Laboratory Twinning Process:

Exactly what am I getting myself and my lab into?

David Mills, PhD, HCLD
What parties are involved in a twinning project?

It can vary, but will usually involve:

• In country laboratory and Ministry of Health
• U.S. public health laboratory
• APHL
• CDC in country
• Other laboratories and consultants as needed
How does it all begin?

1. APHL will approach you with a possible twinning match. Why you?

2. You will review a “priorities paper” developed by the partner lab/MoH that outlines desired goals and objectives to be achieved in the partnership.

3. You, the in country partner lab and APHL agree upon what is feasible, activities and timeline. Is outside expertise required?
Formalizing the Agreement

4. A formal agreement is signed by twinning partners and APHL listing:
   - duration of agreement
   - activities to be conducted
   - deliverables
   - tentative timeline
   - budget
Country priorities for NM twinning projects:

**Uganda**
- Transformation of CPHL to UNHLS
- UNHLS to lead the UNHLN
- Occupy and manage new laboratory facility/campus

**Paraguay**
- QMS improvement at National PHL
- Construct a BSL-3 facility
### NM twinning project activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Uganda</th>
<th>Paraguay</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Management training</td>
<td>• QMS documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Lab network functions</td>
<td>• QMS systems operations</td>
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<td>• QMS documents</td>
<td>• QMS equipment acquisition</td>
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<tr>
<td>• SP and OP for UNHLS and UNHLN</td>
<td>• BSL-3 lab planning</td>
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<td>• Business modeling</td>
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<td>• Facility mgmt.</td>
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<td>• Technical training</td>
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Uganda and Paraguay are located in the continent of Africa.
Who in your lab does the work?

It varies, depending on the project activities

**Uganda**
- Lab Director
- Deputy Director
- QMS officer
- Lab section heads
  - WA lab director
  - CA lab director
  - SF lab director
  - APHL consultant

**Paraguay**
- QMS officer
- Lab section heads
- Lab Director
Is travel involved?

Yes... to:

Uganda

(# trips in 4 years)

- NM Lab Director (5)
- WA lab director (1)
- CA lab director (2)
- SF lab director (1)
- APHL consultant (3)

Paraguay

(# trips in 2 years)

- QMS officer (1)
- Lab Microbiology head (1)
Trips by twinning partner to NM

**Uganda**

- CPHL Lab Director
- CPHL Microbiology head
- CPHL consultant
- CDC-Uganda (epi)
- CDC-Uganda (micro)

(1 trip)

**Paraguay**

- Dep Director
- Lab Microbiology head
- Quality Officer

(1 trip)
What is the cost to my lab?

- Time

*Activities and travel are externally funded by agreement. APHL Global Health staff assists with arranging travel, purchasing, disposable costs, etc*
The benefits to your laboratory

• Morale
  • Change of routine
  • Helping others

• Travel

• Friendships

• PR for Department
Other issues to consider:

• Support of staff
• Support of administration
• Time availability
• Willingness to travel
• Language
Benefits of twinning approach:

• Stability of personnel involved
  • Understanding of circumstances
  • Trust among partners
  • Informal interactions in addition to formal interactions

• Good ROI
  • Interactions outlive formal agreement
  • Collaboration can expand beyond formal deliverables
East African Public Health Laboratory Networking Project (EAPHLNP)

Ground Breaking Ceremony for the
National Tuberculosis Reference Laboratory
Building In Butabika

Chief Guest: Dr Ruhakana Rugunda

Date: 11 - March - 2014
Venue: Butabika Opp. the Hospital