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# INDEPTH Network Work Plan 2008

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# Introduction

- INDEPTH sites - Africa, Asia, Latin America and Oceania.
- INDEPTH currently consists of 38 health and demographic surveillance system (HDSS) sites in 19 developing countries.
- INDEPTH utilises the resources it raises from funders to foster, fund and co-ordinate cross-site studies, multi-site research and other capacity strengthening activities.



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# Work Plan 2008

- This work plan prioritises scientific, capacity strengthening and administrative activities for 2008.
- Based on the INDEPTH Strategic Plan 2004-2009.
- Some of the activities presented will be ongoing from the previous year.
- The new activities include the following: Education, Reproductive Health, Cost of Illness, Epilepsy, Climate Change and Health, GIS for HDSS, and production of monographs on fertility and clustering of mortality.
- This work plan has not included activities related to the Malaria Clinical Trials Alliance (MCTA). A separate work plan for MCTA is available.



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# Summary of Activities

Scientific  
Capacity Strengthening  
Administrative

# Scientific Activities

1. HIV/AIDS (ART rollout)
2. Adult Health and Aging
3. Migration and Urbanisation
4. NCD monitoring in Asia
5. DSS and Phase IV trials
6. TARGETS
7. RealRights
8. AGM 2008
9. HDSS and University collaboration
10. Scientific Advisory Committee
11. Education
12. Cost of Illness
13. Reproductive Health
14. Climate Change and Health
15. Epilepsy Study
16. Monographs

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# Capacity Strengthening Activities

1. INDEPTH Scientific Development and Leadership Programme
2. Workshops: Scientific Writing, Proposal Development, Data Management, Biostatistics Support and Data Analysis.
3. Small seed grants for cross-site activities
4. INDEPTH data system
5. Bridging language barrier
6. Website support
7. Technical exchange



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# Administrative Activities

1. Fundraising for the Network
2. Running of the Secretariat and networking of sites and partners
3. Board of Trustees

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# PART A: SCIENTIFIC ACTIVITIES





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# 1. Working Groups



# 1.1 Adult Health and Aging

- Five INDEPTH sites are implementing a summarized version of the WHO/SAGE questionnaire and three sites are implementing the full version.
- This aims to improve our empirical understanding of aging and older persons within and across countries
- Sites: Agincourt, Navrongo, Ifakara, APHRC (Africa) and Vadu, Filabavi, Matlab and Purworejo (Asia).
- Field work is complete and data preparation currently ongoing for analysis.
- **2008:** The group is planning an analysis workshop in May at Umea University in Sweden.
- The workshop will be in collaboration with WHO and with technical support from Umea university

## 1.2 HIV/AIDS – ART Rollout

- INDEPTH has developed a grant proposal to evaluate the impact of anti-retroviral therapy (ART) rollout on individuals, populations and the health systems.
- Project Title: Population-based longitudinal assessment of ART rollout: Effects on individuals, populations, and health systems.
- PI: Dr. Nyovani Madise.
- Sites: Ifakara (Tanzania), Bandim (Guinea Bissau), Agincourt (South Africa), Kisumu and Nairobi (Kenya).
- **Submissions:** Wellcome Trust and Gates Foundation
- **2008: Solve the issue of site PIs; Seek funding, if successful, start implementation**

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## 1.3 NCD Monitoring in Asia/Oceania

- INDEPTH funded a multi-site study on NCD risk factor surveillance
- Sites: Kanchanaburi (Thailand); Chililab and Filabavi (Vietnam); Purworejo (Indonesia); HSID, Matlab, and HSID (Bangladesh) and Vadu (India).
- The study was successfully completed and a report submitted to the secretariat. A paper from this study was presented at the AGM and the group has published one paper in *Journal of Human Hypertension*:
- **Submitted a preproposal to AusAid** (*strengthen health systems for addressing chronic disease burden in Asia Pacific region*)
- **2008:** - Further data analysis order to continue to interrogate the data collected.

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## 1.4 Migration and Urbanisation

- MUWG currently working on a monograph that aims to contribute to an empirical understanding of the dynamics between migration and health in Africa and Asia using DSS data.
- Preliminary title: “**Migration, Health and Poverty Dynamics, from the Ground Up**”.
- A series of data analysis and writing meetings were held by the editorial group in 2007 at the PAA in New York, Brown University, the AGM in Nairobi and the UAPS conference in Arusha.
- **2008:** The group plans to continue to work on the monograph hoping to have the full monograph ready by the 2008 AGM.

