



Société Camerounaise de Bioéthique
Cameroon Bioethics Society
CBS

Developing Guidelines for Health Research in Africa

'Science with Africa' Conference



UN Economic
Commission for Africa



Africa Union

Thursday, 6 March 2008, Addis Ababa
Midday Session (11:30 to 13:00)
Afternoon Session (14:30 to 16:00)

moderated by
Representative, Africa Union
Avril Doyle, Member of the European Parliament

Conclusions of the Clinical Trials Roundtable

The participants of the Clinical Trials Roundtable that discussed the topic of Developing Guidelines for Health Research in Africa wish to thank the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and the Africa Union for the opportunity of launching this important health project within the Science with Africa Conference.

The discussion within the roundtable drew the following conclusions:

1. Health research in Africa is a key component to driving health policy and healthcare across the continent. The leadership of the Africa Union (AU) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is of central importance for developing both a pan-African approach as well as national approaches to establishing commonly accepted African and international standards for research promotion and human subjects protections.
2. Africa should develop its own guidelines for ethics, Good Clinical Practice, and other key areas for the development of investment and outcomes in African health needs. A model bioethics law should also be considered by the Africa Union (Africa Union Commission and Panafrican Parliament) and the national parliaments and governments of Africa. The guidelines and model bioethics law should be developed by experts working in close cooperation with national, African, and international policy makers in health research and health policy in order to ensure their implementation, as appropriate, into national law, regulation, education, and practices. The AU and UNECA should provide the leadership needed to create the political will for linking health research to health policy and health care through shared African standards.

3. The roundtable has established an African and international cooperative group with an African Project Secretariat at the Cameroon Bioethics Society (CBS) in Douala, Cameroon, and an International Project Secretariat at the Good Clinical Practice Alliance – Europe (GCPA) in Brussels, Belgium. Specific working groups will be established for the guidelines and model bioethics law and a series of meetings and workshops will be held over the next 24 months to complete the standards and begin the process of implementation.
4. The roundtable participants recognised the need to bring together ethicists, health experts, researchers, regulators, policy makers, and politicians for a discussion of the first drafts of the guidelines and model bioethics law at the First Pan-African Bioethics Congress, 28-30 May 2008, Yaoundé, Cameroon.

The Congress has the following objectives in relation to the development of health standards in Africa:

- a. implementing the Resolution of the Organisation of African Unity (AU) 1996 of the 32nd Bioethics Summit of African Heads of State at Yaoundé, Cameroon;
- b. mobilising African strengths for achieving the 2nd step of the Millennium Development Goals in African countries; and
- c. boosting health research investment and outcomes for the public health needs of African populations

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