



Bridging Communication Barriers and Fostering Cross-Site Exchange at INDEPTH Sites

A new INDEPTH Initiative

In recent years, the INDEPTH NETWORK has made its mark in the fields of population and health. The success of the network has been due to the collective efforts of the Secretariat, the Board, the Scientific Advisory Committee as well as the invaluable contribution of its member sites.

However, there is a need to highlight the fact that the levels of participation and the contribution of sites to INDEPTH activities vary widely; not only because of differences in research expertise and diverging research interests, but also, to some extent, because of language barriers. The latter is especially true for sites where English is not the first language. For instance, there have been only a limited number of applications from young scientists from sites in non-English-speaking countries for the INDEPTH Masters degree training fellowship at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Overcoming the language barrier and sharpening the scientific skills of young researchers from non-English-speaking countries will contribute to strengthening research capacity, and to increasing contributions to future INDEPTH activities.

INDEPTH is launching this new initiative to strengthen the communication skills in English of young scientists from non-English-speaking countries. It is a 1-2 month cross-site attachment programme that will initially support 2 young scientists annually.

Training strategy

- Trainees will take an active part in day to day research activities at the host sites, focusing on their particular area of interest.
- They will have at least three hours of English conversation every week with staff members at the host site.
- They will be expected to use the opportunity offered by field visits to improve their communication skills in English by participating in interviews (if applicable), and by interacting with field staff.

- Host sites will identify staff (mentors) to support the trainees in improving their communication and scientific skills throughout the training period.
- At the end of each week, the trainee will prepare a 1-2 page summary of activities undertaken for submission to the mentor at the host site.
- The host site will assign one scientific publication to the trainee, who will prepare 5-7 PowerPoint slides to summarise the paper and make a presentation to members of the site's scientific staff.
- At the end of the programme, the trainee will give a presentation on the training experience and will submit a report to the INDEPTH Secretariat.
- The INDEPTH Secretariat will cover costs for travel and accommodation during the training period.

Submission of application

- Staff from INDEPTH member sites in non-English-speaking countries are eligible to apply.
- Applicants must be less than 35 years of age and hold at least a Masters degree or equivalent qualification.
- Applicants should submit a CV, a motivation letter and a letter of support from their site leader to Mr. Titus Tei, Administrative Manager, INDEPTH Network Secretariat: titus.tei@indepth-network.org
- Applicants should suggest two INDEPTH sites in English-speaking countries to which they would like to be cross-attached, and specify their area of interest for research training.

The INDEPTH Secretariat will make a final decision based on resources available. There is no deadline for submission of applications.