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# 2. PROJECTS



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## 2.1 Targets

- A consortium led by the London School
- Objectives: Improve health of the poor and vulnerable through generating and facilitating the uptake of evidence based policies, and approaches to effective control and prevention of communicable diseases
- INDEPTH initiated a cross-site study on “Community acceptability of artesunate-amodiaquine for the treatment of uncomplicated malaria in Ghana.”
  - Preliminary results were presented to the national malaria control programme in Ghana.
  - Sites: Dodowa, Kintampo and Navrongo (Ghana).
- 2008: The Secretariat is working with the three sites to conduct further analysis on the data for publication.
  - INDEPTH is currently doing analysis on child and maternal mortality in an effort to monitor the MDGs in Ghana.

## 2.2 Realizing Rights

- **A consortium led by IDS, Sussex**
- **Objectives:** Improving the evidence base on SRH morbidities in vulnerable populations and strengthening surveillance capacity.
  
- **Achievements**
  - Organized an analysis workshop in March 2007 on contraceptive use dynamics in Africa.
  - INDEPTH concluded a report on reproductive health rights in Ghana and presented findings to select parliamentary sub-committees.
  - INDEPTH started an analysis of contraceptive use dynamics in Africa and presented preliminary at the 2007 UAPS conference.
  
- **In 2008:**
  - We will continue with the analysis and refine the report on reproductive health rights in Ghana.
  
  - We plan to do further analysis with the sites that participated in the workshop



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## 2.3. HDSS–University Collaboration

- 2-year project funded by Hewlett Foundation
- Matching analytic and training skills and opportunity among HDSS sites and university population training centres in Ghana, Kenya and South Africa.
- Secretariat developed an online database of the expertise available both at the participating universities and the HDSS sites.
- Late start; Invited Unis to Nairobi AGM
- Five projects were funded in 2007.

### 2008

- The Secretariat will actively promote more collaborations between the HDSS sites and the universities
- Need to spend another \$35K to be able to get the second year of funding
- Efforts will be made to promote working visits between the sites and the universities in order to ensure that both take advantage of the training and research opportunities.



## 2.4. INDEPTH Data Systems Initiative

- Wellcome Trust provided funding in late 2006 to prepare a proposal to develop a data system that will facilitate data capture and retrieval for analysis.
- A team of data managers and IT experts came up with an initial concept that was further refined in a proposal development workshop held in February 2007 in May 2007 was presented to site leaders.
- Proposal developed now finalized...Wellcome Trust and other funders interested
- Objective is to greatly enhance INDEPTH sites' capacity to address major health problems affecting developing countries and facilitate cross-site data analysis and sharing.
- **2008:**
  - Seek funding
  - Engaging vendors to help develop the system.
  - Start implementation process



## 2.5. DSS and Phase IV Trials

- The INDEPTH Network is leading a consortium of partners that developed a proposal to conduct Phase IV safety and effectiveness studies of new anti-malarial drugs in 9 countries with a network of sites in Africa.
- Project creates missing final section of the drug development pipeline for Africa to ensure rapid access to practical safety and effectiveness evidence from local experience.
- Main product is longitudinal evidence base to allow assessment of efficacious drugs in real life settings to inform global and national policy and practice.
- Participating countries represent a diverse range of health systems capacity, malaria endemicity and representative of enough evidence for policy making.
- Several meetings were convened in 2007 for the development of the proposal...draft proposal was shared with sites and district directors of health services in participating countries in May 2007 in Ghana.
- **2008:** A full proposal submitted to Gates Foundation and now awaiting decision
- If funded Secretariat will work with the participating sites to prepare them for the phase IV trials

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## 2. 7<sup>th</sup> AGM Annual General and Scientific Meeting

- The AGM generates the scientific agenda through its working groups and reviews progress of joint work undertaken.
- The AGM is utilised as a scientific forum for the presentations of scientific papers and posters by members and young scientists sponsored by the Network.
- The 7th AGM was held in Nairobi, Kenya, from September 3-7, 2007. The hosts were the DSS sites in Kenya.
- **2008:** The 8th AGM will be held in Dar-es-Salaam from September 22-26 and will be hosted by the HDSS sites in Tanzania.

