Objective

To describe the conference call and communications resources available to AMPATH investigators, establish procedures for scheduling and troubleshooting conference calls, and provide best practices for organizing conference calls.

Overview

The Research Office serves the needs of researchers from Moi University, Indiana University, Brown University, and other schools in the US that are represented in the consortium of schools that conduct collaborative research with Moi University. The success of these collaborative research programs depend on regular communication and coordination of research activities. The Research Office supports nearly 60 conference calls each month to facilitate communications among AMPATH’s research working groups, research support staff, and consortium members. In addition, the Research Office coordinates call and resource scheduling, provides conference rooms with conferencing equipment, and offers access to conference call services to connect participants in Kenya, North America, and other locations around the globe.

Overview of Conference Call Resources

1. Conference Rooms
   - Kenya – There are two (2) conference rooms in Kenya, Conference Room 1 (CR1) and Conference Room 2 (CR2). CR1 is a large conference room that can hold up to 40 people. It is located on the second floor of the AMPATH building in room number 223. CR2, also called ‘Breakout Room 2’, is a smaller conference room located on the first floor of the AMPATH building in room number 123. The room can hold 8-10 persons participating in a call. Each room has an oval table and chairs for use by conference call participants.
2. **Telecommunications Equipment**

There are five (5) telecommunications devices available at the Research Program Office in Kenya: two (2) polycom phones, two (2) Bluetooth speakers and an ideos mobile phone. This equipment is available for use in facilitating communication between researchers in various parts of the globe. The polycom phones are installed in each of the conference rooms and can be used to receive calls from North America while the blue tooth speaker and the phone are for receiving calls and calling into the North American conference line.

3. **Conference Call Services**

The Research Program Office provides conference call services to all investigators involved in research work at the Moi University, Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital and the consortium schools in North America. The services provided include scheduling a call, arranging a conference call line, setting-up the room in preparation for the call, ensuring the keys to each room are available to the users at least 5 minutes before the start of the call, setting up the conference equipment, follow up on quality of conference facility, and providing information to investigators on conference calls.

4. **Conference Call Schedule**

All conference calls should be scheduled at least 1 week in advance of a call. This will ensure that the research office has all the necessary information to schedule your call at your desired time. Regular conference calls have been placed on a monthly calendar that is circulated to the research listserve for any corrections a week before start of the month. Time changes (in North-America) are also sent along with the request for corrections to notify the conference call users in advance.

## Use of Conference Call Resources

1. **Eligibility**

Conference call services including the use of conference rooms and conferencing equipment are available to investigators and study coordinators engaged in research projects through Moi University, Moi Teaching and Referral Hospital and the AMPATH consortium schools in North America.

2. **Cost**

Available conference call facilities are used at a cost. Calls from North America to Kenya can cost more than $50 per hour. Calls made from Kenya to North America costs at least KSHS.300 ($3.75) per hour. The Research Program Office covers the cost of these calls for approved research working groups and cores. However, if you plan to hold a study specific call, you are required to include this cost in your budget. Advice will be provided to you by the Research Program Office on minimizing conference call costs.

## Scheduling a Conference Call
Use of conference call rooms and equipment are scheduled through the Research Program Office. Priority is given to working groups, program cores, and operations teams that are essential to research program operations. A monthly schedule of recurring conference calls is published on the AMPATH Research Network website, www.medicine.iu.edu/ampathresearch, and distributed to researchers in the week prior to the start of each month.

1. Conference Call Scheduling Requests
All conference call requests should be submitted to the Research Program Office by e-mail (research.manager@iukenya.org) or the online scheduling from www.medicine.iu.edu/ampathresearch/index.php/resources/call available on the Research Network Website. All scheduling requests must include the following items:

   a. **Title of Conference Call**
      Provide a brief name that describes the purpose of the call, e.g. “Adult Medicine Working Group Conference Call”

   b. **Conference Call Services Needed**
      Indicate if a conference call line will be needed to connect participants calling-in from multiple locations in North America and Kenya. Unless an alternative conferencing service is arranged by the call organizers, a conference line will be set-up through the Indiana University Contact Center when requested.

   c. **Date of Call**
      Provide the date when you would like the call to be scheduled. If you are scheduling a recurring call provide the preferred start date

   d. **Preferred Start Time**
      Indicate when you would like the call to begin. Most calls are scheduled between 6:00 and 9:00 AM Eastern Time (North America) / 2:00 PM and 5:00 PM East African Time (Kenya).

   e. **Call Duration**
      Indicate how long the call will last in minutes, e.g. 30 minutes, 60 minutes, 90 minutes. Due to the limited availability of conference resources recurring conference calls will be limited to 60 minute time slots. Longer call times may be requested for one time conference calls and will be approved by the Research Program Office based on the availability of conference resources.

   f. **Number of Call Participants**
      Provide a count of the number of participants to ensure adequate conference call services and meeting space is reserved.

   g. **Call Frequency**
Indicate if the call is a one-time call or a recurring call happening weekly, monthly, quarterly or at other regular intervals. For recurring calls, be sure to specify the day of the week on which the call will take place.

h. Call Contact Person
Provide the name and contact information for the person who will be responsible for connecting the call, coordinating call agendas and announcements, and troubleshooting technical problems.

