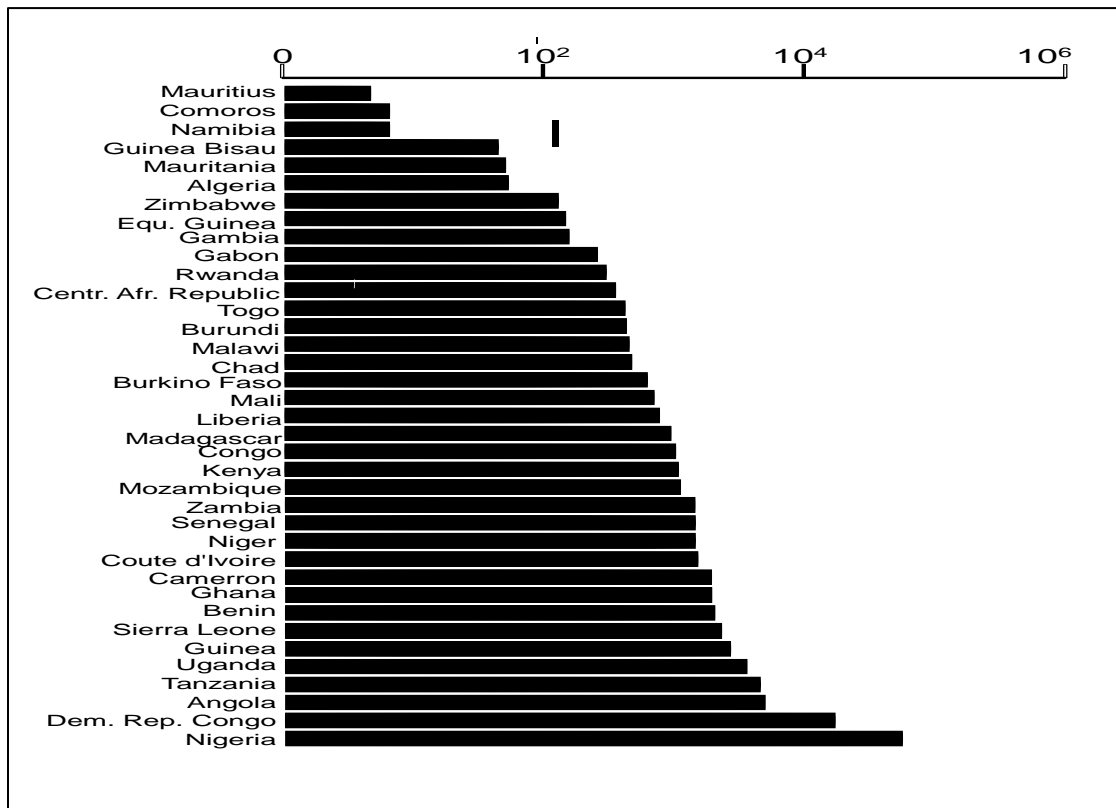


The 3rd Symposium of Sickle Cell Disease Research Network of Central Africa June 1st to 2nd 2012, Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania

Tanzania has been nominated to organize the 3rd Symposium of Sickle Cell Disease Research Network of Central Africa (alias le Réseau D'étude de La Drépanocytose en Afrique Centrale, **REDAC**). This will be organized in collaboration with the Sickle Cell Disease Foundation of Tanzania and The Muhimbili Wellcome Programme. The meeting will gather 200 participants including prominent research scientists from the entire African continent and from outside Africa.

What is the importance of SCD?

Sickle Cell Disease is the most common genetic cause of childhood morbidity and mortality. The most severe form is the homozygous pattern, known as sickle cell anaemia. The highest burden of SCA is in countries in central Africa, with 4 out of 5 countries with the highest birth prevalence being in east and central Africa.



Why is there a need for REDAC?

The REDAC network was established in 2009 during the "Sickle Cell Disease International Congress" of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. The sickle cell disease research network of Central Africa (REDAC) is a network dedicated to the combating sickle cell disease (SCD) in countries in the Central African Region. REDAC promotes research and health strategies among the central African countries. REDAC includes teams from hospitals, research centers and associations.

