

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT IN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT: STREAM EXPERIENCE IN BUILDING CAB NETWORKS

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The STREAM study is an international, multi-center, randomized, controlled trial in people with multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. A Community Engagement (CE) Plan was written in 2016 and as of April 2019, 13 Community Advisory Boards (CABs) had been established in seven countries at all STREAM Stage 2 trial sites.

Challenges

The limited practice of CE in multi-country TB trials and skepticism towards the value of cross-site sharing are challenges to improve performance of CABs by exchange of experiences in a multi-cultural scenario.

Interventions

STREAM CABs participated in cross-site collaboration by means of annual joint CAB meetings, creation of a regional network, exchange meetings and webinars ranged from TB and research awareness to advocacy for policy change. At each site, outreach events, trainings and policy meetings are regularly conducted to build treatment and research literacy as well as focusing on ethics and human rights approach while engaging communities in clinical trials.

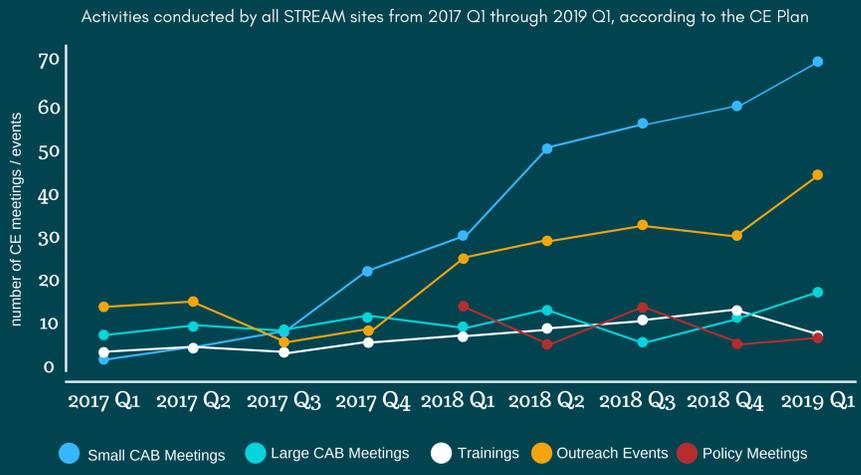
Results & Lessons learnt

The increased understanding of different experiences and common challenges on the global level has strengthened joint community messages at the local, country level to affected people, service providers, local and national governments and general society. An improved interaction between communities and research teams has been noted within sites and across sites.

Conclusions and key recommendations

The diversity of the STREAM CABs is an asset. Challenges and experiences showed that building cooperation across sites is useful to boost CABs' performance. CE has proved to be essential in R&D for raising TB and research awareness, to turning research data into information that is applicable for affected people, and finally to influencing policy change, according to country needs and considering in the same time cultural, gender and other aspects.

13 COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARDS established in 7 countries



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