2. Annual Daylight Savings Time Changes
Conference call schedules are adjusted to reflect Daylight Savings Time (DST) changes in North America (Kenya does not currently follow Daylight Savings Time). DST begins at 2:00 AM Eastern Time on the second Sunday in March and ends at 2:00 AM Eastern Time on the first Sunday in November (See below schedule for exact dates). When DST begins in March, the time “Springs Forward” and call times will move forward by one hour in North America. When DST ends in November, the time “Falls Back” and call times will move back by one hour in North America.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>DST Begins (2:00 AM ET)</th>
<th>DST Ends (2:00 AM ET)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>Sunday, 10 March</td>
<td>Sunday, 3 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Sunday, 9 March</td>
<td>Sunday, 2 November</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Sunday, 8 March</td>
<td>Sunday, 1 November</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Research Program Office will notify call organizers one month before DST time changes occur to confirm call times. An updated schedule will be published with updated call times on the AMPATH Research Network Website and distributed via program listservs.

If you are responsible for scheduling conference lines with the IU Contact Center or other conferencing services for recurring conference calls, please be sure to schedule enough time to allow for the Daylight Savings Time (DST) adjustments. For a 60 minute call, we recommend reserving at least two and a half hours for the call. Thus if your call is at 7:00 AM in North America before the March time change and 8:00 AM after the March time Change we recommend scheduling your conference line from 7:00 to 9:30 AM. This will ensure the conference line is available regardless of the Daylight Savings Time cycle.

Unless otherwise indicated on the conference call schedule, conference calls will not take place on major national holidays observed in Kenya or North America. Conference calls will not be scheduled on the following holidays.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location(s)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Year’s Day</td>
<td>Tuesday, 1 January 2013</td>
<td>Kenya &amp; US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martin Luther King Day</td>
<td>Monday, 21 January 2013</td>
<td>US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Friday</td>
<td>Friday, 29 March 2013</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Easter</td>
<td>Monday, 1 April 2013</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Labour Day</td>
<td>Wednesday, 1 May 2013</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Day</td>
<td>Monday, 27 May 2013</td>
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<td>Madaraka Day</td>
<td>Saturday, 1 June 2013</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>Thursday, 4 July 2013</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eid-al-Fitr</td>
<td>Thursday, 8 August 2013*</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>Monday, 2 September 2013</td>
<td>US</td>
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<td>Kenyatta Day</td>
<td>Sunday, 20 October 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving</td>
<td>Thursday, 28 November – Friday, 29 November 2013</td>
<td>US</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independence Day</td>
<td>Thursday, 12 December 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Christmas Day</td>
<td>Wednesday, 25 December 2013</td>
<td>Kenya &amp; US</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxing Day</td>
<td>Thursday, 26 December 2013</td>
<td>Kenya</td>
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*Date is approximate

**Connecting Conference Calls**

Conference calls can be connected from North America or Kenya to the conference call lines. Connecting the call is the responsibility of the designated conference call contact listed in the conference call schedule published by the Research Program Office.

1. **Connecting from Kenya to North America**
   
   When making a call from Kenya to North America, one should follow the steps below:
   
   - Connect the Bluetooth speaker gadget to the power
   - You will hear a “dong” sound, notifying you that the speaker is on.
   - Turn on Bluetooth on the Bluetooth speaker gadget
   - Turn on Bluetooth on your mobile phone
   - Your phone will search for a device: PLCM VS500 or
   - Choose the Bluetooth speaker gadget you want to pair with.
   - Once paired, connect by choosing connect option on your phone.
   - A connection signal (continuous blue light) will appear on the Bluetooth speaker gadget
   - Dial the call in number on your phone (the sound will come from the speaker)
   - Dial in the access code when prompted
   - Your call should now be on

   *If not sure, ask for help from the Research Program office*
2. Connecting from North America to Kenya

When making a call from North America to Kenya, the designated conference call contact should:

- Use a telephone with conferencing and international long distance capabilities
- Dial the conference room in Kenya listed on the conference call calendar:
  - CR1 – 011-254-53-203-2857
  - CR2 – 011-254-53-203-2393
- If needed, enter your long distance calling code.
- When someone in Kenya answers, tell them you will put them on hold while connecting to the conference line.
- Press the “conference” button on your phone.
- Dial +1-317-278-7008 for the IU conference line or the alternative dial-in number provided for your call.
- Enter the conference call access code
- Press the “conference” button to connect the group.

Please be aware that additional steps may be needed depending on the conference call equipment you are using and the procedures of your institution. Please check with the telephone support personnel in your institution to confirm the specific procedures you should use.

3. Troubleshooting and Reporting Call Problems

Conference call issues are logged and tracked by the Research Program Office to improve conference call supports. If you experience problems with your conference call, please contact the Research Program Office (research.manager@iukenya.org) to request assistance and report the problem. If you experience problems with an Indiana University supported conference line, the designated conference call contact person should call the IU Contact Center support line at +1-317-274-3043 for immediate assistance.

Best Practices for Conference Calls

1. Agendas & Meeting Minutes

An agenda for a scheduled call should be sent out together with meeting reminders. Solicitation of agenda items could also be done in advance. Minutes of the meeting should be kept for all meetings to track communication. Minutes should be circulated to the participants prior to the next scheduled call.

2. Meeting Reminders

Meeting reminders should be sent out at least 1 week before the scheduled call date. Reminders are sent out by the co-chairs of the specified calls or the designated conference call contact. Requests can be made to the research program office to send out a reminder on your behalf. Call reminders should include:

- Date and time of the call
- Location for the call
- Call in number and access code
- Agenda and previous call minutes (if available)

3. Cancellation Notifications

If a meeting is cancelled, the conference call co-chairs should send a cancellation notification by e-mail to the call participants and copy the Research Program Office (research.manager@iukenya.org). It is good practice to send cancellation notifications at least 48 hours in advance of the call.

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<thead>
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<th>SOP Version Log</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Version Number</strong></td>
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