We are proud to announce two upcoming events organized by AFRICA BUILD and that will gather experts, professionals, students and people interested in using Information and Communication Technologies to improve Health Research and Learning in Africa.

The first will take place in Eldoret, Kenya, co-located with HELINA 2013 Conference. This will be a symposium where members of AFRICA BUILD will show the latest advances of the project. [http://africabuild.eu/symposium-kenya](http://africabuild.eu/symposium-kenya)

The second is the first conference of AFRICA BUILD, in Yaounde, Cameroon. The call for papers & posters remains open until September 30. Please, find more information at: [http://africabuild.eu/conference/yaounde](http://africabuild.eu/conference/yaounde)

In this newsletter we want to emphasize African participation. You will find several contributions from our partners in Mali, Cameroon and Ghana.

In this issue:

... 1st AFRICA BUILD International Conference
... 1st AFRICA BUILD Symposium
... New Catalog of programs of diploma training at the Faculty of Medicine and Odonto-stomatology (FMOS)
... Next steps for pilot courses
... AFRICA BUILD: Its relevance to Interprofessional Learning
... Outreach meeting in Bamako

The Consortium...

... Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, University of Yaounde I (Cameroon)

News & Events...
Among the activities of the project, we planned to organize several conferences that will bring together experts, professionals, students and people interested in the topics of the project. With these conferences AFRICA BUILD aims to increase interest in these topics, attract various stakeholders and share knowledge among them.

The first AFRICA BUILD conference will be held in Yaounde, co-located with the 4th Conference of the Cameroonian Association for Health Informatics (Société Camerounaise d'Informatique Médicale, SOCIM). It will provide showcases targeted at attracting and informing decision makers from industry, government, education and research organizations.

**Audience**
It is expected that more than 100 African, European and American key stakeholders will attend the event. This includes: AFRICA BUILD Consortium, members of the AFRICA BUILD Panel of Experts, representatives for Biomedical Informatics (BMI), representatives from International Development, researchers, representatives from governments, industry, NGOs, health professionals, students and people interested in the areas of the project and biomedical research in Africa.

**Registration**
There is no registration fee, but advanced registration for the conference is required. To receive conference materials at registration, please register by 5 November 2013. A Website will be provided soon for the registration.

More information: [http://africabuild.eu/conference/yaounde](http://africabuild.eu/conference/yaounde)

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**Call for abstracts & posters**

**Deadline September 30**
The topics of interest for this conference include but are not limited to:

- Biomedical Informatics tools for Health Research in Developing Countries
- e-Learning
- e-Health
- Collaborative platforms for virtual health research
- Mobile Technologies & Applications
- Sustainability of training and biomedical Web applications in developing countries

**Call for sponsors**

There is no registration fees to attend the AFRICA BUILD 1st International Conference. We are looking for sponsorships that will collaborate with the event to achieve a larger participation of representatives from Africa, providing them travel costs and per diem. If you are interested, please contact: africabuild@infomed.dia.fi.upm.es. Please, find the complete call for sponsorshere.

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Important notes...

Date: 25 November 2013
Venue: Yaounde, Cameroon
Abstract submission deadline 30 September 2013
For more information: [www.africabuild.eu](http://www.africabuild.eu)
Education and health systems have become very complex and so have the various professions. Currently, there are so many specializations within the health profession that they are having an impact on effective interprofessional collaboration.

“Two or more professionals learning with, from and about each other to improve collaboration and quality of care” is the most accepted definition of interprofessional learning; the goal being the enablement of learners to acquire skills, knowledge and professional attitudes they would not be able obtain through other means.

Interprofessional collaboration is undoubtedly vital to the delivery of quality healthcare; however, health professionals face several challenges in participating together in training programs to improve collaborative practices due to varying work commitments and responsibilities.

Non-traditional formats such as small group problem based learning have had limited success in imparting knowledge and changing the professional behavior of participants. Hitherto, proponents of interprofessional learning argue that if opportunities are provided early for students to learn together, negative stereotypes and ingrained attitudes would be avoided. Encouraging teamwork, collaboration, increased knowledge and better understanding of other professionals by students will impart attitudes of respect.

