

Forum for African Medical Editors (FAME) Meeting in Egypt: Steps Forward!

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I have attended FAME recent meeting held on 27th-29th of November in Egypt-Ain Soukhna through competitive sponsorship from WHO/TDR.

FAME is a professional association and network established in 2002 by some African medical editors with the purpose of strengthening African medical journals. FAME is supported by WHO/TDR and has a webpage on TDR website.

The meeting was attended by 22 medical editors and experts representing 15 of the African medical journals besides TDR, WHO/AFRO and WHO/EMRO.

Issues discussed during the meeting covered the following aspects:

- FAME guidelines.
- Accreditation of African medical journals.
- Annual award scheme.
- Enhancement of networking between medical journals in Africa.
- Open access journals.

The meeting concluded by presenting its recommendations in a form of action plan for 2006-2007. The plan constitutes the following 10 points:

1. Disseminate the FAME guidelines to all African medical journals by all possible means to all known addresses by end of 2006 with quarterly updates, while also promoting membership.
Action: Membership Committee
2. Conduct a survey during 2006 to evaluate the implementation of the guidelines by member journals. The information obtained from the evaluation may be used to revise the guidelines as necessary.
Action: FAME Secretariat
3. Develop intercountry training proposals, including a proposal for development of training materials, for submission to potential funding partners by March 2006.
Action: Education Committee
4. Identify resource materials, including appropriate tracking processes and systems,

that can be used by African medical journals, and share them through the FAME listserv and website.

Action: ICT Committee

5. Review existing codes of conduct on medical journal publishing and adapt for use by editors in the African context as necessary.
Action: Ethics Committee
6. Make better use of the existing website facility and listserv provided by TDR, including linking to African medical journals that have websites and suggesting ways to TDR in which the website could be enhanced, in order to share experiences and widen the number of users.
Action: ICT Committee
7. Promote during 2006:
 - Twinning between African journals as South to South collaboration
 - Exchange of visits between editors of medical journals within and between countries to enhance capacity building.Action: Secretariat
8. Network at the national level to promote FAME and its objectives
Action: FAME members
9. Promote use of the recently revived African Index Medicus and its website coordinated by WHO/AFRO.
Action: Secretariat and FAME members
10. Plan to convene its next general meeting at the proposed WHO interregional meeting on medical journals, which would be supported, by FAME and EMAME in Morocco in 2007.
Action: Secretariat

The Sudanese Journal of Public Health (SJPH) participation in the meeting was well received. The SJPH was added to the FAME journal list and its editor has gained access to FAME membership.