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## 2.7. Scientific Advisory Committee

- The Scientific Advisory Committee (SAC) provides guidance, scientific review and leadership to the Secretariat and the Board
- Provides advice and recommendations on the research and development portfolio of the Network.
- In 2007 the SAC had one face-to-face and one telephone conference. Four SAC members rotated off.
- A new SAC chair and deputy chair were appointed by the board.
- **2008:** The SAC is expected to have at least one face-to-face conference and two teleconferences.
- SAC members to serve as mentors to sites
- The Secretariat will be making recommendations to the board on new members to join the SAC

# 3. Interest Groups

- The Secretariat has encouraged the establishment of various groups proposing cross-site activities.
- Secretariat plans to fund one or two of these groups with high potential to raise funds, to convene proposal development workshops.
- In 2007, a number of interests groups came up prominent among which included a group on Education, Reproductive Health and Climate Change and Health.
- **2008:** The Secretariat will encourage and where necessary, provide support to some of these groups, particularly those that demonstrate great promise to deliver a concrete product.

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## 3.1 Education Group

- Jean-Francois Kobianne of Ouagadougou HDSS site leads group to examine and analyze education data.
- Call sent out in late 2007 for sites to indicate data collected on education and their interest to participate
- Longitudinal data from DSS can give us the opportunity to assess issues such school attendance rates, progression rates, repetition rates, etc.
- Follow up of health indicators and education outcomes at the same time provide opportunity to examine health-education relationships and allow evaluation of education MDG
- **2008:** The Secretariat will continue to encourage this group to develop a good research agenda in this area

## 3.2 Environment and Health

- The Executive Director and Dr Yazoume Yé, Associate Research Scientist at the APHRC/Nairobi HDSS visited Bergen, Norway, to dialogue on possible collaboration
- Presented the Network's research plans in climate change and health.
- University of Bergen presented the Centre for International Health's climate health research at the University of Bergen and ongoing CIH research collaboration at some INDEPTH sites.
- **2008:** The Secretariat will revive the INDEPTH Environment and Health interest group so that the Bergen initiative can be moved forward.



# 3.3 Reproductive Health

- Since 2002, the reproductive health interest group has been on the drawing board.
- 2007 AGM saw rebirth of this interest group
- Discussions under way to ensure group becomes vibrant.
- Secretariat plans to ensure that reproductive health is a key network activity
- Secretariat hosted Dr Nana Twum-Danso, Director, Mebendazole Donation Initiative, with the Task force for child survival and development, USA
- Discussed the possibility of developing a comprehensive agenda in the area of reproductive health
- Dr. Twum-Danso agreed to spearhead this effort and the Secretariat will provide the necessary support to have this happen.
- **2008:** The Secretariat hopes to support serious efforts at developing the reproductive health agenda at INDEPTH sites.

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## 3.4 HDSS and Monitoring Progress of MDGs

- INDEPTH in 2005 developed a concept paper that outlined the role HDSS sites could play in monitoring progress MDGs
- HDSS systems collect data from whole communities over extended periods of time, and therefore accurately reflect developing-country health and population problems
- Monitoring new health threats and tracking population changes HDSS sites could provide policy-makers critical information for policy while monitoring MGDs
- In **2008**, Secretariat will encourage the formation of a specific working group whose aim will be to assemble data that and produce indicators that will show progress towards meeting the MDGs.

# 3.5 Vaccination and Immunization

- Led Peter Aaby, Bandim HDSS, INDEPTH Board member
- Do comparative work on immunization.
- The tangible outcomes of the current plans for the vaccination group would be:
  - agree on methodological problems
  - benefit from different combinations of data collection on vaccinations, micronutrient supplementation and similar interventions
  - establish a consortium of INDEPTH sites with interest in measuring the impact of common childhood interventions in observational or randomised studies
  - agree on a number of multi-site publications which can be made with existing data sets
  - agree on a common protocol for prospective studies assessing the hypotheses presented in the Fine/Smith editorial in TMIH 2007 – LSHTM
  - explore interest in conducting randomised multi-centre studies of possible modifications in the current standard programme for health interventions in childhood.
- In 2007, a data analysis workshop was held in Nairobi to examine the data and to explore avenues for doing comprehensive analysis on immunization at INDEPTH sites.
- In 2008, the group plans to organise a series of workshops to explore and analyse existing to address the issues above

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## 3.6. GIS for HDSS

- INDEPTH Secretariat to encourage HDSS sites taking keen interest in geographic information systems
- Integrating GIS into their DSS operations
- Secretariat plans to support a major effort to incorporate GIS into routine HDSS data collection.
- Secretariat to support a group that will look at the use of GIS techniques to visualise HDSS data.

