SHORTLISTED APPLICANTS FOR TWO PH.D. POSITIONS WITHIN THE UR-SWEDEN RESEARCH TRAINING PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMME: UNDERNUTRITION – AN INTERDISCIPLINARY PROGRAMME FOCUSING ON CHILDREN AND THEIR MOTHERS AT THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES (CHMS) AT UR

Background

The overall research-training sub-program will address the complexity of undernutrition in children and their mothers with an extensive interdisciplinary undertaking by the University of Rwanda in collaboration with complementary specialists from five universities in Sweden, involving a number of scientific disciplines working in close collaboration. It is planned as four interlinked research projects combining Health issues, Agricultural practices and Environmental matters, with Geospatial Information Technology, Innovation opportunities, Gender theory and analysis as crosscutting themes. This sub-programme will engage in a total of eight PhDs in sandwich mode with supervision from the University of Rwanda (UR) and Swedish Universities.

The research program will contribute to the implementation and management of Rwanda's cross-sectoral Nutrition and Food Security policy, Poverty Reduction strategy and connected initiatives. The main contributions are strategic interventions and inclusive innovations targeting families, mothers and children at risk of undernutrition and stunting, based on an analysis of needs, demands and opportunities. Substantial contributions will also be innovations for the development of an electronic Rwandan Medical Birth Register and ICT-based tools for data collection, analyses, and dissemination, as well as monitoring of interventions addressing child undernutrition.

It is against this background that the call for recruitment of two PhDs scholarship was adivised on the University of Rwanda Website. The call was part of the Research Training Programme (2019-2026) funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida), aiming to strengthen research capacity at the University of Rwanda (UR). The criteria for each position is highlighted in this report.

Members of the shortlisting committee:

- Prof. Gunilla Krantz
- Ass. Prof Theoneste Ntakirutimana
- Prof Ingrid Mogren
- Dr. Kristina Elfving
- Dr. Eric Matsiko

Meeting agenda

The team leaders of this program cross-checked the received applicants on 7th December,2021 and fixed the meeting date for shortlisting. The meeting was held on 9th December 2021. The agenda of the meeting was shortlisting the applicants for two PhD positions.

PhD Position 1. *Developing, implementing, and evaluating a pilot Rwandan Medical Birth Register* **at Umeå University, Department of Clinical Sciences, Obstetrics and Gynecology, and UR, College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS)**

Study context
Medical Birth Registers worldwide have proven invaluable in providing trustworthy information to health sectors, governments and to researchers on outcomes of pregnancy and childbirth. This project aims to develop an electronic pilot Rwandan Medical Birth Register in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, with the potential of nationwide implementation in the future.

Outline of the study
<u>Design:</u> The overall study design is to develop, implement and evaluate a pilot Rwandan Medical Birth Register through four different sub-studies. The pilot Rwandan MBR software program has been

constructed during the last years. The first part is to evaluate the pilot MBR in a pre-field setting before the implementation. The next step is to implement the MBR, meaning training of health professionals in registration of data from different data sources, applying codes for maternal and fetal/child health conditions, and overall management of a MBR at selected health facilities.

Data collection and data analysis: Eight health centers and two district hospitals in the Northern Province have been selected. Data on maternal background characteristics, geographic location, and maternal and fetal/child health outcomes will be collected. The implementation of an electronic MBR will be evaluated in quantitative and qualitative studies, i.e., monitoring the implementation process, investigating data quality, exploring health professionals' experiences of handling a MBR, and investigating normal/adverse pregnancy health outcomes in registered data. Thus, four sub-studies will be undertaken in this PhD project and these will form the main part of the doctoral thesis.

The role of the PhD
The PhD student will have a significant role in implementing the pilot MBR in the field, as well as provide support to health professionals/data managers managing the MBR. The PhD student will primarily be collaborating with the PhD student enrolled in pediatric nutrition. The data collection in the MBR will continue throughout the entire study period.

The applicant must be:

i. UR employed staff or external candidates, such as persons on temporary contracts, persons from collaborating government institutions, including the Ministry of Health and other universities, and staff within the health care sector.
ii. Citizen of Rwanda;
iii. Holding a relevant MSc degree from UR or any other university;
iv. Ready to spend a maximum of 29 months in Sweden in multiple visits;
v. Ready to continue working at the University of Rwanda after completion of the PhD studies for a specified period of time.

Specific eligibility criteria
Essential criteria:
vi. The candidate is a medical doctor, having some clinical experience in obstetrics, including assessing maternal and fetal/child health conditions;
vii. The candidate should hold a MSc degree in a obstetrics/gynecology, pediatrics, public health, or any other related field within medicine;
viii. The candidate must be proficient in English.

Desired criteria:
ix. Basic skills in epidemiology, biostatistics, data analysis, and qualitative methods.
x. Basic skills in ICT tools.

