: Dr Thomas Agyarko-Poku

12.00-12:30 **Questions and discussion on Feedback from COMMISSIONS E – H**

12:30-13:30 **LUNCH**

13:30 – 14:30 **Summary of Conference Proceedings and Preparation of Resolutions**

14:30-15:30 **AGM:** all AfriNEAD Network members

15:30-16:30 **Way forward:** AfriNEAD Network members

16.30-18:00 Workshop on assistive devices

18:00 **Closing Remarks**

END OF CONFERENCE

1.3 POST-CONFERENCE EVENTS

THURSDAY 10 AUGUST 2017

12:00-15:30 Writing workshop for the AJOD

2. SUMMARY OF OFFICIAL OPENING MESSAGES

The following main points emerged from the messages conveyed at the official opening of the conference:

- Appropriate theme: “Disability and Inclusion in Africa: The Role of Assistive Technology”. Ensuring universal access to essential and affordable assistive technology will be crucial in the attainment of the development agenda for the decades ahead
- 5th AfriNEAD Conference coincides with the 7th College of Health Sciences Scientific Conference, presenting a unique platform to project disability issues in a manner that is unprecedented
- Inclusion of persons with disability through the application of science and technology, critical role of assistive technology recognised
- Overcoming impairments, eliminating barriers to enable persons with disabilities to actively participate and become productive members of society
- Persistence of gaps between knowledge, legislation and practice severely undermining the quality of life of persons with disabilities in Africa
- Advocacy for the translation of existing legislation/conventions and research evidence into practice through the efforts of AfriNEAD is imperative
- Leveraging the strong relations that exist among the countries on the continent to promote inclusive society
- The tenets of freedom and justice cannot be achieved without the inclusion of persons with disability
- There is urgent need to translate intentions/rhetoric into actions/practices
- Governments have critical roles in supporting persons with disabilities and promotion of inclusive society
- Creation of institutional frameworks across Ministries, Agencies, Departments is imperative to promote the inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities
- Lessons to learn from experiences of South Africa, setting up disability units
- Experiences of Ghana, commitment of government to addressing unemployment and persons with disabilities and inclusion in decision making process through appointments
- Assistive technology needs to be prioritized by governments and development partners as a major aspect of inclusive development to reduce inequalities among all persons living with impairments and functional limitations
- Brings to focus the objective of this year’s conference which is to highlight the need to ensure wider population access to assistive technology/products

3. RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS

3.1 Commission A: Children and Youth with Disabilities

Overall facilitators: Isaac Owusu and Lieketseng Ned

Chairs: Samuel Asare-Nkansah, Alexander Bankole Williams and Obeng Asamoah

The following areas were discussed during the session:

- Practicing inclusive early childhood development
- Parental involvement in inclusive education
- Participation of children with disabilities in extracurricular activities
- Objective and subjective inequality in families with and without a child with disability
- Experiences of caregivers of children with disabilities
- Perceptions of young people of disability and leadership
- Children's perspectives of inclusive education

Recommendations

- Need to bridge the massive gap between education, skills and training
- Need to match assistive devices needs with services (accessibility of AT)
- Need to improve access to extracurricular activities for children and youth with disabilities to enhance their participation and well-being
- Policies should recognise the needs of caregivers
- Social protection measures are critical to support children with disabilities and their caregivers
- Innovative strategies needed to improve communication and information dissemination between caregivers and professionals
- Strategies are needed to advocate for opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in leadership roles

3.2 Commission B: Education: early to tertiary

Overall facilitator: Tony Opoku Agyeman

Chairs: Samuel Hayford, Esther Akua Gyamfi, Kwamena Dadzie-Dennis, Lilian Bruce-Lyle and Joslin Dogbe Alexis

The following areas were discussed in this commission:

- The advocacy role of the Higher and Further Education Disability Services Association (HEDSA) in assistive technology information dissemination
- Assessment of government support to special schools
- Social interaction between children with and without visual impairments in inclusive schools
- Coping skills and challenges of teachers in special schools
- Barriers to inclusive education
- Inclusion of disability studies as a course in senior high school curricular
- Experiences of disabled learners of transitioning to a senior high school
- Using assistive technology to enhance inclusive education
- Use of public libraries by persons with visual impairment and access to assistive technology by this group