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# 4. Production of Cross-site Products



# 4.1. Second Edition of INDEPTH Mortality Monograph

- The first INDEPTH Mortality Monograph generated a lot of interest and the Network believes sites today have collected more data which would enrich the volume even more.
- The Secretariat is supporting a team of editors to work on the second edition of the monograph. The publication will have separate chapters on child and adult mortality, as well as causes of death at the participating sites.
- In 2007, INDEPTH set up an editorial team which met during the AGM in Nairobi and again at the UAPS conference in Arusha where they assembled 16 datasets submitted by HDSS sites.
- **2008:** The Secretariat will encourage and support this group to work on revising this monograph.



## 4.2. INDEPTH Fertility Monograph

- INDEPTH sites collect information that should allow the Network to contribute to the international literature on fertility issues in developing countries.
- The Secretariat has encouraged sites to contribute data for fertility analysis.
- Four sites have nominated scientists to constitute an editorial team on a fertility monograph -- Dr. Jean-Christophe Fotso (African Population and Health Research Centre, Nairobi, Kenya), Dr. William Muhwava (Africa Centre Demographic and Information System, Mtubatuba, South Africa), Prof. Clifford Odimegwu (Agincourt HDSS MRC/Wits, South Africa) and Abdur Razzaque (ICDDR, B, Matlab, Bangladesh)
- **2008:** Secretariat plans to provide support to facilitate the production of a fertility monograph. SAC members have expressed interest in contributing their expertise.



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## 4.3 Clustering of Under-five Mortality

- Extensive analysis from the Nouna (DSS) data for 1990-1998 concentrating on the clustering of children under five in the study area.
- Can be replicated in other sites with mortality and GIS data.
- In 2007 the three HDSS sites in Ghana started a collaborative analysis of clustering of child and adult mortality at the sites
- **2008:** Secretariat plans to encourage other sites with the requisite data to use this methodology to look at potential clustering of childhood, adult and old-age mortality at INDEPTH DSS sites.



## 4.4. Project Officers

- Working group activities have been largely carried out on a pro-bono basis.
- However, this 'free-service' method has not worked.
- Secretariat in seeking core support budgeted for the use of Project Officers who will largely be scientific staff based at HDSS sites
- Percentage of their time contributed to network level activities will be catered for.
- This should help site scientists to take up lead roles in working group and proposal development activities.
- **2008:** The Secretariat plans to support working groups that have demonstrated commitment at producing research work that will contribute to advance science and policy development in the developing world.

# 5. Collaborations

- Maintaining and establishing partnerships with funders, donors and parallel groups is essential to INDEPTH's vision and mission
- The Network and its members work closely with funders, product development groups, parallel groups, local governments, policy makers, service delivery NGOs and local community-based groups.
- Current list of collaborators includes WHO, TDR, University of Witwatersrand, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, Swiss Tropical Institute, the Health Metrics Network, University of Ghana, and the EAGLES Project
- **2008:** INDEPTH will continue to maintain current collaborations and pursue new strategic collaborations. The following are highlighted: University of Hiedelberg, Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation (IHME), University of Washington, Measure Evaluation, Macro International (DHS+) and NACOST, African Union.

## 6. INDEPTH Prize

- The INDEPTH Prize for Extraordinary Research in Population and Health at INDEPTH Sites was established by the Board of Trustees in March 2002.
- The Prize fund of \$10000 was donated Dr. Peter Aaby, leader of the Bandim DSS site in Guinea-Bissau.
- \$3000 awarded annually to researchers who have recently published innovative INDEPTH-relevant research in a refereed journal or a comparable publication.
- Filabavi HDSS won the prize in 2005 and Kintampo HDSS in 2006. The prize was not awarded in 2007.
- **2008:** INDEPTH will award the Peter Aaby prize for extraordinary research from INDEPTH sites at the AGM.



