



UGANDA NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY



ACCREDITATION OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW COMMITTEES IN UGANDA

NOTICE

In March 2007, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST) in line with Sections 3d, 3h, and 4e of the UNCST Act (Cap 209) issued revised National Guidelines for Research Involving Humans as Research Participants in Uganda. The guidelines provide a national framework for harnessing the benefits of research while ensuring that the rights, interests, values and welfare of people who take part in the research are not compromised. Specifically, the guidelines are intended to protect the rights and welfare of human research participants; provide ethical standards and procedures for the conduct of research involving humans as research participants; and ensure that research takes into account social and cultural sensitivities of participating communities.

In order to assure the protection of rights and welfare of research participants, the guidelines require all research involving humans as research participants to undergo scientific and ethical review by an accredited Institutional Review Committee (IRC) --- commonly referred to as Institutional Review Boards or Research Ethics Committees. An IRC is a committee established usually in a research related institution to conduct initial and continuing review of research projects with the primary goal of protecting the rights and welfare of research participants. So far there are 21 IRCs established in different institutions in Uganda. It is the responsibility of the UNCST to strengthen these IRCs and oversee their operations so as to promote higher quality and ethical research in Uganda.

In this regard, UNCST has put in place an IRC Accreditation Scheme in accordance with the National Guidelines for Research Involving Humans as Research Participants, 2007. The Accreditation scheme aims at improving efficiency and effectiveness of IRCs in Uganda; ensuring that IRCs provide the highest possible ethical standards and protection to research participants, and building public trust and confidence in the research system.

To this end, therefore, UNCST wishes to notify all Chairpersons of IRCs and Heads of Institutions hosting IRCs in Uganda that the Accreditation process for all IRCs in Uganda begins 1st July 2009. The process will last for nine months. Any IRC that will not have applied for Accreditation by the UNCST will NOT be permitted to function as such. The guidelines for Accreditation of IRCs including application forms are available at www.uncst.go.ug. Copies of the same have been sent to all IRC Chairpersons and Heads of Institutions hosting IRCs.

For more information about the IRC Accreditation process, please contact:

The Executive Secretary

Uganda National Council for Science and Technology

P. O. Box 6884 Kampala

Tel. 256 414 705500

Fax. 256 414 234579

E-mail: uncst@starcom.co.ug

www.uncst.go.ug.