Applications received:

Can did ate	Family name	First name	e-mail	Meets the general eligibility criteria (yes/no) [1]	Applicati on complete (yes/no) [1]	Specific essential criteria [2]			Specific desirable criteria [2]				Ranking	Assessment (short comments)
						Education (level and topic):	Langua ge skílls:	Other essential qualification s:	Degree, or by complement ary education, has a specialization in	Publicatio ns	Relevant work experience:	Specif ic skills		
1	Habimana	Samson	habimanasam115@gmail.com	No	No	No academic degree provided	Good	-	-	None	Has clinical experience	Use of anal ytica l tools		Rejected Did not provide the Degree
2	Gitera	Joseph	joseph.gitera@moh.gov.rw	No	Yes	Master in Public Health; Masters in FELTP	Very Good	Bachelor 'of General Nursing	-	None	Has clinical experience	-		Rejected The applicant has a medical background (General Nursing) but is not a MD
3	Sebazungu	Theodomir	zungumir88@yahoo.fr	Yes	Yes	Master in Obstetric s and Gynecolo gy	Very Good	Bachelor degree of Medicine and Surgery	-	None	7 years of clinical experience	Obste trician		Shortlisted
4	Nyaziyose	Ignace	ignashad55@gmail.com	No	Yes	No Master degree provided	Very Good	Bachelor degree of Medicine and Surgery	-	None		-		Rejected Degree not relevant to the position
5	Ndahindwa	Védaste	ndahindwa@nursph.org	Yes	Yes	Master degree in	Very Good	Bachelor degree of Medicine		19 publicat ions	More than 10years Teaching	Comp uting and data		Shortlisted

					Biostatistics					and research experience	management	

	Meets the criterion very well
	Meets the criterion partly, uncertain
	Does not meet the criterion at all

Ph.D. POSITION 2. *Studying the complex interplay between maternal and child health, and nutrition, and the risk of adverse child health outcomes*
at University of Gothenburg, School of Public Health and Community Medicine, and UR, College of Medicine and Health Sciences (CMHS)

The PhD project consists of two field studies. (**a.** and **b.**)

a. A cross-sectional epidemiological study. The specific focus for the present PhD position will be to investigate the role of perinatal factors including low birth weight, maternal and child diet, infant feeding practices, food insecurity, childhood illnesses and function as risk factors for malnutrition in childhood (stunting). A household survey will be conducted in five districts of the northern province of Rwanda, where 630 households visited and the study population will be children (n≈630-650) aged 1-36 months and their mothers.

b. The MBR pilot study aims to develop, implement and evaluate a pilot electronic Rwandan Medical Birth Register with data collected in eight selected health centres and two district hospitals in the Northern Province of Rwanda. For further information on study context and outline it is described under the call for "PhD position 1". The specific focus for this PhD position will be to describe and analyse neonatal outcomes and corresponding risk factors.

General Eligibility criteria
The applicant must be:
i. UR employed staff or external candidates, such as being employed at other universities, collaborating government authorities, including Ministry of Health, UR staff on temporary contracts, external MSc or even PhD holders.
ii. Citizen of Rwanda
iii. Holding a relevant MSc degree;
iv. Ready to spend a minimum of 29 months in Sweden in multiple visits
v. Ready to continue working at the University of Rwanda after completing the PhD studies for a specified period of time.

Essential criteria:
i. The candidate is preferably a medical doctor.
ii. The candidate should hold a MSc degree in a relevant field, such as nutrition, pediatrics or public health;
iii. The candidate must be proficient in English.

Desired criteria:
i. Clinical experience in pediatrics (in particular neonatology), and nutrition.
ii. Skills in epidemiology, biostatistics, data analysis, and other quantitative methods.
iii. Basic skills in ICT tools.
iv. Experience with register-based studies as well as epidemiology is an advantage.

Application received:

Candidate	Family name	First name	e-mail	Meets the general eligibility criteria (yes/no)	Application complete (yes/no)	Specific essential criteria [2]			Specific desirable criteria [2]				Ranking	Assessment (short comments)
						Education (level and topic):	Language skills:	Other essential qualifications:	Degree, or by complementary education, has a specialization in	Publications	Relevant work experience:	Specific skills		
1	Nyirimanzi	Naphtal	naphtal7@gmail.com	Yes	Yes	Masters of Medicine; MS in Global Health Delivery	Very good	-	Bachelor's, Medicine and Surgery	-	7 years of clinical experience	-	(green)	Shortlisted
2	Munyembaraga	Valens	valens2@yahoo.fr	No	yes	Master of Science	Very good	-	Bachelor of Pharmacy (BPharm)	-			(red)	Rejected No required degree
3	Benimana	Immaculee	imaculeebenimana@gmail.com	Yes	Yes	Master of sciences in Public Health	Very good		-		8 year of teaching experience	-	(green)	Shortlisted
4	Rinda	Diane	rindian06@gmail.com	yes	Yes	Master of Science in Epidemiology	Very good	-			10years of clinical experience		(green)	Shortlisted
5	Habimana	Samson	habimanasam115@gmail.com	No	No	No academic degree provided	Good	-	-	None	No experience	-	(red)	Rejected No required degree
6	Ivang	Andrew	aeivang2012@gmail.com	Not Rwandan	Yes	MSc. in Basic Medical Sciences	Very good	-	-		-	-	(red)	Rejected Not Rwandan
7	Gitera	Joseph	joseph.gitera@moh.gov.rw	Yes	yes	Master in Public Health; Masters in FELTP	Very Good	Bachelor's of General Nursing	-	None	-	-	(green)	Shortlisted

   	Meets the criterion very well
   	Meets the criterion partly, uncertain
   	Does not meet the criterion at all

Signature

Ass.Professor Theoneste Ntakirutimana
Chair of the Selection