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# **PART B: CAPACITY BUILDING/STRENGTHENING ACTIVITIES**

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# Part B Capacity Building/Strengthening Activities

INDEPTH organises capacity building/strengthening initiatives across the lifecycle of both institutional DSS site development and individual professional training. These initiatives help the global public health sector get better information and scientific work from the efforts of the sites, and increase the scientific and operational strength of the member sites.



# 1. Scientific Development and Leadership Programme

- Objectives :
  - To develop a genre of African scientists from INDEPTH sites and elsewhere through practical on-the-job training in a unique Masters programme that combines epidemiology, biostatistics, demography and other social sciences with a focus on demographic and health surveillance in developing countries.
  - To develop the capacity of scientists in the INDEPTH Network to have negotiating power to engage external collaborators.
- In 2007, INDEPTH funded four students for the Msc. in population-based field epidemiology at WITS.
- **2008:** Twelve students funded for 2008/9. INDEPTH will continue support students based on available funding.
- In seeking support for core funding from the Wellcome Trust, INDEPTH built into this proposal a component to continue to fund the leadership programme
- The Secretariat at the end of 2008 will participate in evaluation meeting for the programme.



## 2. Cross-site Capacity Building Small Grants

- With funding from Sida/SAREC, the Secretariat launched a small grants programme whose overall goal is to foster research collaboration and research training between INDEPTH sites in the developing world by providing seed grants of US\$25,000 per grant to at least three member sites participating in a cross-site activity.
- In 2007, INDEPTH funded six cross-site projects that are now complete.
- In late 2007, INDEPTH received further funding from Sida/SAREC following the success achieved from the first round to continue the cross-site capacity development programme.
- **2008:** INDEPTH will continue with the programme by expanding it further.
- Funding will be provided to sites that come up with innovative capacity strengthening activities.
- The Secretariat hopes to attract other funding agencies in the near future.



# 3. Scientific Writing Workshop

- Objectives:
  - help scientists in INDEPTH sites develop the ability to communicate their thoughts effectively through writing;
  - build skills for writing in peer-reviewed journals;
  - understand how the peer-review process works and to gain some experience of peer-review on own writing; and
  - facilitate peer-review and feedback on a set of DSS focused papers among developing country researchers and practitioners.
- A total of 10 young scientists participated in the 2007 workshop.
- The Regional Institute for Population Studies at the University of Ghana hosted the workshop on behalf of the network.
- **2008:** The Secretariat plans to organize another scientific writing workshop that will bring between 10-15 young scientists together for one week.





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## 4. Data Analysis Workshop

- One of the biggest challenges facing many INDEPTH sites is lack of adequate capacity to analyze the large volumes of data
- Expertise in longitudinal data analysis is required to analyze rich, longitudinal and multi-level data at HDSS
- **2008:** Secretariat intends to organize one data analysis workshop in 2008 for scientists from its member sites. The workshop will combine theory and on-hands practical analysis of data to allow participants understand both the concepts and the actual data analysis process and procedures.
- Seeking collaboration with UAPS to undertake workshop



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## 5. Short Training in Biostatistics

- One of the crucial skills that most INDEPTH sites lack is a biostatistics.
- While sites collect and archive a huge amount of data they are often unable to analyse because of lack of biostatisticians
- **2008:** As part of efforts to equip site scientists with biostatistics skills, the Secretariat plans in 2008 to organize a one week short course in biostatistics in one of the sites. Scientists from other sites will be funded to visit the hosting site to attend the course. The Secretariat intends to collaborate with one of the universities that have offered biostatistics as a course and have extensive experience in organizing short courses in this area.

# 6. Data Managers Workshop

- Objective: Provide a forum that will facilitate sharing of experiences, solutions, and other related issues to ensure that the data is readily provided for network-level activities.
- The Secretariat encounters difficulties getting data from sites for network level activities because sites generate and store large volumes of data and data Managers have to grapple with a multiplicity of constraints:
- These sentiments have been raised in various INDEPTH meetings including the last Data Managers Meeting held in Ho in June 2004. Meanwhile, skills and expertise exist within the network that can be harnessed to the benefit of more member sites.
- **2008:** The Secretariat plan to organize a data managers workshop. The objectives of this meeting are to bring together Data Managers and Statisticians from selected HDSS sites to discuss difficulties they encounter in data management within the sites and discuss how these problems can be overcome with the support of the network.

