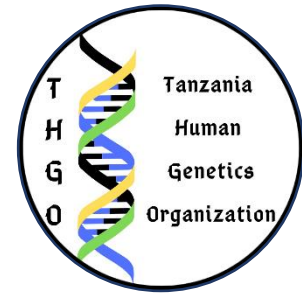


NEWSLETTER



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Tanzania Human Genetics Organization (THGO)



Issue No. 1 2024

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1.0 Opening section

Dear Readers,

Greetings and welcome to **Issue Number 1** of the 2024 Tanzania Human Genetics Organization (THGO) Newsletter. Building on the success of our newsletters in the first and second quarters of 2023, we are thrilled to provide you with the latest updates and insights into the dynamic realm of human genetics.

In this edition, we are thrilled to share highlights from key THGO events, including the National Human Genetics Stakeholders Meeting (NHGSM), our Annual General Meeting (AGM), and exciting updates about the return of the THGO Journal Club.

Alongside these highlights, we are committed to sharing valuable opportunities, webinars, and the latest news in the dynamic field of human genetics. We trust that this newsletter will prove to be both informative and engaging. As always, we value your feedback and welcome your suggestions for future editions.

Regards,

THGO Communication Team.

2.0 Events

The National Human Genetics Stakeholders Meeting (NHGSM sp2023)

From 15th to 17th November, 2023, THGO hosted a highly successful national stakeholders' meeting in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, centered around the theme '**Accelerating the uptake of human genetics in Tanzania.**' Attended by 151 participants, 149 in person and 2 virtually, the event spanned three days, featuring diverse scientific talks by Tanzanian researchers on topics such as oncogenetics, non-communicable diseases, antimicrobial resistance, rare diseases, and infectious diseases. Policymakers and regulators engaged in discussions on regulatory frameworks, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

We were delighted to have **Hon. Nassor Mazrui** (Zanzibar's Minister of Health) as the esteemed Guest of Honor at the meeting. Hon Mazrui graciously pledged the government's support for the advancement of Human genetics in the health sector. The meeting culminated in developing a ten-year strategic plan for human genetics in Tanzania (2024-2034), emphasizing concrete action plans and policy recommendations. This strategic plan positions Tanzania to utilize modern human genetics research, fostering the adoption of precision medicine.

The meeting marked a significant step in Tanzania's journey toward leveraging the transformative power of human genetics knowledge for improved health outcomes.



Panel discussion on Infrastructure and capacity building for genetics research discussed by scientists in the field of Human genetics at the National Human Genetics Stakeholders meeting. (16th November, 2023 University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania).



The executive committee members, keynote speakers, and the Guest of honor (seated center) in a group photo at the National Human Genetics Stakeholder Meeting (NHGSM23) (15th November, 2023 University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania).

THGO hosts its second Annual General Meeting

The second Annual General Meeting (AGM) for THGO took place on 17th November, 2023, following the NHGSM2023 on its final day. The AGM was preceded by the first term's board meeting for both the Board of Directors and the Advisory Board, held online on September 6, 2023. This meeting concluded with the election of representatives for these boards, as detailed below:

Board of Directors:

- Chairperson: Dr. Mary Mayige
- Secretary: Dr. Siana Nkya

Advisory Board:

- Chairperson: Prof. Karim Manji
- Secretary: Prof. Julie Makani

The annual general meeting brought together THGO members, the Board of Directors, and the Advisory Board, which included the recently elected representatives. The meeting was conducted through a hybrid format, incorporating both in-person attendance and virtual participation at the New Library Hall, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Key highlights of the second THGO annual general meeting included;

- ✓ Review and amendments of the constitution and the THGO operational manual.
- ✓ A comprehensive presentation on the annual organization's report on research, training, and advocacy by the president of THGO.
- ✓ Endorsement of membership fee payments categorized by corresponding respective justifications.

- ✓ Announcement of Honorable Ali Mohamed Shein agreeing to serve as a senior advisor to THGO.
- ✓ Endorsement to extend THGO to country zones, and choosing zonal representatives to enhance advocacy, training, and research efforts.



Participants of the THGO 2nd Annual General Meeting in a group photo (17th November, 2023, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania).



Dr. Siana Nkya the president of THGO giving a detailed annual report presentation at the Annual General Meeting (17th November, 2023, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania).

The THGO Journal Club is back!

On 26th January, we successfully hosted the 1st THGO journal club meeting via Zoom. We had an enlightening presentation about **"Publishing the PREPRINT; The What, The Where and The How"** from our guest speaker Dr. Aneth David, a luminary #biotechnologist. To watch the full recording on YouTube, click [this link](#).

Ms. Aisha Fikirini, a biochemist and research fellow, skillfully led the second episode of THGO's journal club on 23rd February with a compelling presentation on **"Isolation and Quantification of CD34 Cells from Cord Blood Samples"**. Plan not to miss the next session.

Journal club presentations are expected to be done each Month. If you are keen to share your work, you are invited to submit your application by completing the [THGO Journal Club Registration Form](#).

To our attendees, kindly complete this [Journal Club Feedback Form](#) to help us improve future sessions.