Recommendations:

- The following areas pose persistent challenges to implementing inclusive education effectively and they need to be addressed:

Accessibility

Logistical constraints

Teaching and learning materials

Discrimination

Stigmatization

- There is convincing evidence of the critical role of assistive technology in enabling inclusive education hence the area of assistive technology needs urgent attention

Governments should play a role in enabling universal access to essential and affordable assistive devices for young people with disabilities to be able to access and participate optimally in their education

3.3 Commission C: Economic empowerment

There was only one presentation for this commission which was on perspectives of persons with physical disabilities and their employers of employment of the former in the informal sector

Recommendations:

- Economic empowerment of persons with disabilities is imperative to address issues of unemployment, poverty, stereotyping and discrimination against persons with disabilities which are challenges they are faced with daily on the continent
- Deliberate and systematic measures should be implemented by policy makers to empower persons with disabilities

3.4 Commission D: Development processes in Africa: poverty, politics and indigenous knowledge systems

Overall facilitators: Callista Kahonde and Akohene Mensah

Chairs: Peter Agyei-Baffour and Joslin Alexis

The following areas were discussed in this commission:

- Role of wheelchairs in disability inclusion
- Experiences of persons with disabilities participating in elections
- The role of assistive technology in increasing access to criminal justice system for persons with disabilities
- Access to the judicial system among persons with disabilities
- African centered perspectives on assistive technology

Recommendations:

- Access issues e.g. physical, communication, information need to be address as they limit participation of persons with disabilities in elections, judicial system and criminal justice system
- Need for training services to facilitate sourcing of wheelchairs and their use by those who acquire them. Wheelchairs in Africa mostly come via donations so they are not appropriate and not appreciated by the recipients
- Need for affordable assistive devices e.g. governments subsidies, production of low cost devices, devices to be readily available and accepted and appreciated by local people
- PWDs need to be given a voice in matters affecting them by motivating them to speak up and educating them about their rights
- Education of service providers and professionals working with persons with disabilities about AT
- Packaging human rights instruments like laws and policies in various forms accessible to persons with different types of disabilities e.g. having Acts in Braille and easy to read formats
- The WHO and National guidelines should be standardised and contextualised to be appropriate and relevant to local contexts so that supply may match demand
- Need for understanding of indigenous conceptualisations of AT in African settings to enhance participation of persons with disabilities and in the process come up with social theories which enhance understanding of AT in African settings
- Need to advocate for policy development and revisions around AT

3.5 Commission E: Health and HIV & AIDS

Overall facilitator: Oti Acheampong and Chioma Ohajunwa

Chairs: Leslie Swartz, Arnie H. Eide, Y. Adu-Sarkodie and E.H. Frimpong

The following areas were discussed in this commission:

- Urine incontinence, the catheter and challenges of African disability advocacy
- Barriers to healthcare for persons with disabilities
- Prevalence and risk factors of substance abuse among adolescence
- Health information and healthcare services among the Deaf community
- Menstrual hygiene management among female adolescents with disabilities
- Association between nutritional uptake and cardiovascular disease
- Knowledge and barriers to family planning services by the deaf
- Nutritional risk markers among stroke survivors
- Mental health registry- reporting of cases to hospital

Recommendations

- The catheter which is used during incontinence has often being seen as medical technology, however the GATE project gave it status of assistive technology and this needs to be given more attention in the African settings in research and practice
- Need for both social media and CBR to reverse the way incontinence is underrated as a priority and underscore its role on equality in societies
- Sign language to be introduced in nursing schools and there is urgent need for interpreters in the health sector
- Governments and other relevant sectors to consider means by which persons with disabilities may be assisted to purchase and repair assistive devices at affordable costs
- Menstrual hygiene learning materials and guide books should be provided to young females by the relevant authorities responsible
- Ministries for health should provide education for young women with disabilities and their family on issues of hygiene and support them to carry these out effectively

