

BCNetter

Issue No. 7, September 2018

Message from the Editor

The past year has been a transitional time for the BCNet with my departure from the IARC biobank in September 2017 and the arrival of Zisis Kozlakidis in June 2018, but the enthusiasm and energy in the network has remained and we are now poised for a new surge of activity to best support you, our members.

I am delighted that Zisis Kozlakidis will be taking an active role in the BCNet and I know that he will bring his considerable biobanking expertise to the network through his broad, international knowledge and many years of experience.

The EU funded B3Africa project will end this September. Congratulations to all members and institutions that have contributed to the success of the project, we hope to build on this success to promote and initiate future collaborative projects to benefit the network.

I would like to congratulate the Universitas Gadjah Mada Biobank for the enormous work they have achieved in opening their biobank. Congratulations also to the Institut Pasteur Biorepository in Côte d'Ivoire for obtaining approval for West African Member states for their Biobank to be the ECOWAS Regional Biobank.



Maimuna Mendy

BCNet Coordinator

mendym@visitors.iarc.fr

Zisis Kozlakidis appointed Head of Laboratory Services and Biobank Group, IARC



Dr Zisis Kozlakidis,
Past President of
the International
Society for
Biological and

Environmental Repositories (ISBER), has been appointed Head of the Laboratory Services and Biobank Group at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), in Lyon, France.

The IARC Biobank is one of the largest, most varied, and richest international collections of samples in the world. It is publicly funded and hosts more than 50 different studies, led or coordinated by IARC scientists. The Biobank contains both population-based collections from research projects focusing on gene–environment interactions (as in the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition [EPIC] study) and disease-based collections which focus on biomarkers (as in the International Head and Neck Cancer Epidemiology [INHANCE] Consortium). Study designs include case series, prevalence studies, case–control studies, and cohort studies.

In addition, the IARC Biobank leads the Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) Biobank and Cohort Building Network (BCNet), as an opportunity for biobank institutions in LMICs to work together in a coordinated manner and jointly address the challenges in biobanking infrastructure and the acquisition and maintenance of high-quality samples and data.

The Maimuna Mendy Data Centre



Dr Kozlakidis has significant expertise in the field of biobanking. Until recently he served as the President of ISBER, and he has been involved in the activities of BBMRI.uk. His ISBER presidency was instrumental in the closer collaboration between ISBER and BBMRI-ERIC, with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations and the planning of many future joint activities.¹

It is expected that this close collaboration will continue now that Dr Kozlakidis has taken up his position with IARC and BCNet, to the benefit of the biobanking field globally.

Dr Kozlakidis is a virologist, with a PhD in microbiology from Imperial College London. He is an elected Fellow of the Linnean Society of London, the Royal Academy of Sciences, UK, and a Turnberg Fellow of the UK Academy of Medical Sciences.

Dr Kozlakidis has contributed to seminal studies in the adoption of innovations into routine healthcare, and their associated financial impacts. He holds an Executive MBA degree from Cass Business School, City University, London, and he is a co-founder of the City Healthcare Innovation Network, a conduit for providing and strengthening contacts between healthcare start-ups and financial institutions based in the financial district of London.

Click [here](#) for more information about Zisis.

¹ <http://www.bbmri-eric.eu/news-events/bbmri-eric-isber-sign-memorandum-understanding/>



From Left: A representative of the Ministry of Health, The Gambia; Mr Badou Gaye, Head of IT MRC@LSHTM; Dr Maimuna Mendy and Professor Umberto D'Alessandro – Head of MRC Unit Gambia @ LSHTM

A new data centre was inaugurated on 16th July 2018 at The MRC Unit, The Gambia @ London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (MRC The Gambia @LSHTM).

The Data Centre is to accommodate the growth in computing, data and application to supplement the Unit's IT infrastructure which provides the backbone for critical information processing and analyses needed for the sustenance and expansion of medical research.

The building is named after Dr Maimuna Mendy in recognition of her immense contribution to research in Africa and to the MRC Unit The Gambia at LSHTM in particular for over 3 decades.

Mr Badou Gaye and Professor Umberto D'Alessandro in their remarks at the inauguration ceremony highlighted the areas of research that Dr Mendy in her capacity as Principal Investigator and coordinator for several research projects and her long-standing involvement in the Gambia Hepatitis Project.

A molecular virologist by training, Dr Mendy has lead projects involving the assembling and management of longitudinal cohort studies, biobanking, capacity building in Low and Middle Income Countries including coordinating the LMIC biobank network, BCNet. As a member of BCNet, MRC @LSHTM has benefited from BCNet's activities and participation in the EU-H2020 B3frica Project.



