



Grand Challenges African Drug Discovery Accelerator



GC ADDA Network Newsletter Q1 2025

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GC ADDA 2024 in a nutshell

2024 brought the opportunity to establish the network and the following milestones were achieved:

Governance was constituted: The OLT, EXCOM, and Advisory Board were established

Documents were approved: OLT ToR, EXCOM ToR, Advisory Board ToR, Membership Requirements.

Members were onboarded: 22 Full Members, 9 Associate Members, and 1 Affiliate Member.

Comms & Marketing: An internal working document was developed, the logo was created, and development on the website began.

By 2024, the network already linked **8 African countries, 22 research institutions, 32 members, and 4 Flagship and 1 Member drug discovery projects** focused on infectious disease research.



GC ADDA Milestones

2025 Q1 & 2



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People & Groups	<p>7 Mar: Call for GC ADDA Member Projects</p> <p>7 Mar: Thierry Diagana elected as Advisory Board Chair</p> <p>10 Apr: Ghada Zoubiane replaces Julie Brady as LifeArc representative for EXCOM</p>	<p>25 April: Janine Scholefield approved for Full Membership</p> <p>Upcoming June: Call for GC ADDA Membership</p> <p>Upcoming May/June: Second review of Member Projects</p> <p>Upcoming: Working groups & champions for balanced scorecard year 1 targets</p> <p>Upcoming: Onboarding Emerging Researchers</p> <p>Upcoming: Official onboarding of Affiliate Institutions</p>
Training	<p>9 – 10 Feb: GHMP Scientific Leadership Workshop</p> <p>11 – 14 Feb: GC ADDA Drug Discovery & Development Course</p> <p>H3D Foundation Webinar Series: 5 presentations</p>	<p>21 May: GHMP Kick-off Event</p> <p>Ongoing: H3D Foundation Webinar Series: 5 presentations</p>
Meetings	<p>20 Feb: Advisory Board Meeting 1</p> <p>21 Feb: OLT Meeting 1</p> <p>10 – 12 Mar: Convening Meeting, Accra</p> <p>11 Mar: OLT Meeting 2</p> <p>11 Mar: EXCOM Meeting 1</p> <p>11 Mar: Advisory Board Meeting 2</p>	<p>25 April: OLT Meeting 3</p> <p>Upcoming: EXCOM Meeting 2</p> <p>Upcoming: OLT Meeting 4 & 5</p> <p>Upcoming: Special OLT Meeting for GC ADDA Member Projects</p>
Documents	<p>Critical Success Factors Balanced Scorecard development</p> <p>Code of Conduct development</p>	<p>Upcoming: Balanced Scorecard approval</p> <p>Membership Activities development</p>
Comms & Marketing	<p>7 Mar: Website live (ongoing updates)</p>	<p>5 May: Website approved (with ongoing updates)</p> <p>Upcoming: Website Member page development</p> <p>Upcoming: Social Media account development</p>

Convening Meeting

10 – 12 Mar, Accra



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A highlight of the first quarter was certainly the Convening Meeting. 70 network participants shook hands, rubbed shoulders and pulled up their sleeves in Accra to work on the Critical Success Factors for 2025 – 2027. The meeting also enabled sharing of updates on the network & new funding, insights into the Flagship and Member Projects, and training opportunities.

Convening Meeting

Objectives



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OBJECTIVES:

- Update the GC ADDA community on progress with Network formation
- Showcase GC ADDA Flagship Projects highlighting successes and challenges
- Create visibility around new projects and new funding
- Set GC ADDA critical success factors for coming 3-5 years (a balanced score card)
- Map out key engagement points with different communities, including the diaspora, and capture what is already occurring
- Engage the next generation of drug discovery scientists
- Training session for Emerging Researchers
- Opportunity for closed meetings for Flagship Projects, GC ADDA Advisory Board, EXCOM and Operational Leadership Team (OLT)

Critical Success Factors

Topics



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1. Fundraising
2. Drug Discovery Pipeline
3. Membership
4. Capability Building
5. Patient advocacy & community engagement
6. Diaspora engagement
7. Industry engagement
8. Skills development
9. Comms & marketing

At our Convening Meeting (10-11 Mar, Accra), network participants workshopped these Critical Success Factors towards the Balanced Scorecard for 2025 – 2027. The scorecard is under review by OLT and will be shared with the network (June).