CALL FOR PRESENTERS

For Journal Club
23rd Feb, 2024 | 0900 - 1000hrs
Via Zoom Meeting
Deadline: 2nd Feb, 2024

Area of Focus

- Prenatal diagnosis of genetic disorders and conditions
- Genome Wide Association Studies (GWAS)
- Cancer genetics & Genetic screening
- Diagnosis of hematological malignancies
- Pharmacogenomics
- Ethical, Legal & Social Issues (ELSI)
- Bioinformatics/Computational tools for human genetics research
- Microbiome and human genetics
- Sickle cell diseases genetics

Criteria

- ✓ Recent paper (2019 onwards)
- ✓ Applicable to Tanzanian/ African setting
- ✓ Should be under the area mentioned

Eligibility

- ✓ Researchers
- ✓ Scientists
- ✓ Academicians
- ✓ Students and other interested individuals in human genetics and relevant fields

Register via <https://rb.gy/62lox1>

humangeneticstz

<https://thgo.or.tz>

3.0 Membership updates

The organization is experiencing steady growth, having over 250 members currently.

We anticipate to further expand our audience and increase operational efficiency after the establishment of THGO zonal centers.

As resolved in the second AGM, starting from 2024, active membership to THGO necessitates payment of membership fees as outlined below. Select a suitable category and complete your payment to become an active member today!



The poster features the THGO logo at the top, followed by the text 'Tanzania Human Genetics Organization (THGO)'. Below this is the main heading 'THGO ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE PAYMENT' and a sub-heading 'Fee Description'. A table lists three categories: Students (20,000/- TZS), Early career scientists (50,000/- TZS), and Senior professionals (100,000/- TZS). Under 'Payment Options', it shows CUB BANK (0133596163100) and m-pesa (0765687689), both for Tanzania Human Genetics Organization. A 'CASH' option is also listed, requiring payment to the Executive Committee or Office Admin. Social media icons and contact information (humangeneticstz and +255 712 230 966) are at the bottom.

Fee Description		
Students: 20,000/- TZS	Early career scientists: 50,000/- TZS	Senior professionals: 100,000/- TZS

Payment Options		
	0133596163100	Tanzania Human Genetics Organization
	0765687689	Tanzania Human Genetics Organization

CASH By handing it to the Executive Committee or Office Admin and receiving a written proof of payment.

humangeneticstz | For more help contact: +255 712 230 966

THGO Membership fee payment details, visit our [website](#) for more information.

4.0 Relevant news

- ✓ The government moves to have key sickle cell drug made in Tanzania. [Click here](#) to read more
- ✓ Illumina Ventures launches a refreshed genomics startup accelerator program. [Click here](#) to read more.

5.0 Publication features

- ✓ **The Plight of Rare Diseases in Southern Africa: Health and Social Services Policy Recommendations.**
Affecting ~300 million people globally, the majority being hereditary and affecting children, rare diseases (RDs) show a significant challenge, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. In collaboration with regional partners, this paper proposes a unified approach for the Southern African Development Community (SADC). [Click here](#) to read more.
- ✓ **Publication of the Preprint survey results among African Researchers.**
Dr. Aneth David and colleagues from ASAPbio conducted a survey on #preprints, giving insights into the perspectives of African Researchers. [Click here](#) to explore the findings.
- ✓ **Multi-ancestry genome-wide association meta-analysis of Parkinson's disease**
Researchers conducted a landmark study delving into the genomics of Parkinson's disease, transcending geographical boundaries with a large-scale multi-ancestry meta-analysis aiming to expand our understanding of the genetic.

landscape of Parkinson's and set the stage for future investigations focused on non-European populations. Follow [this link](#) to learn more.

✓ **Every Medical Test proved Negative, she was still very ill**

Hajrath battles against Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) in Tanzania. From delayed diagnosis to societal stigma, this narrative prepared by Elizabeth Hanai, a member of the THGO communications team, emphasizes the urgent need for increased awareness, research, and improved healthcare for Lupus patients. [Click here](#) to read more.

6.0 Opportunities

- ✓ Apply for the 2024 ASAPbio Fellows program to become a preprint advocate. **Deadline: 18th March, 2024.** [Click here](#) for more details.
- ✓ Call for applications to Dorcas Muthoni PhD Fellowship. **Deadline: 2nd May, 2024.** For more info, [click here](#).
- ✓ Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's scholarship programme – deadlines vary depending on the offering country and institutions. For more info, [click here](#).
- ✓ Manaaki New Zealand scholarships for international tertiary students are open. **Deadline: 29th February, 2024.** For more info, [click here](#).

- ✓ Applications for African Research Leaders funding are open to support exceptional early to mid-career African researchers to conduct excellent global health research across sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

Deadline: 24th April, 2024 For more info, [click here](#).

7.0 Conferences, workshops, and webinars

Welcome Connecting Science will be hosting a conference on Antimicrobial Resistance - Genomes, Big Data and Emerging Technologies. **Virtual registration deadline: 05 March 2024.** Click [here](#) for more details.

Explore the upcoming sessions of PacBio Winter Webinar series to learn from leading voices in human genomics.

1. **28th February, 2024:** Join a next-level exploration of the [latest advancements in RNA sequencing technology and their application in the study of rare and inherited diseases](#).
2. **6th March, 2024:** Explore the [comprehensive transcript quantification capabilities of Kinnex full-length RNA data](#), and uncover the bioinformatics frontier in RNA sequencing research.
3. **13th March, 2024:** [Assessing HiFi genomes as first-tier analysis in rare disease genetic research](#): Understand the efficacy of HiFi sequencing in becoming a front-line assay to interrogate the many possible genetic mechanisms underlying rare disease.

Links to more opportunities: [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), [4](#), [5](#), [6](#)

THANK YOU FOR READING

We appreciate your feedback. Please send us relevant articles, publications, news, and opportunities to be featured in our mailing list at humangeneticstz@gmail.com. Include the words “NEWSLETTER” in your heading to make it easier to find it.