



Regulatory and Legal Frameworks for STEGHs in LMICs: Ghana and Nigeria

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My Background/Context

- Staff of IHV and faculty of Pediatric Department, UMB
- I am from Ghana and work in Nigeria
- Senior Technical Advisor (Ped/Adol HIV) to IHV-Nigeria
 - PEPFAR-funded Pediatric and Adolescent HIV programs
 - Research: Implementation Science
 - Teaching: local and US students and trainees
- Academic appointment and network in Ghana
- Teaching STEGH students in both Nigeria and Ghana

Just to orient us all....



Regulatory and Legal Frameworks for STEGHs: Ghana

- Regulating bodies:
 - Ghana Medical and Dental Council
 - Nursing and Midwifery, Pharmacy, Psychology Council
- Governed by the Health Professions Regulatory Bodies Act
 - Registration of allied health professionals
 - Registration of foreign-trained persons with terminal degrees
 - Temporary (≤ 3 and 6 mo),
 - Provisional (house officers/residents)
 - Permanent registrations (after 6 mo supervised training)
 - **No specific regulations re: students (local or foreign) and their activities**



Regulatory and Legal Frameworks for Medical STEGHs: Ghana

- Students with no medical training or license:
 - Expected to be supervised by licensed professionals (local or foreign)
 - In manner compliant with local and international standards
- Examples of cases/prosecutions/other actions regarding STEGH and foreign students/trainees:
 - Documentation of cases and any actions largely from local health facilities/academic institutions than from MDC
 - There are examples of cases from academic institutions
 - Procedure for legal/other action from institutional standpoint unclear → may be institution-specific



Regulatory and Legal Frameworks for STEGHs: Nigeria

- Regulatory body: Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria
- Governed by the Medical and Dental Practitioners' Act
 - Standards, registration, licensing
 - Provisional (upon completion of training)
 - Temporary-expatriates up to 2 years
 - Full/permanent registration
- No specific regulations or guidelines for STEGHs and foreign students
- Again, appears to be at discretion of host institutions and supervisors



Problem → Opportunity!

- Nigeria Implementation Science Alliance (NISA)
- Consortium of >20 NGOs, academia, policy-makers
- Generate and evaluate evidence for translation into practice for Nigeria's biggest health problems
- A key part of this mission is skill and capacity-building
 - A wealth of local health program, training/teaching and research experience
 - A nation-spanning network of academic and health institutions
- A ready resource for guiding ethical STEGH activities in-country

How Can NISA Reduce Hassle for Sending Institutions for In-Country STEGHs?

- Minimize “I know a guy” STEGHs → find in-country hosts
- Link to well-established host institutions with standards for engagement of foreign groups in ethical STEGHs, OR
- Provide guidance to less-established host institutions
 - Minimum standards for STEGHs (including ethics) defined by NISA stakeholders
 - Incorporate how sending institutions can help minimize unethical STEGH practices
 - Planning stakeholder consensus at 2019 conference in Sept.
- Provide information on safety, security, ethics, context
- Need to be covered in an agreement

Summary

- From this two-country evaluation, Medical and Dental Councils do not have guidelines for dealing specifically with foreign students coming in for STEGHs
- Did not delve into core legal entities or institutional-level regulations and bye-laws for dealing with foreign students
- It appears guidance is needed for both sending and host institutions to ensure that STEGHs are conducted ethically and according to local regulations.
- Onus on the host country/institutions to provide guidance

References, Resources, Acknowledgments

- Ghana Medical and Dental Council
 - mdcghana.org, info@mdcghana.org
- Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria
 - mdcn.gov.ng, info@mdcn.gov.ng
- Nigeria Implementation Science Alliance
 - www.nisaresearch.org
- Center for Global Education Initiatives, U. of MD Baltimore
- IHV-Maryland and IHV-Nigeria
- Global health students and local staff and trainees