Comms & Marketing



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Website is live at
www.gcadda.org

- Ongoing updates and improvements
- Members Page upcoming in June

Social Media accounts
upcoming in July

*Please send any suggestions for website edits/updates to nicola.elliott-wong@h3dfoundation.org

Activities

Drug Discovery Course

Another highlight was our Drug Discovery & Development Course which took place in Cape Town, 11 – 14 March.

- 55 Participants from 8 African countries
- 12 Expert lecturers (early-stage drug discovery through to clinical trials)
- Practical team-based sessions that reinforced the key concepts via a group work drug discovery simulator
- Ample networking opportunities



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Activities

Global Health Mentorship Programme

Of course, our GHMP is a 'favourite child', and the Scientific Leadership Workshop we held in March took our breath away:

Programme May 2024 – June 2025

50 Mentee/Mentor pairs

Structured themes for the confidential mentoring sessions

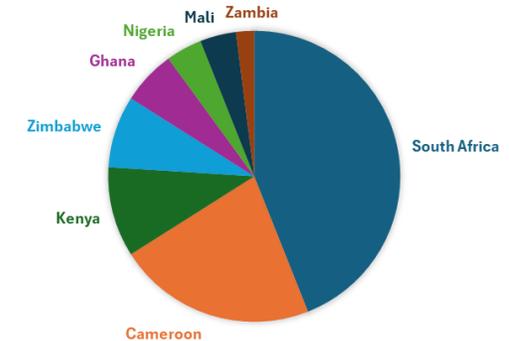
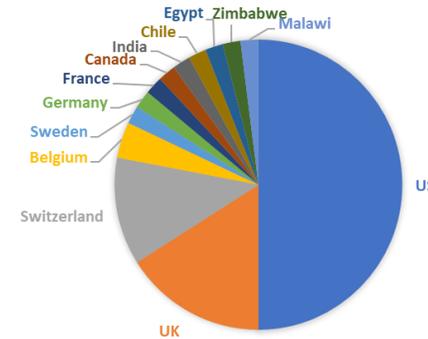
- the scientific process
- scientific communication
- personal interactions
- career progression; and
- scientific responsibility

Mid-programme scientific leadership workshop and best practise sharing

Monitoring and evaluation ongoing (surveys and formal interviews)



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Activities

Global Health Mentorship Programme



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“Through my mentorship with xxx, I have developed a more strategic approach to SAR design and addressing DMPK challenges. His guidance has significantly enhanced my ability to connect scientific theory to practical applications, enabling me to make more meaningful contributions to drug discovery.”

“xx has significantly contributed to my development in several key areas, including: understanding physiochemical properties in drug design, the role of nature and natural products in drug design, and providing insights into his role as an expert in patent litigation. Additionally, he has provided valuable feedback to improve my CV.”

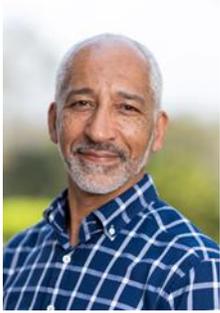
“I have had two critical manuscripts reviewed and are ready for publication”

“I have learned more on PBPK fundamentals, sharing the textbooks useful for PBPK modelling. Concept on in vitro to in vivo extrapolation”

“The joint initiatives between mentee/mentor gives me opportunity to learn how to communicate my findings to the scientific world in a more professional way.”



New faces & new roles



Thierry Diagana elected Chair of
Advisory Board (March 2025)



Ghada Zoubiane replaces Julie Brady as
LifeArc representative for EXCOM
(April 2025)



Janine Scholefield approved for Full
Membership (May 2025)



Welcome!



Shared opportunities



In case you missed it:

- [Potency predictions for drug design \(due 13 May\)](#)
- [Research Development Fellowship 2025/26 \(Call Open on 1st April 2025\) - Africa Research Excellence Fund \(due 27 June\)](#)

Upcoming (more info to come):

- AI2050 Webinar Series: AI/ML Tools for Drug Discovery Workshop (15 – 18 September)
- RAFIKI Drug Discovery Workshop (22 - 25 October)
- **Feel free to share opportunities with Nicola for amplification: nicola.elliott-wong@h3dfoundation.org*



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Thank you!