

UW-Kenya Organizational Briefing Document

Mission

UW-Kenya's mission is aligned with the University of Washington Department of Global Health:

To improve health for all through research, education, training, and service.

Core Focus

UW-Kenya provides operational, financial, and compliance support to research programs based in Kenya. Its work centers around:

- Scientific and Clinical Research Implementation
- Capacity Building and Academic Training
- Financial, HR, and Administrative Infrastructure for Research

The organization streamlines non-research functions to allow scientists and principal investigators to focus on discovery and impact.

Key Achievements

- Operational Risk Mitigation: Eliminated the need for personal bank accounts to handle research funds.
- Standardized Internal Controls: Developed policies and procedures adopted across all UW-funded projects.
- Comprehensive Support System: Manages procurement, HR, payroll, finance, compliance, asset tracking and audit coordination.

Governance and Organizational Structure

- Registration: UW-K is registered in Kenya under the NGO Coordination ACT 1990 (now repealed to [Public Benefit Organizations ACT 2013](#)).
- Ownership and Controlling Interest: Department of Global Health (DGH) on behalf of the University of Washington.
- UW-K has a constitution that guides on all governance aspects and an affiliation agreement that specifies its relationship with the parent institution.
- Board of Directors: Formed by Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and five Ordinary Members.
- Stakeholders: Faculty from the Kenya Research and Training Center (KRTC).
- Secretariat: CEO, 2 Program Managers (Based in Seattle, WA), Country Manager, and Country Office Staff (6 staff members).
- Project Office Teams: Embedded support for individual research projects.

Financial and Operational Systems

- Accounting: Modified-accrual accounting using QuickBooks, following U.S. GAAP and OMB Circular A-21.
- Monthly Reporting: Submitted via [Purchase Path](#) system to UW Field Advance Office.
- Fund Flow: Managed through Work Advance (WA) requests.
- Procurement: Governed by policies on bids, vendor agreements, and documentation.

HR and Recruitment Policies

- Hiring: Initiated via [Catalyst survey](#) and approved by the CEO and UW-K recruitment team.
- Onboarding: Offer letters, contracts, and policy orientation.
- Payroll: Monthly, based on submitted timesheets.

Audit and Compliance

- Annual external audit as required by Kenyan law.
- [UW Internal Audit Department](#) approved auditor must be used for this exercise.
- Audit fees shared proportionally across departments.

Facilities and Leasing

- Office leases reviewed by [UW Real Estate office](#).
- Payments made by UW-Kenya only with signed, approved leases.

Vehicle and Asset Management

UW-Kenya's role in vehicle purchases:

- Verify funder approval for vehicles has been obtained before purchase.
- Assist with inventory and disposition of purchased vehicles.
- Liaise with University of Washington (UW) Office of Risk Management (ORM) to assess insurance coverage needs.
- Liaise with UW ORM to obtain vehicle insurance policy approval.

Project Offices are responsible for the procurement and safe, legal operation of UW-Kenya vehicle(s) as well as devising policies and procedures to ensure the safe use of staff-owned vehicles when undertaking UW-Kenya business.

Strategic Priorities

- Strengthen infrastructure and administrative capacity.
- Expand technical training.
- Improve compliance and scalability.

Target Beneficiaries

- Researchers & Investigators
- Institutional Collaborators in Kenya
- Local Populations

Key Partnerships

- University of Washington Department of Global Health
- Kenya Research and Training Center (KRTC)
- Donor agencies and academic institutions

Contact Information

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