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Sharing the latest news from the AWACAN-ED programme

Hello and welcome to the first of our new-look AWACAN-ED Newsletters. Via our twice yearly newsletters we aim to keep everyone involved and up-to-date with the latest activities and news.

AWACAN-ED is an NIHR-funded Global Health Research Group which started in October 2021 and runs for 4 years. It follows on from the African Women Awareness of CANcer (AWACAN) project, which focussed on breast and cervical cancer awareness among women in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The AWACAN-ED team includes researchers from South Africa, Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom. We aim to advance the early diagnosis of cancer in Southern Africa by developing and evaluating electronic tools (e-Tools) to improve care-seeking and reduce healthcare delays. We will focus on cervical and breast cancer in women and colorectal cancer in men and women.



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Queen Mary
University of London

Team updates

Since our last newsletter there have been some changes to the team:

- Natalie Tegama has joined the UK team as a Research Associate at Queen Mary University of London
- Dr Chipso Gwanzura has stepped down from her role in Zimbabwe

Research Update

Data Collection for Workstream 1 of the project is well underway in both South Africa and Zimbabwe. Teams are visiting clinics in the following locations:

- Mthatha, Eastern Cape, South Africa
- Cape Town, Western Cape, South Africa
- Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
- Harare, Zimbabwe

Overall, recruitment across all three cancers has exceeded 60% of the target. A pilot study was carried out prior to starting data collection for real and you can read a blog [here](#) about the teams' initial experiences in the field.

awacan.online/news/experiences-of-the-awacan-ed-team-during-the-data-collection-pilot-study



Local Collaborators

One key contributor to the great progress we are making with our data collection is the network of local collaborators we are working with at the facilities in South Africa and Zimbabwe. We would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their continued assistance with our work.

A full list of our local collaborators can be found [here](#) on our website.

awacan.online/aboutus/collaborators

Capacity Development Update

A core objective of AWACAN-ED is to strengthen research capacity in Southern Africa. The programme funds a number of studentships in Zimbabwe and South Africa and these have been awarded to:

- Dr Simbarashe Chinyowa - PhD student in Zimbabwe
- Dr Grant Murewanhema - PhD student in Zimbabwe
- Dr Belinda Mutibura - Masters student in Zimbabwe
- Miss Tendai Gudza - Masters student in Zimbabwe
- Miss Zvikomborero Satuku - Masters student in Zimbabwe
- Ms Lactricia Maja - PhD student in South Africa
- Mr Denis Okova - PhD student in South Africa
- Ms Kelechi Nnene - Masters student in South Africa
- Dr Sudarshan Govender - Masters student in South Africa

A second key element of our capacity building is the annual AWACAN-ED Southern African School for Cancer Research. The Inaugural School was held in Harare, Zimbabwe in September 2022 and you can read more about it [here](#). The Second School will be held in Harare in late November this year.

awacan.online/news/awacan-ed-southern-african-school-for-cancer-research/



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