One of the current innovative tools that hold great potential for improving professional knowledge and collaboration is web based educational programs, which have become very interactive employing multimedia formats to transfer knowledge to meet individual preferences.

E Learning or web-based learning can be used to create an enabling environment that combines convenient individual learning with collaborative experiential learning.

AFRICA BUILD’s initiative in implementing an IT-enabled, open and collaborative infrastructure for education, training and knowledge sharing for health researchers, developing virtual communities of practice and a professional social network provides an ideal model for facilitating inter professional learning within the African health landscape.

With the plethora of innovative tools on the AFRICA BUILD Portal students, researchers, health educators and professionals will have an enabling environment to learn, interact and collaborate with each other thereby greatly enhancing research, education and health care in the region.

One particular resource which I find very valuable is the integration of DUDAL with the portal. The ability to webcast over limited bandwidth as low as 30kb/sec is a visionary feat and has the potential of stirring interest in educative and collaborative endeavors by delocalized and remote health professionals with their counterparts in the urban areas.

Moreover, access to didactic materials, specialized advice and interactive sessions with other professionals will considerably promote inter professional learning.

The AFRICA BUILD project with its main aim of improving capacity for health research and education in Africa through Information Technologies has a great potential of impacting positively on teamwork and collaboration among health professionals on the African continent.

References


Centre for the Advancement of Interprofessional Education, 2002

"Providing a reliable and complete information on training programs in health sciences in Mali", such was the motivation for AFRICA BUILD Mali team to develop a directory of training programmes offered by FMOS.

Initially the information was needed to feed the training programme plugin developed for AFRICA BUILD Portal. Taking into consideration the lack of reliable source of timely information on training programmes available at FMOS, it was decided to produce a print directory. This is justified by the fact that FMOS has neither a website nor a print listing of its training programmes for the public to satisfy its information needs. Potential candidates were facing an obstacle race to access the information on training programs. When they got the needed information, it was often too late to apply.

To collect the information, the team developed a questionnaire inspired by the database of training programmes created by UG-SPH. A survey was conducted in the Faculty of Medicine and odonto-stomatology, University of the Sciences, Techniques and Technologies in Bamako (FMOS/USTTB). These questionnaire and an introductory letter signed by the Head of the Department of Public Health were distributed to training programme coordinators. Filled questionnaires were collected, processed and compiled in two directories: an access database in English and excel file in French. The access database was sent to UG-SPH for integration in the AFRICA BUILD portal. The excel file served to create a directory using Microsoft word. The draft copy of the directory to training programme was sent to coordinators for correction and validation. The corrected version is currently being processed by a printing office and will be published soon.

Out of twenty-six training programmes offered by FMOS, twenty-one will be listed. Information about the five remaining was either incomplete or not provided by programme coordinators. The final product will provide its users with information on medical and dentistry general studies, residency programmes, master degree programmes. About each training programme the following information will be available: duration, cost, conditions of admission, program start date, number of available places, contact information (contact person, phone number, email address, website), type of training (initial training, Master degree, University Diploma and Residence), production of a final thesis or dissertation to defend.

Medical studies last 7 years. For most of residency programmes the duration is 4 years. The annual fees for medical studies is about 10 € whilst 500 € are required for the majority of residency programmes. The master of public health is the most expensive with around 4000 €. All listed training programmes require the student to write and defend a thesis or a dissertation.

The production of the directory took almost 5 months: from March to July 2013. It is valuable resource since it will provide accurate information in a timely manner to potential candidates. It also contribute to the promotion of both FMOS and AFRICA BUILD. The letter sent to programme coordinators with the questionnaire introduced AFRICA BUILD to them. The directory itself contains a brief presentation about AFRICA BUILD. The draft copy was sent to the university central administration when it was in need of information about training programme. Even though incomplete and not yet the document was appreciated.