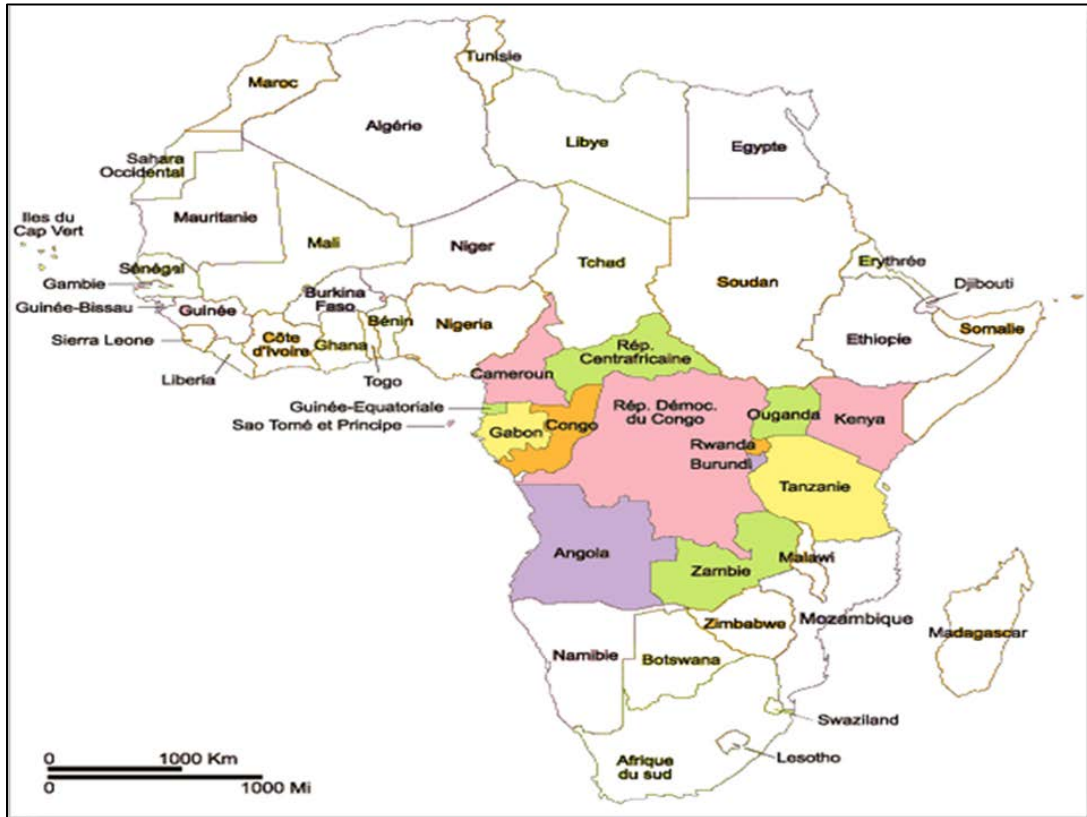
These countries decided to form a research network as this would allow resources, experience and expertise to be shared in the region and ultimately build capacity in each country. **The ultimate aim is to use research to provide evidence to improve the lives of SCD individuals.**

The REDAC countries have the following common issues:

- Prevalence of SCD trait is high. Around 20-30% of the population
- Most of the SCD patients have the CAR haplotype

- There are no SCD healthcare programmes and therefore SCD causes high mortality and morbidity
- Malaria is endemic
- Achieved independence 50 years ago.
- limited resources

What are the countries in REDAC?



Previous REDAC meetings

The first inaugural symposium of REDAC was organized in 2010 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). The second symposium was held in Gabon in 2011. The third symposium will be held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania on June 1st to 2nd 2012.

Why is there a need for having the REDAC meeting now?

This meeting will bring together scientists from African English and French speaking countries. This will create a unique opportunity for scientific communities and advocacy groups to share experiences, present research progress and establish collaborations.

1. Increased recognition of importance of SCD by the United Nations, World Health Organization and member countries¹
2. Increased recognition of how SCD contributes to under five mortality
3. Increased recognition of how SCD can be a model disease for genetic research².

¹ The world health assembly "resolution 59.20 of 27 may, 2006" that sickle cell anemia is a public health problem. The United Nations general assembly "resolution 63/237 of 17 march, 2009" and the WHO SCD strategy, 2010 on Sickle Cell Anemia. The declaration of "June 19th as World sickle cell day" by the United Nations to raise universal awareness.

Organizing committee

Julie Makani (Tanzania)

Leon Tshilolo (DRC)

Lucas Sica (Gabon)

Deo Soka (Tanzania)

Baron Ngasia (DRC)

Jean Paul Gonzalez (Gabon)

Munira Tarmohamed (Tanzania)

The network has a scientific committee with a annual rotation of presidency, a scientific secretariat (presently in DRC) and, members (Doctors, nurses and lab technicians) from all of the Central African country and oversea partners. Presidencies: 2010 - DRC; 2011 - Gabon; 2012 - Tanzania.

Scientific Committee: Leon Tshilolo, MD, PHD (DRC); Jean Paul Gonzalez, MD, PHD (Gabon); Lucas SICA, MD (Gabon); Julie Makani, MD, MRCP, PhD (Tanzania); Rajagopal Krishnamoorthy, MD, PHD (France); Simon ATEGBO, MD, PHD (Gabon), Guillaume WAMBA MD (Cameroun), Gylina LOKO MD (Martinique), Simon ATEGBO (Gabon) Baron NGASIA MD (RDC)

Secretariat: Gylina Loko, MD (Martinique); Guillaume Wamba, MD (Cameroon); Baron Ngasia, MD (DRC)

Format of meeting

The scientific symposium will be on Friday 1st June (8am – 5pm) and Saturday 2nd June (8am – 12pm). This will be at Kunduchi Beach hotel (<http://kunduchi.com/pages/aboutthehotel.htm>).

On Saturday 2nd June 2pm-6pm, there will be a public ceremony that will be graced by the first lady of Gabon and Tanzania. This will be a ceremony with maximal media coverage. There will be presentations, performances and demonstrations by SCD patients, scientists, famous public figures who will be known as SCD ambassadors.

Attendees

We anticipate 200 scientists, advocacy groups and healthcare workers to attend the meeting.

Outcomes of the meeting

1. Improve quality of healthcare for SCD individuals
2. Establish research studies that would be conducted
3. Strengthen networks for SCD research.
4. Strengthen South-South collaborations
5. Publications and technical reports about SCD research networks.
6. Advocacy amongst scientists, policy makers and healthcare workers about SCD
7. Increase public awareness about SCD

² H3Africa Working group (2011). Non-Communicable Diseases: Sickle Cell Disease. Harnessing Genomic Technologies Toward Improving Health in Africa: Opportunities and challenges. E. K. Peprah and C. N. Rotimi, National Institutes of Health Wellcome Trust.