



OGHI Newsletter

September 2018

Dear friends and colleagues,

OGHI is well into its second year now – how time has flown. We have welcomed many new members in the past few months, and this issue of the newsletter contains items from members new and not-so-new.

We are gearing up for our 11th Annual OGHI Conference 27-28 November, which will culminate in the 2018 McKinlay Oration and our official launch event on 28 November. Abstract submissions have now closed.

The conference programme will be available at: otago.ac.nz/global-health/annual-conference

Leadership Group

It is with some sadness that we say “farewell” to Professor Pauline Norris, who left the OGHI Leadership Group in July. Pauline, who was with OGHI since its inception, has moved to a new role within the Division of Health Sciences at Otago University.



Sierra Leone: Kayima village clinic upgrade

OGHI Leadership Group member Professor Tony Binns will work with local leaders in Kayima village, Sierra Leone, to improve residents’ access to healthcare by upgrading their community clinic. Prof Binns has had ties with Kayima for 44 years, and was given the titles Chief Manjawah of Sandor (“master farmer”) and Sahr

Kayima (“first son of Kayima”) in 2014. Although the community has only about 2,000 people, the clinic provides health services to almost 100,000 people from surrounding areas, some of them several hours’ walk away. Sierra Leone is still recovering from the effects of the civil war, which ended in 2002, and the Ebola epidemic of 2014-16.



See

<https://www.odt.co.nz/news/dunedin/campus/university-of-otago/african-villages-otago-chieftain-helps-healthcare>

Ebola research in Sierra Leone

In January and February 2018 Professor Tony Binns and Dr Jerram Bateman visited Sierra Leone, where they collaborate on efforts to monitor the implications of Ebola on livelihoods in Panguma and Kayima, two small communities in the Eastern Province of the country. While there were no deaths directly attributable to Ebola virus disease in either community, their research has found that it still had a dramatic impact on the predominantly agricultural livelihoods in both. Restricted mobility, social contact, and trading during the two year outbreak resulted in dislocation from land, labour, and key markets, reducing the production of food and income for most households over this time. The Ebola outbreak also severely disrupted education, generated fear and suspicion,

particularly toward healthcare workers, and increased the scope for violence and corruption.

Since Sierra Leone was declared Ebola-free in March 2016, agricultural livelihood outcomes have largely bounced back to pre-Ebola levels, re-affirming the importance of resilience to livelihood systems in rural



Sierra Leone. Restrictions on mobility, social contact, and trading have largely been removed, although there is still a reticence to human touch (such as shaking hands, for example) which continues to impact traditional social practices, and Sunday trading remains

banned nationwide. Schools have re-opened, although education remains fragmented, and there is still a suspicion and stigma attached to healthcare workers in Kayima. The Ebola outbreak has resulted in some improved practices around hygiene and the dissemination of public health messages in rural Sierra Leone, but stark attitudinal differences between Panguma and Kayima were detected, raising questions around the extent to which lessons learned have permeated the country. Prof Binns’ and Dr Bateman’s research highlights the wide reaching implications large-scale health issues, such as Ebola, can have in developing countries like Sierra Leone.

Memorandum of Understanding with Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa’e



OGHI members Dr Sue McAllister and Professor Richard Edwards with UNTL Rector Profesor Francisco Miguel Martins.

Dr Sue McAllister and Professor Richard Edwards travelled to Timor-Leste to witness the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the University of Otago and Universidade Nacional Timor Lorosa’e (UNTL) in Dili, Timor-Leste on 18 September 2018.

The Memorandum of Understanding formalises a long history of collaboration

between the two institutions and a developing partnership to support research and capacity-building between UNTL and the Otago Global Health Institute. Sue and Richard also met with various government representatives and non-profit organisations in the capital, as Timor-Leste starts to rebuild and develop after much political and social change in the country.

With best wishes,

David Fielding and John Crump
Co-Directors, Otago Global Health Institute