# 7. Language Barrier

- One of the key challenges preventing some of our member sites from non-English-speaking countries participating in network level activities is the language barrier.
- Overcoming the language barrier and sharpening the scientific skills of young researchers from non-English-speaking countries can strengthen research capacity and increase contributions to future INDEPTH activities.
- In late 2007, INDEPTH launched a new initiative to strengthen the communication skills of young scientists from non-English-speaking countries.
- **2008:** The initiative's programme will be implemented. Navrongo has accepted to host first candidate from Bandim HDSS

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## 8. Site Exchange and Technical Support

- Support to sites for Technical Exchange Visits
- **2008:** The Secretariat will continue supporting technical site exchange visits and funding technical support to sites.

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# PART C: ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES



# 1. The Secretariat

- Principle responsibilities:
  - Identify key health and social issues needing investigation
  - Maintain donor relations and generate funding for network studies and evaluations
  - Coordinate and support the conduct of network studies and evaluations
  - Publish and disseminate results to impact policy and practice
  - Promote DSS and its capabilities
  - Position INDEPTH among regional and international institutions
  - All other institutional costs not covered in activities
- Travel
  - Site visits
  - Presentations at fora such as the UAPS and APHA meetings.
- **2008:** To engage with international experts in population and health and to learn best practices from the field, INDEPTH will intensify efforts at making a huge presence at international scientific meetings.



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## 2. Fundraising for the Network

- In late 2007, the Secretariat was successful in raising \$2.3 million
- Strategies for raising Core Funding
  - Approach current funders
  - Expand the funder-base
- Strategies for Raising Research Funding
  - Get working groups / sites more active in raising research grants.
  - Motivate working groups to develop grant proposals for funding.
- Strategies for Raising Capacity Building Funding
  - Contact various foundations to provide full or part funding
- Other strategies
  - Strengthen existing collaborations
  - Pursue new collaborations.
  
- **2008:** Submit a proposal to IDRC Canada for funding. The HIV/AIDS group has also completed a proposal which will be submitted in early 2008.



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## 3. Board of Trustees

- The Board's primary role is to provide oversight and accountability for the activities of the Secretariat and the Network as a whole.
- The Board had two face-to-face conferences and one telephone conference in 2007.
- **2008:** We expect the Board to hold at least two face-to-face and two telephone conferences.



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## 4. Websites

- The Secretariat has been helping several member sites develop and register websites. The Secretariat is also maintaining its own website. In 2007 great efforts were made to improve the Secretariat's website to give the network more visibility.
- An INDEPTH prize for the best website was launched to encourage sites to update the contents of their websites regularly. These efforts are geared toward creating more visibility for the DSS sites and the Network.
- **2008:** We will continue to improve on this while we provide support to member sites without websites to develop their own.



# 5. Secretariat Staff

- INDEPTH is led by a permanent executive body (“the Secretariat”), which is headed by a full-time Executive Director.
- Additional network support is provided through an ICT Manager, an Accountant, an Administrative Officer, an Administrative Secretary, and a full-time Senior Research Associate. A Senior Clinical Trialist, two Clinical Trialists and an Administrative Secretary provide support to the Malaria Clinical Trial Alliance.
- **2008:** A Research Associate (Biostatistician), a Senior Accountant, and an Administrative Secretary will be recruited

# 6. Tipping Issue

- INDEPTH is registered as a charity with the US IRS. This enables the network to receive non-taxable funding from US donors. In recent years due to the high level of funding attracted from donors like the Bill and Belinda Gates Foundation, it became apparent that INDEPTH could lose the charity status. This phenomena is called “Tipping”
- In order to forestall this, the Secretariat in 2007, with support from the Gates Foundation, initiated action for legal advice. A favourable report has been received from the legal experts in New York that the Secretariat is studying.
- **2008:** The Secretariat will work intensively with the legal advisors to solve this problem.

# 7. Headquarters Agreement

- The Secretariat is made up of both locally and internationally recruited staff. However, INDEPTH does not enjoy diplomatic status in Ghana. This has been detrimental to especially nationals of other countries who are working in Ghana and qualify for tax exemption.
- The Secretariat assisted by its legal advisor, started working with the Foreign Affairs Ministry to obtain a diplomatic status. and enjoy the benefits that accrue to such a status
- **2008:** The Secretariat is striving to acquire diplomatic status for the Network. This would enable the Network to attract international staff