3.6 Commission F: Systems of Community Based Rehabilitation

Overall facilitators: Isaac Owusu and Lieketseng Ned

Chairs: Hillary Lane and Alister Munthali

The following areas were discussed in this commission:

- Using assistive technology to live a fully productive life
- Community based nutrition education interventions targeting undernourished children
- Motivations, challenges and coping strategies in caring for persons with intellectual disabilities
- Disability inclusion in the workplace
- New hearing concept for low income settings

Recommendations

- The need for employers not to allow the cost of reasonable accommodation to serve as a barrier to employing persons with disabilities
- Application of add-on soft-wares to facilitate the employment of persons with disabilities
- Persons with disabilities should take advantage of available opportunities to develop themselves and not give up in life
- Demystifying intellectual disability by developing public educational strategies such as the use of role models
- Leveraging the implementation of the inclusive education policies for attaining wider inclusion and participation of persons with disabilities in the society
- Adoption of user participatory approaches in the design of assistive devices

3.7 Commission G: Wellness, sports, recreation, sexuality and spirituality

Overall facilitators: Callista Kahonde and Kofi Akohene Mensah

Chairs: Mawunyo Kuma Yakor-Dagbah, Asamoah Gyawu and Abraham Yeboah Mensah

The following areas were discussed in this commission:

- Improving access to assistive technology for people with intellectual disabilities
- Views of religious leaders in involvement of persons with disabilities in church activities
- Persons with disabilities experiencing maltreatment in marriage
- Disability, sexuality and gender- experiences of persons with physical disabilities
- Negative attitudes towards sexual rights and sexual healthcare access of persons with physical disabilities

Recommendations

- Persons with intellectual disability are disadvantaged in accessing health services and the need to improve access and use of assistive technology in this regard was stressed

- Inclusion of disability sensitisation in the curriculum for the training of religious leaders as this has potential to remove attitudinal barriers not only in churches but in the larger society
- Advocacy campaigns needed for public education in order to demystify perceptions regarding marriage for persons with disabilities
- To raise public awareness about the intersection between disability stigma, gender and sexuality
- High quality contact between persons with and without disabilities as valuable in tackling negative attitudes towards sexuality of persons with disabilities and also need to remove physical barriers to facilitate such contact

3.8 Commission H: Research evidence and utilization

Overall facilitators: Paul Okyere and Peter-Agyei Baffour

Chairs: Maria Kett and Eleanor Cole

The following areas were discussed in this commission:

- Predictors of under-nutrition among children
- Assistive technology programmes legislation
- Using assistive technology to improve communication, knowledge and skills in communities of practice and disability inclusive development
- What should research about disability do and be?

Recommendations

- High cost of imported assistive devices need to be addressed
- The need to link assistive technology users with suppliers/providers
- The potential of legislation to increase accessibility to assistive technology e.g. Assistive Technology Act programs in the United States
- Prevention of health conditions such as stroke and malnutrition to prevent disability
- Maternal health services and data should be disability sensitive
- Potential of assistive technology to improve communication and knowledge in disability issues
- Need for database/directory of assistive technology suppliers and support networks, increasing general awareness of assistive technology among a diverse range of stakeholders, building linkages between private and public sector
- More research needed to determine the role of assistive technology in disability inclusive development in Africa

4. SUMMARY OF CONFERENCE OUTCOMES (RESOLUTIONS)

The messages conveyed and discussed in the plenary sessions and the presentations in the commissions culminated to the following core issues:

- Elimination of all forms of discrimination, barriers and negative socio-cultural practices against persons with disabilities
- Ensuring universal access to essential and affordable assistive devices to promote inclusive society
- Implementation of existing legislation, policies, conventions and evidence to ensure the inclusion of persons with disabilities
- Moving beyond legislative compliance to social justice approach
- Alignment of training of persons with disabilities with employment opportunities

5. MINUTES OF THE CORE GROUP MEETING*

Present: Gubela Mji – Chairperson of Afrinead
Hillary Lane – Afrinead coordinator
Lieketseng Ned
Nora Groce
Arne Eide
Megan Giljam
Alister Munthali
Patrick Devlieger
Leslie Swartz
Charlotte Capri
Sr Emily Owusu-Ansah
Callista Kahonde
Rustim Ariefdien
Chioma Ohajunwa
Rachel Kachaje
Mussa Chiwaula
Abdul Busuulwa
Anthony Edusei

Welcome: Given by Gubela. All present where asked to introduce themselves.

