

BIOSAFETY AND BIOSECURITY RETREAT FOR CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT STARTS IN EARNEST.



Members of the Biosafety and Biosecurity training curriculum development retreat. L_R Fre Mose (UNITID), Prof Mwanda (Director UNITID), Dr Mburu (NACOSTI), Ernest Lutomia (UNITID), Meshack Juma (OBS/GYn), Onyango Obila (KAVI), Winnie Mutai (Microbiology), Dr Lillian (Biochemistry), Prof Nyaga (CAVS)

UNITID organised a two day retreat for facilitators to develop curriculum for training health care workers in Biosafety and biosecurity.

Addressing the facilitators the Director UNITID Prof mwanda noted the increased Proliferation of Biomedical Laboratories with increased cases of Laboratory Acquired infections which is due to poorly trained staff on matters of Biosafety and Biosecurity and that we need to mount this

training so as to increase awareness of the Biosafety and Biosecurity challenges. The objectives of the training were to consider the appropriateness of the Biosafety training content, to familiarize the training content, recommend the mode of delivery and flow of the training, to approve the facilitators and coaches for the year 2015, and to come up with the Draft Biosafety and Biosecurity training curriculum. At the end of the workshop all the objectives were achieved.

On his part, Dr Mburu the NACOSTI representative recommended UNITID for having taken a lead in the implementation of its part as an academic institution's mandate in matters of Biosafety and Biosecurity.

Biosafety is complementary to biosecurity, and refers to the implementation of laboratory practices and procedures, specific construction features of laboratory facilities, safety equipment, and appropriate occupational health programs when working with potentially infectious microorganisms and other biological hazards. These measures are designed to reduce the exposure of laboratory personnel, the public, agriculture, and the environment to potentially infectious agents and other biological hazards. Laboratory-acquired infections (LAIs) have also started to receive more attention in recent years, in particular with regard to high (biosafety level 3, or BSL-3) and maximum (BSL-4) containment laboratories. LAIs may occur in research labs, clinical labs, or animal facilities, and sometimes it is difficult to determine whether the infection was acquired in the lab or from the community. There is also a strong public health concern related to the LAIs, as an infected laboratory worker may transmit the infectious disease to his colleagues, family, or community at large. Poor personnel training increases the risk of a LAI or other biological accident in the laboratory, and may also contribute to improper pathogen accounting, storage and transportation, which in turn could contribute to the illicit acquisition of biological agents by terrorists or would-be bio-criminals.