Disseminating the directory in print format as well as in electronic format online and through email will allow thousands of potential candidates access an accurate, valuable and timely information about FMOS training programme.
The faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (FMBS) of the University of Yaounde I is the first center for medical teaching in Cameroon and the Central African Subregion.

Created in 1969 as the University Centre for Health Sciences, the FMBS delivers a comprehensive education and training for medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, public health and biomedical sciences. This includes undergraduate and post graduate training, and continuing medical education.

Its main campus is situated in Yaounde, in the Melen neighborhood, but the affiliated hospitals are found in different parts of the capital city.

Teaching is based on a variety of techniques: small group teaching, laboratory-based practicals (including anatomical dissections and sessions in the purpose-built clinical skills centre), clinical demonstrations, ward rounds, multidisciplinary symposia, computer-aided learning and lectures, community postings.

Clinical, public health and biomedical research is part of the training and thesis defense is mandatory for all the medical doctors, dentists and pharmacists. As a matter of fact, the FMBS works closely with all the clinical, laboratory and research health institutions such as the first category hospitals of Cameroon, the Centre Pasteur of Cameroon, the institute of medical research and medicinal plants of the ministry of research, the Chantal Biya International center of medical research, etc.

KEY FACTS.

- Created in 1969 as the University Centre for health sciences, with Pr G Monekosso as the first Director. More than 2500 medical doctors, 500 medical specialists.
- The underlying philosophy of education is based on community oriented curriculum, training of team, integration and bilingualism (English and French). Values that are emphasized are: excellence, responsibility, ethics and collaboration.
- 4 main training programs in medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, and biomedical sciences. Programs are structured in the Bachelor, Master, and Doctorate architecture.
- Residency division with 24 options including pathology, anesthesiology, radiology, public health, internal medicine and ins subspecialties, general surgery and subspecialties, clinical biology, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology
- 4 partner tertiary hospitals and more than 40 affiliated district hospital all over the country
- International renowned researchers in diabetes and nutrition, cardiovascular diseases, malaria and AIDS

- 2000 students and 170 full time academic staff including 60 professors
- The Community oriented curriculum is structured in the Bachelor, Master, Doctorate architecture
- Health Sciences and Disease, an on line open system journal as the official publication
- Active Cooperation with many universities and research institutions in Africa, Europe, America and Asia
A mini forum held at the Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences of Yaounde (FMSB) on the 30th of July on the methodology of research using AFRICA BUILD Portal (ABP). The aim was to train finishing medical students, pharmacy and dentistry students, to write their end of training thesis.

Eighty two medical students, ten in pharmacy, five in dentistry and ten lecturers at the FMSB were registered. The Vice-Dean in charge of academics affairs opened the ceremony and explained the scope of the Dean about the refoundation of research in our institution. The key points of the research was defined and presented by Professor Djientcheu. A practical demonstration of registration and navigation in the AFRICA BUILD Portal was performed by Dr Bello via a video projection. Some lectures were followed during few minutes. Mr. Alima insured the Wireless connection in the room. Dr Noumsi did a few descriptions of clinical essays and will help those students engaged in this subject. The trainees were very motivated. A practical session took place on the first august 2013 and the trainees were registered on the ABP. The Lectures were easily followed on android tablets and smart phones. A practical community was created and the first lecturers registered accepted to be facilitators.
AFRICA BUILD outreach meeting in Bamako

By Dr Mohamed Doumbia, Dr Boncane C Toure and Mr Abdrahamane Anne (Mali)

On Saturday, July 20, 2013, FMPOS held an outreach meeting about Africa Build activities. The main objective of this activity was to enable actors involved in use of ICTs for Health to discover, discuss and share ideas around the enormous ICT potential for education and research in the health sector. During the conference a number of Africa Build activities and achievements were presented with special focus on Work packages 3, 5 and 6.

The meeting was attended by about 50 doctors, lecturers, students, ICT specialists from governmental central administration, research centers and institutes, Faculty of medicine and Non governmental Organizations.