Apologies: Gillian Barrows; Shona Mc Donald; Margie Schneider and Vincent Daniels. Marcia, Diana Bell, Sedrico Husselman were invited to the meeting but did not attend.

Agenda: GM read out the agenda which was accepted by all. Adoption of previous minutes: GM Highlighted the minutes from the meeting of the 2nd November 2016. Previous minutes approved by Leslie Swartz and seconded by Mussa Chiwaula.

Matters arising:

1. It was reported that people had been approached for the position editor-in-chief of AJOD with a few people responding for this position. Charlotte Capri has now been approached and has accepted to assist as editor-in-chief of AJOD. Sister Emily and Dr Martha Geiger who were earlier selected will remain co-editors.
2. The 6th AfriNEAD Conference is to return and be held in Cape Town in 2020. The original plan was that after holding 3 conferences in other African countries it would return to Cape Town and thereafter to one other place in South Africa before once again be hosted in another African country.
3. Membership – at the 2020 conference people to pay member fees and to become members - So when you register at the conference you automatically become a member as well as get a subscription to AJOD – Alister suggested that the issue of membership need to be resolved before the 2020 conference - both Alister and Nora suggested that we raise the conference fee so that some of the money goes towards the AJOD to assist authors who cannot afford to publish.

4. Afri-CAN – Abdul Busuulwa, chairperson of Afri-CAN addressed members about MOU’S. The other members agreed that there should be MOU between Afri-CAN and AfriNEAD. The question was asked as to what shape the MOU should take. To this end a meeting would take place between Gubela, Callista and Rustim, within the next two weeks to look at the issue.
5. With regard to issues of raising funds and developing a business plan for AfriNEAD as mentioned in the previous minutes – a one-day workshop had been suggested between A.K. Dube, Shona and Gubela. This did not take place however, a meeting with Shona happened. Later Prof Cloete the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Research at Stellenbosch University (SU) offered AfriNEAD the services of Mr Nico Elema who is a consultant for International Affairs at SU to assist, Callista who is a post doc fellow at the CRS to draw up a business plan.

AGENDA

1 **Status of the network** – Leslie congratulated Gubela on holding the network together for 10 years – Gubela is tired of SU (Stellenbosch University) not supporting AfriNEAD. Rustim pointed out that the participation of PWD has grown. Gubela said that taking the conference to other countries every 3 years with good attendance and participation showed the critical mass of PWD who want change.

2. **Country Working Groups** - Many people still seem to be puzzled as to what a Country Working Group (CWG) was however in the area of the GOOGLE Project and assistive devices there was more understanding. This needs to expand from a project to a program and has to be more than assistive devices. Assistive devices advance the inclusion of people with disabilities.

There is a need for a round table discussion on the area of CWG with Mussa and partners and with DRC and KNUST. This will assist in how to expand the CWG as SAFOD is now working in more countries like Tanzania, DRC, and Madagascar etc. We could also use DeafNET as a connection to other countries as DeafNET is linked to over 50 countries in Africa.

3 **Constitution** –has been given to SU lawyer who agreed that it was a good constitution, but pointed out that as AfriNEAD is a project of SU and according to SU regulations a project cannot have a constitution. The AfriNEAD secretariat has suggested for AfriNEAD to be governed by a charter. However, as we want AfriNEAD to carry on for ever, we need a constitution and we do not need to be a project any more.

Nora asked what SA law says about a constitution. Rustim suggested that we talk to SU about what we need to do as we do need money to run AfriNEAD. Gubela said that the business plan is the suggestion of SU. Leslie pointed out that SU has given GM a lot of grief about AfriNEAD over the years.

Patrick commented that if SU does not take care of AfriNEAD, perhaps another university should take it on. It was pointed out that SU owns the AfriNEAD name.