Launch of Biobank in the Faculty of Medicine, Public Health and Nursing Universitas Gadjah Mada (FK-KMK UGM), Yogyakarta, Indonesia



The Biobank Development Team at FK-KMK UGM has worked since 2015 to develop a biobank system that fit in with the

needs and potential at the institution. The team has undergone retrospective and prospective modelling, each included technical SOPs and intranet-based data management system that recorded the chain of custody of the biosamples collected.

In 2017, the faculty provided a temporary laboratory with three -80C freezers connected to generator backup, computers attached to the intranet, and facilities for plasma, buffycoat and red blood cells separation. This has enabled a try-out of the research specific prospective biobank system.

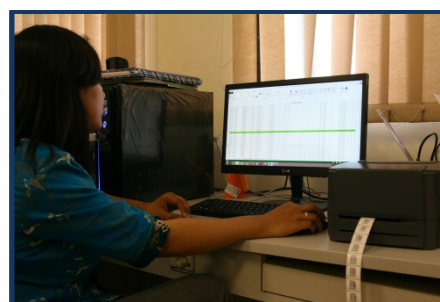


The system aimed for standardized storage for a minimum of one year, for principle investigators who have current ethical approval. The right to share the information and biosamples remains with the principle investigator, with a summary of the collection posted on the biobank website.

As of May 2018, the biobank started to open its services for PIs based in FK-KMK UGM and Dr Sardjito General Hospital who needed to use -80C freezer storage, applying cost-recovery based on the use of consumables.

The biobank plans active advocacy, including workshops, the use of flyers and information through its [website](#). The permanent facility will be open at the end of 2018

Contact: [Dr Jajah Fachiroh](#) for more information.



More articles:

Staying Chill even when disaster strikes [....](#)

Ethics of Research Biobanks: Islamic Perspectives [....](#)



First International Egyptian Biobank Conference

Cairo, Egypt | 18–19 January 2019

The Faculty of Medicine Ain Shams Research Institute (MASRI) and Breast Gynaecological International Cancer Society (BGICS) Board, will host the 1st International Egyptian Biobank Conference in conjunction with the 11th Breast, Gynaecological and immuno-oncology International Cancer Conference on 18-19 January 2019 at the Fairmont towers hotel, Cairo, Egypt. The conference will bring together a global network of professionals to foster innovation resulting in the betterment of biobank and medical research.

The Conference's Scientific Program is designed to provide state-of-the-art information on Biobank Science, biobank regulations, Quality management and Quality assurance, Ethical legal and social issues, offering breakthrough advances, patient management and best practices of biobank and biobank accreditation through an outstanding range of scientific and educational symposia, special sessions, debates and much more.

The Conference intends to introduce to the audience the latest information on new aspects and strategies through strongly multidisciplinary approaches. The first International Biobank Conference is the result of two successful meetings in 2017 and 2018 supported by IARC and the BCNet, and attended by Dr Maimuna Mendy and Dr Elodie Caboux.

Contact: amanymourad@yahoo.com for more information.



Report from National Health Laboratory Services / Stellenbosch University Biobank, South Africa

Dr Carmen Swanepoel writes that she, Dr Dominique Anderson, (researcher in Metagenomics, University of the Western Cape) and an MSc student at the Stellenbosch University, Ms Jody Bell participated in South Africa's National Science week as part of their community and public engagement activities.

As members of South African Women in Science and Engineering and members of BCNet, they participated in the South African National Science Week (30 July – 4 August, with the theme "Deepening our democracy through Science" at schools under the West Coast Department Education jurisdiction. We visited Bernadino Heights School in Kraaifontein and set up an exhibition and discussion on Biobanking science, cancer and bioinformatics. We also let all the children perform their own DNA extractions from the saliva using household items.



Carmen also co-authored an article "EU data transfer rules and African legal realities: is data exchange for biobank research realistic?" You can find the article on the BCNet website [here](#).

The article "How biobanks can help improve the integrity of scientific research" can be found [here](#).



What's on...



October:

[5th Middle East Molecular Biology Congress and Exhibition 2018 – Jordan](#), 3-6 October 2018

November:

[Ethics of Data Sharing and Biobanking in Health Research, South Africa](#), 13-14 November 2018

[Keystone Symposia Conference on “Leveraging Genomic Diversity to Promote Animal and Human Health, Uganda](#), 25-29 November 2018

December:

[3rd December is the Deadline for submission of abstracts for the ISBER 2019 Annual Meeting & Exhibits, Shanghai](#), May 7-10, 2019

[African Society for Laboratory Medicine Meeting, Nigeria](#), 10-13 December 2018

BCNet Catalogue

The IARC team is working hard to update the BCNet catalogue with more and more information. We will shortly be moving into a revamped website which will include more user-friendly functionalities to upload data, secure protocols, and an easily searchable and attractive interface.

