

Scaling up research results and innovations for public health impact



Project full name:
Ifakara Health Institute: Scaling up of research results and innovations to maximize public health impact

Phase VII:
2019 - 2024

SDC contribution:
CHF 1,950,000

Total phase budget:
CHF 12,850,770

Implementing partner:
The Ifakara Health Institute

Partners:

- MoHCDGEC
- COSTECH
- Fondation Botnar
- EssentialTech – EPFL
- Swiss TPH
- RoboTech

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Project Overview

Investment in health research and innovation in Tanzania is a policy priority. The national health research priorities focus at present on the elimination of diseases of poverty, universal health coverage, prevention of traffic accidents, non-communicable diseases and equity-focused health financing strategies. However, public research institutions are hampered by funding shortfalls and the private sector capital plays little role in research and innovation.

The Ifakara Health Institute (IHI) is one of few independent, private health research institutions in Tanzania that has successfully transferred major research findings into national policy. IHI is now a nationally and internationally recognised global health research institute with total grants worth 25 million US Dollars.

IHI is a Tanzanian Trust engaged in research-cum-action and training to address high quality public health relevant priorities. IHI developed from the Swiss Tropical Institute field laboratory in 1949 to a Tanzanian trust-based institution in 1996 with the Tanzanian and Swiss Governments, and Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute (Swiss TPH) as founding members.

In this phase, Switzerland is supporting IHI to improve its research impact at policy and community levels. The intervention also brings together researchers and end-users in an innovation hub to identify livelihood challenges of youth and innovative approaches to address these challenges. Private sector partnerships with Swiss innovators will be pursued to support the innovation hub.

Overall Goal

Promote and scale up innovative research approaches aiming to improve the impact of public health in Tanzania.

Expected Outcomes

- IHI's local, national, regional and global attractiveness as a research platform is durably strengthened and its research impacts optimally on the wellbeing of the local communities.
- Thriving culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, producing solution that contribute to the improvement of local community wellbeing and sustainable development.

KEY RESULTS FROM PREVIOUS PHASES

- Quality, quantity and relevance of IHI research increased
- High quality data and knowledge products accessed by a broad range of users for decision making
- ISO accredited quality management, robust governance and renewal of high quality human resource
- Growing management and financial stability

IFAKARA INNOVATION HUB

IHI's strategic plan 'Impact on Public Health 2018 – 2023' prioritizes strategic initiatives that will close the gap between researcher interests and user relevance. To foster this collaboration, IHI established an innovation hub in Ifakara. The Ifakara Innovation Hub aims to bring together scientists, prototype developers, start-up entrepreneurs and end users to develop innovative solutions to address local livelihood challenges, particularly those of youth and women. The Hub will deal with social and economic issues beyond the health sector, it will serve as a test platform for new solutions to evaluate the cost-benefit/effectiveness of innovative approaches targeting the approximately one million resident population.

Beneficiaries

Populations in Ifakara, particularly youth, young women and girls; local and international innovators and researchers; research institutions: public, private, local and international; Government of Tanzania including policy makers such as the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children (MoHCDGEC) and the Commission of Science and Technology (COSTECH); and private companies.