Chairied by Prof. Mamadou Souncalo Traoré, Africa Build project manager at FMPOS and Director of the National Institute for Research in Public Health (INRSP). The meeting brought together representatives from the National Agency for Telemedicine and Medical Informatics (ANTIM), the Department of Teaching and Research in Public Health (DERSP), Faculty of Medicine and odonto Stomatolgy (FMOS), Faculty of Pharmacy (FAPH), National Federation of Community Health Associations (FENASCOM), Centre of Expertise and Research in Telemedicine and E-Health (CERTES), individuals (students, health professionals) and members of the project team.

The first presentation was made by Dr. Cheick Oumar Bagayoko. In his presentation he explained the Africa Build project and its objectives; he briefly described the different partners before focusing on Work Package 5 coordinated by FMPOS (Mali). He explained that Africa Build aims to promote research and education in the health using ICTs. The project is divided into seven work packages. The Work Package 5 is concerned with the establishment of centers of excellence and mobility of researchers.

Mr Abdrahamane ANNE presented the Africa Build portal (ABP). According to him, ABP is a professional social network intended for researchers, educators, students and professionals working in the health sector. Built using open source technologies, ABP offers different features of online collaboration: group discussions, document sharing, publishing, networking and learning.

Dr Seydou Tidiane Traore talked about mobility within the context of Africa. This mobility aims to promote exchanges between researchers, teachers and students, to train them and to facilitate their research.

Finaly, Dr Mahamoudane Niang made a presentation about WP 6. He talked specifically about the Pilot course in clinical research on HIV/AIDS conducted by ITM, FMPOS, and FMSB. Dr Niang mentioned some results of this pilot course, from the malian. The results include:

- 13 lessons, of which 6 were given by four teachers from Mali,
- The participation of 22 malian doctors including 19 medical specialists in public health or resident doctors in infectious diseases,
- The creation of five working groups Online
- The involvement of 9 teachers and researchers from Mali to deliver courses and supervise workgroups.

Dr. Niang concluded his presentation by saying that through this pilot course, participants learned new skills and knowledge in field of evidence based medicine (EBM), clinical research on HIV / AIDS. They learned how to formulate a research question, review research project methodology, present and discuss results.

After the presentation, some of the doctors who took the pilot course made testimonials giving a positive note to course. Their testimony was followed by questions/answers and discussion session.

The meeting was a great opportunity to promote Africa Build to different audiences. It contributed to expose Africa Build to a wider public. It served as a venue to emphasize on the importance of collaboration and synergy between the different organizations doing research and education in health. Participants were informed about the existence of online collaboration tools for health care professionals.
AFRICA BUILD Symposium
Co-located with HELINA 2013 Conference
8 October 2013

“Gathering experts, professionals, students and people interested in using Information and Communication Technologies to improve Health Research and Learning in Africa”

AFRICA BUILD (www.africabuild.eu) is a EU-funded project aiming to improve Health Research and Education in Africa, through Information and Communication Technologies.

The project began in August 2011 and after 2 years has conducted several studies to examine the needs and idiosyncrasies of African biomedical researchers. Based on the conclusions of these studies, we have carried out some actions. The Consortium —gathering partners from Europe and Africa — and some invited international experts will be holding a whole-day Symposium on October 8th, 2013, co-located with HELINA Conference, to present our main findings around some areas:

• Analysis of the state of eHealth and health research in Africa. This will be the basis for developing a Roadmap for future activities in the area. Presentation and discussion of the Roadmap
• Creation of a collaborative research and training infrastructure, called the AFRICA BUILD Portal, oriented to African biomedical researchers.
• Study of the African training needs in the health research domain, together with the different formats of training. Based on the conclusions of these studies we are creating a catalogue of courses and other didactic materials in this domain.
• Promotion of mobility of health researchers in Africa to other African and International locations, by using an innovative tool to automatically match offers and demands.
• We have launched two pilot courses in HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health research.

We invite you to attend our Symposium. Seating is limited and pre-registration is mandatory. We invite you to book a place in our symposium, by completing the form below:

http://africabuild.eu/symposium-kenya/registration