



Researchers from Ahmadu Bello University receive grant for research on long-term outcomes of Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme

In April 2015, the Department of Community Medicine of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, received the first tranche of monies for a new research project to study long-term outcomes following treatment in a Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme in Katsina State. The grant was awarded by ORIE (Operations Research and Impact Evaluation), a DFID-funded consortium of UK and Nigerian organisations [<http://www.heart-resources.org/tag/orie/>]. ORIE undertakes nutrition research and evaluation to generate evidence on the operationalisation, cost-effectiveness and impact of a major DFID-funded six-year programme to implement and scale-up nutrition interventions in Northern Nigeria, called WINNN [<http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-201874/>]. ORIE also invests in strengthening the capacity of nutrition researchers working in Northern Nigeria, by providing funding to enable researchers to design and undertake their own research project with the ongoing support and guidance of a group of experienced international researchers. The Department of Community Medicine, ABU Zaria, was one of three successful bidders in a competitive bidding process in late 2014, which attracted thirty-two applications.

The project will generate valuable research findings on long-term outcomes following treatment in a Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM) programme

Every year about one million children under five years of age die in Nigeria. Malnutrition contributes to nearly half of these deaths. The CMAM (Community-based Management of Acute Malnutrition) programme is recognised

as a cost-effective way of treating large numbers of children with severe acute malnutrition (SAM) without needing to admit them to a health facility or therapeutic feeding centre. It allows for proactive case-finding in the community, early treatment before medical complications develop, and high population coverage. As such, it has the potential to avert the deaths of hundreds of thousands of children in the Northern Nigerian context. But there is a lack of data on long-term outcomes and rising concerns over high post-discharge relapse and mortality rates.

The ABU team will examine the short- and long-term survival, health and growth outcomes of a sample of approximately 600 children treated in a CMAM programme in a randomly-selected LGA (Bakori) in the state of Katsina. Survey data including information on maternal, paternal and household characteristics, child anthropometry, health status and feeding practices will be collected for each child in the outpatient clinic at discharge and then again in the home, six months after discharge. The data will allow for the analysis of risk factors associated with good and poor short- and long-term outcomes. Interviews will be conducted with health workers and community leaders to assess their level of knowledge and understanding about the programme. Focus group discussions will be conducted with service users to explore the accessibility and acceptability of the programme, and factors in the home which may contribute to good or poor long-term outcomes. Data collection activities started in August 2015. Findings are expected to be disseminated around the end of 2016.

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The team will use a targeted dissemination strategy to ensure that its findings are widely communicated. The dissemination plan includes activities targeted at three kinds of audiences: (1) the general public, through 'town hall meetings'; (2) state and LGA-level policymakers, programme managers and other key nutrition stakeholders; and (3) the scientific community, via presentations at scientific conferences and at least one article in an international peer-reviewed journal. Context-specific evidence like this, generated by high quality research, is essential to underpin the Scaling-up Nutrition agenda in Nigeria.

Developing new research skills

The grant is accompanied by support activities, including ongoing informal support and guidance and formal training provided by ORIE's researchers. These support activities are designed to strengthen data collection and analysis and to provide a forum for trouble-shooting as and when problems arise. The formal program includes training in qualitative and quantitative research methods, the use of specialised software packages for data analysis, and general research skills such as writing research grant applications and scientific papers, and using electronic literature.



Right Members of the ABU Department of Community medicine participate in qualitative research training course.

ORIE and WINNN

ORIE is an independent component of the UK Government's Department for International Development (DFID) funded Working to Improve Nutrition in Northern Nigeria (WINNN) programme. WINNN is working to improve the nutritional status of 6.2 million children under five years of age in five states of northern Nigeria. ORIE is carrying out research to determine the impact of WINNN and generate important research on key evidence gaps regarding solutions to undernutrition in northern Nigeria.

The ABU team

Dr. M.N. Sambo is the principal investigator. The other team members are: Dr S.H. Idris, Dr S.S. Bashir, Dr B.P. Zakariyya, and Dr H.N. Kera. All are based in the department of Community Medicine. Please direct any queries about the research to Dr Idris at idrissuleman2003@yahoo.com. For more information on ORIE please contact Dr Vincent Ahonsi on vincent.ahonsi@orie-ng.org.

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ORIE is run by a consortium of UK and Nigerian organisations. In the UK: Oxford Policy Management, Institute of Development Studies, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Save the Children UK; in Nigeria: Food Basket Foundation International, University of Ibadan. ORIE works in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria.

For any further information about ORIE please email orienigeria@orie-ng.org or see the website heart-resources.org/tag/orie