

# Status of ethical review of biomedical research in the WHO African Region

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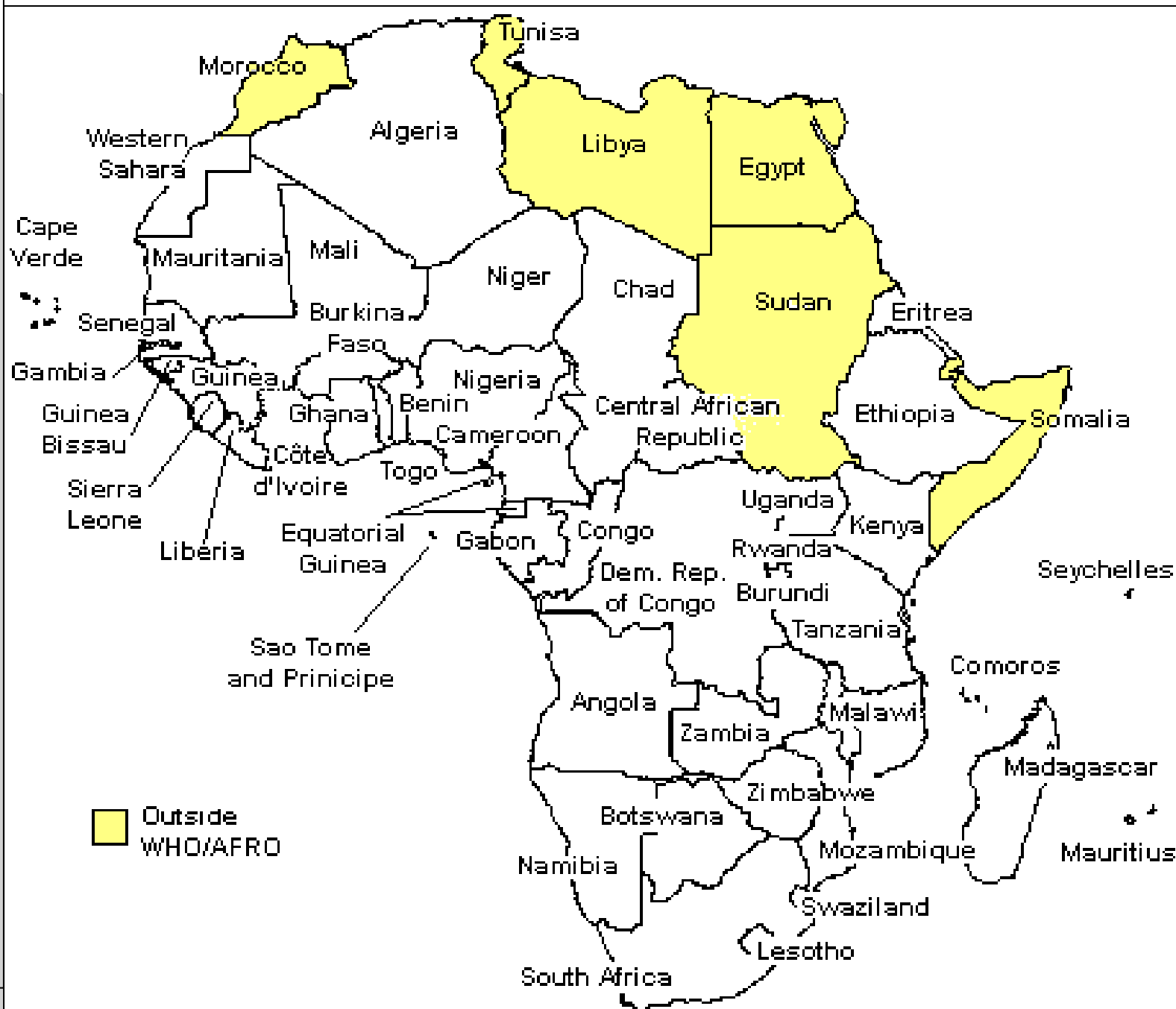
# Outline

- WHO's Africa Region
- Studying research in Africa  
AFRO, NEBRA, PABIR
- AFRO's work in 2007
  - > HRSA survey of research institutions
  - > Supplementary survey
- Synthesis of AFRO's recent work

- Some detailed country results

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# WHO'S African Region



# Studying research ethics – 1

- Kirigia et al. (2008) – Survey of Research Ethics in Africa (AFREC)
- Questionnaire-based
  - > “Sent by diplomatic post to 46 countries in the Region in 2005”
  - > Results reported in *BMC Medical Ethics* 2008; 9:10
  - > 28 of the 46 countries in the Region completed the questionnaire
  - > 18 of the 28 countries reported the existence of national REC.

# Studying research ethics – 2

- **NEBRA**: Network of European Biomedical Research Ethics by European Union
  - > **Partners**: INSERM (France), Eberhard Karls University, and 15 countries of Central Africa
    - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo (Republic), Congo (Democratic), Congo (Republic of), Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo (Cote d'Ivoire did not provide data)

# Studying research ethics – 3

- PABIN: Pan African Bioethics Institute  
Founded in 1999 following an African conference on research ethics organized by the European Forum for Practice following on an initiative by the African Malaria Network 1999
- PABIN aims:
  - > Developing competent in-country **ethical review systems**

# Studying research ethics – 4

- **SIDCER** (South African International Development Committee for Research Ethics)  
Developing  
A network of independent  
regional forums for  
committees, health re  
invited partner organizan  
objective of SIDCER is to con  
human subject protections glob  
developing local capacity for ethic  
review of research involving human  
subjects and for developing policies on  
the ethics of health research

# AFRO's recent work – 1

- Started...
- HRSA survey... contained over... modules: 1) Identification and background information and approaches to research, 2) Financial resources for health research, 3) Health research output, synthesis, dissemination and knowledge management, 4) Health research output, synthesis, dissemination and knowledge management, 5) Human resources, capacity and development for research,



# AFRO's recent work – 2

- Only seven countries have a law on health research ethics, these include ethiopia
- 41% of institutions reported having policies on research ethics
- Most countries (32 out of 44) reported having functioning ethics committees
- Most (61%) of the institutions did not have mechanisms to address conflict of interest

# Botswana data in detail – 1

- **Respondents**  
from Government and independent research universities. 9 were women. Respondents spent on average 1.5 hours to complete the questionnaire. Their average professional work experience was over 19 years. Average experience of ethics, under 3 (range 0 to 15 years). Research activity was high in 6 respondent institutions, medium in 10

# Botswana data in detail – 2

- 4 of the research proposals were approved by the ethical committees regularly. A total of 250 research proposals were submitted to the ethical committees between 2002 and 2006
- A total of 250 research proposals were submitted to, and 245 were approved by the ethical committees between 2002 and 2006 . Of these, 42 proposals were approved with no revision by the committee, while 8 were rejected with no revision. 154 were not approved in

# AFRO Ethical Review Committee

- With help from
- Members being
- Condition for review of  
has already been reviewed at  
level – stimulating creation of  
RECs.