

The Launch of the Eastern African FAIMER Regional Institute (EAFRI)

New Regional Health Professions Educator Training Institute Opens in East Africa.

The Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER), a member of Intealth, launched its new FAIMER Regional Institute for health professions educators in East Africa on 10th May 2023. FAIMER partners with Makerere University College of Health Sciences (MakCHS) in Kampala, Uganda, serving as a host institution and Mbarara University of Science and Technology (MUST), Faculty of Medicine in Mbarara, Uganda serving as the regional partner, to establish the Eastern Africa FAIMER Regional Institute (EAFRI). EAFRI will advance access to health professions education in the eastern Africa region.

FAIMER was established in 2000 as a non-profit foundation of the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG). FAIMER and ECFMG now are members of Intealth, which brings together the expertise and resources of the two non-profit organizations to advance quality in health care education worldwide to improve health care for all. Intealth unites FAIMER and ECFMG under a common vision: to be the trusted global authority on health care education. FAIMER held its first Institute, now called the International FAIMER Institute (IFI), in Philadelphia, in the United States in 2001 and since has partnered with colleges and universities around the world to host FAIMER Regional Institutes. The IFI and FRIs offer a 2 year part time Fellowship in health professions education to global and regional health professions educators respectively.

The core curriculum of EAFRI will be based on that of the IFI, which teaches education methods, leadership and management, education scholarship and research, and project management and evaluation. The EAFRI will host its first cohort of fellows on 7th August 2023 using an online part time approach to enable participation from the region. The institute will run its fellowship tuition free and will admit 12-15 fellows.

EAFRI joins nine other FAIMER Regional Institutes, one in Chile, two in China, one in Egypt, four in India, and one in Indonesia. There are over 2,000 graduates, known as FAIMER Fellows, of the International FAIMER Institute and FAIMER Regional Institutes from almost 60 countries forming a vibrant network of global health professions educators.

The new institute will serve health professions educators in East Africa including Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Tanzania, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, the Comoros, the Seychelles, and Mauritius. In addition, EAFRI will serve East African Community member states including the Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda. It will also consider applicants from other regions of Africa.

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“With the establishment of EAFRI, we are delighted to provide these faculty development opportunities to educators in the East Africa region.” said Dr. Ronald Blanck, Interim President of FAIMER, “The shared strength of both MakCHS and MUST will allow EAFRI to advance the health workforce in East Africa, benefiting faculty, students, and the communities in which these healthcare workers serve.”

MakCHS, the oldest medical school in the region, offers doctoral and master’s programs in health professions education (HPE) and is creating an HPE Center of Excellence. MakCHS supports other medical schools in East Africa through several collaborative training programs, including the Medical Education Partnership Initiative (MEPI), Medical Education for Equitable Services for All Ugandans program (MESAU), and the Health Professional Education Partnership Initiative (HEPI).

“Partnering with FAIMER will enable us to develop leaders in health professions education, research, and community services who will transform the health care system and address the needs of the community in East Africa,” said Dr. Annetee Nakimuli, Dean at the MakCHS School of Medicine.

MUST is the second oldest public university in Uganda and has trained undergraduate and graduate health professionals since 1989. MUST features a medical education resource center, and vibrant regional, national, and international collaborations. EAFRI will greatly expand the interprofessional community-based health professions education, research, and service programs that MUST has implemented in recent years.

“Mbarara University’s collaboration with FAIMER provides a monumental opportunity to benefit from globally pooled expertise and resources in order to enhance excellent health professions education and ensure equitable access to health care for everyone,” said Dr. Joseph Ngonzi, Dean for the MUST Faculty of Medicine.

“We are honored to partner with two outstanding universities in the region to advance the education of physicians and other health care professionals throughout East Africa,” said William Pinsky, MD, FAAP, FACC, Chief Executive Officer of Intealth.

EAFRI participants will join the FAIMER global community to advance health professions education in their regions.

References

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