BCNet members interested in learning more about the Catalogue may contact [Sally](#)

The IARC Biobank

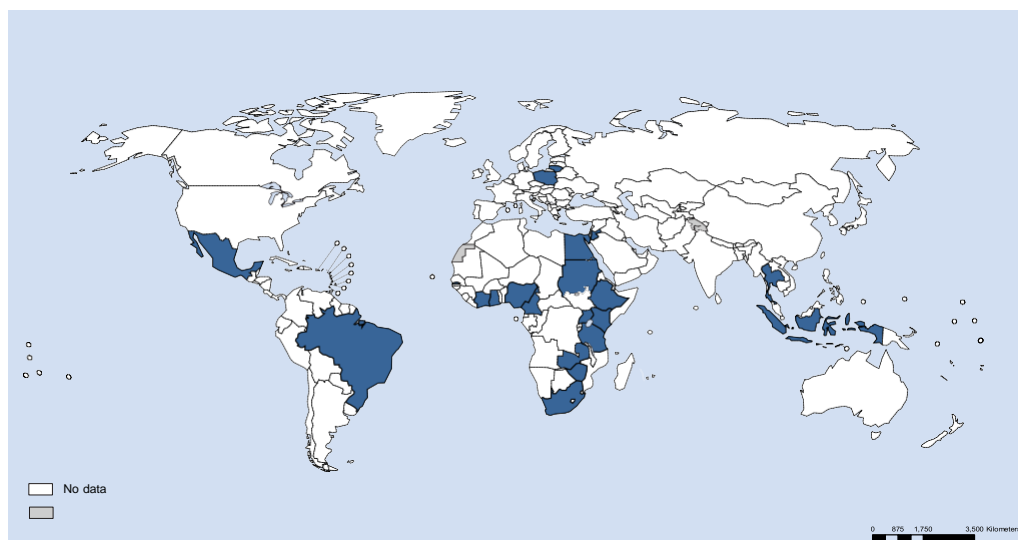
IARC recently celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the EPIC (European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition) study. You can find out more and watch a video that the agency made about the IARC Biobank [here](#)



Who Are We?

BCNet is the Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs) Biobank and Cohort Building Network, which was established in 2013 to provide a platform for collaboration between its members, partners, IARC, and the international community. BCNet aims to support biobanking and cohort-building activities and to develop sustainable infrastructures for the management of high-quality biological samples and data for research, using best practice principles and guidelines.

BCNet Members



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted and dashed lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement. © WHO 2017. All rights reserved.

Data Source: IARC
Map Production: IARC

BRAZIL: Barretos Cancer Hospital; **CAMEROON:** Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Université de Yaoundé; Université des Montagnes; **CÔTE D'IVOIRE:** Institut Pasteur de Côte d'Ivoire; **EGYPT:** Children's Cancer Hospital Egypt – 57357, Faculty of Medicine Cairo University, Medical Research Institute Ain Shams University, Medical Research Institute Alexandria University, National Cancer Institute, National Liver Institute, South Egypt Cancer Institute Assiut University; **ETHIOPIA:** Jigjiga University; **GHANA:** Breast Care International, University of Health and Allied Sciences; **INDONESIA:** Faculty of Medicine Universitas Gadjah Mada; **JORDAN:** King Hussein Cancer Center Biobank; **KENYA:** Ampath Reference Laboratory; **LITHUANIA:** National Cancer Institute; **MEXICO:** Instituto Nacional de Cancerología; **NIGERIA:** College of Medicine University of Ibadan, Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex; **POLAND:** Biobank Lab Department of Molecular Biophysics University of Lodz, Wrocław Research Centre EIT+ Biobank; **SOUTH AFRICA:** National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), NHLS/Stellenbosch University Biobank; **SUDAN:** Radio-Isotope Centre Khartoum; **THAILAND:** National Cancer Institute; **THE GAMBIA:** Medical Research Council (MRC) The Gambia Unit, MRC International Nutrition Group; **UGANDA:** Makerere University College of Health Sciences; **UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA:** Kilimanjaro Clinical Research Institute; **ZAMBIA:** Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia; **ZIMBABWE:** African Institute of Biomedical Science & Technology; University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences.

BCNet Partners



Centre of Genomics and Policy
Centre de génomique et politiques

LMIC



BCNET
BIOMARK AND COHORT NETWORK

Contact

Dr Zisis Kozlakidis Ms Sally Moldan

Kozlakidisz@iarc.fr moldans@iarc.fr



+33 4 72 73 80 35



<http://bcnet.iarc.fr/>