Gubela shared the idea of a “roving secretariat” - that perhaps different universities should take on the ownership of AfriNEAD as they prepare for the next conference – this prompted a lot of discussion. Arne Eide commented that a roving secretariat would strengthen the membership of the network.

Alister thought that if we wanted to have a roving secretariat, then we would have to put in place plans to have a roving secretariat now, and talk to members about membership fees for individuals and universities. Arne Eide wanted to know what the consequences of this move would be.

Gubela said that this process would have to be put in place now.

It was decided to take it to the AGM. Rustim offered to assist with this process for fund raising.

CBR relationship, we are still working on the MOU as well as with the Western Cape Network on Disability and Artscape. Rustim wanted to know what the constitution says about MOU. Is there a template another task team should be set up to look at it?

Plans for future conference – to discuss in main conference.

Meeting closed at 8-10pm

Follow - up actions:

1. Callista to continue improving the business plan
2. A need for a round table discussion on the area of CWG with Mussa and partners and with DRC and KNUST
3. Issue of membership need to be resolved before the 2020 conference
4. What does SA law say about constitutions and what does the constitution say about development of MOUs and partnerships?
5. Put together a template for MOUs - meeting with Rustim, Gubela, Callista and Hillary to take place within two weeks

Minutes taken by Hillary Lane

***Kindly note that these are unapproved minutes.**

6. MINUTES OF THE TRIANNUAL GENERAL MEETING*

5th AfriNEAD AGM HELD ON THE 9TH August 2017

Number of attendees: 54

Facilitators: Gubela Mji, Arnie Eide, Rachel Kachaje, Mussa Chiwaula, Sr Emily Owusu-Ansah, Alister Munthali

1. **Welcome and opening remarks by Gubela Mji Chairperson of Afrinead:** Everyone was welcomed to the AfriNEAD tri-annual general meeting held at the 5th AfriNEAD conference in Ghana. People were given time to peruse through the last minutes of the AGM of the 5th of November 2014 for adoption. The minutes were adopted by Rachel Kachaje and Seconded by Patrick Devlieger. Thanks, was given to Anthony and the members of his committee for planning and hosting the 5th AfriNEAD conference in KNUST, Kumasi Ghana.
2. **Gubela Mji then gave feedback** on the progress of AfriNEAD over the last 10 years where we have come from and what we have achieved. The 6th AfriNEAD Conference is to return and be held in Cape Town in 2020. The original plan was that after holding 3 conferences in other African countries it would return to Cape Town and thereafter to one other place in South Africa before once again being hosted in another African country.
3. **Membership** – at the 2020 conference people to pay member fees and to become members - So when you register at the conference you automatically become a member as well as get a subscription to AJOD – this issue of membership need to be resolved before the 2020 conference
4. **Country Working Groups** - Many people still seem to be puzzled as to what CWGs were. However, in the area of the GOOGLE INFO-MAP Project on assistive devices there was more understanding. The area of CWG for AfriNEAD will pilot the area of AT for its research focus area – drawing from the GOOGLE INFO-MAP Project on assistive devices and the WHO GATE project, for AfriNEAD this need to expand from projects to a program on disability research which will include assistive devices. Assistive devices advance the inclusion of PWDs. There is a need for a round table discussion on the area of CWGs with SAFOD and partners in DRC and KNUST. This will assist in how to expand the CWGs as SAFOD is now working in more countries such as Tanzania, DRC, and Madagascar.
5. **Roving secretariat** Gubela shared the idea of that perhaps different universities should take on the ownership of AfriNEAD as they prepare for the next conference –

this prompted a lot of discussion, this requires to be thought through before implementation.

6. **Core Group minutes:** Other matters reflected in the minutes of the Core Group meeting of the 8th of August 2017 were shared with the AGM (see included document)
7. **Any other business:** thanks was given by members of the core group to the leadership of AfriNEAD reaffirming of the next conference to be held in 2020 in Cape Town.

Minutes taken by Hillary Lane

***Kindly note that these are unapproved minutes.**

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