

Key themes;

- PRECISE Partnership development & team building
- Bio banking capability (PEG Paper; Site Assessment Tool, to be completed by sites mid Jan '18)
- Scoping and planning for institutional and individual capacity building
- Early engagement with local health sector leaders across policy and practice
- Integration with existing demographic surveillance systems (DSS)
- Scientific network building for sustainable research partnerships and bio bank use
- PRECISE project governance; ethics, finance and timelines

Briefing from UK Co-I's, Monday 6th November 2017

Ahead of the scoping visits we wanted to gather input from PRECISE colleagues in the UK to ensure the network is established as a fully collaborative effort with shared vision and objectives. It was great to discuss the proposed sample collection and COLLECT database plans to inform thinking ahead of biobank scoping. Input from colleagues shaped thinking as we discussed data collection site options, operating procedures and scientific vision with country teams. The issues discussed during this meeting and site visits will form the basis of more detailed conversations at the PRECISE kick off meeting in Nairobi on Monday 29th-Tuesday 30th January 2018. Additionally, sub-group meetings according to the scientific themes within PRECISE were proposed, and will be established for regular communication and planning of activities.

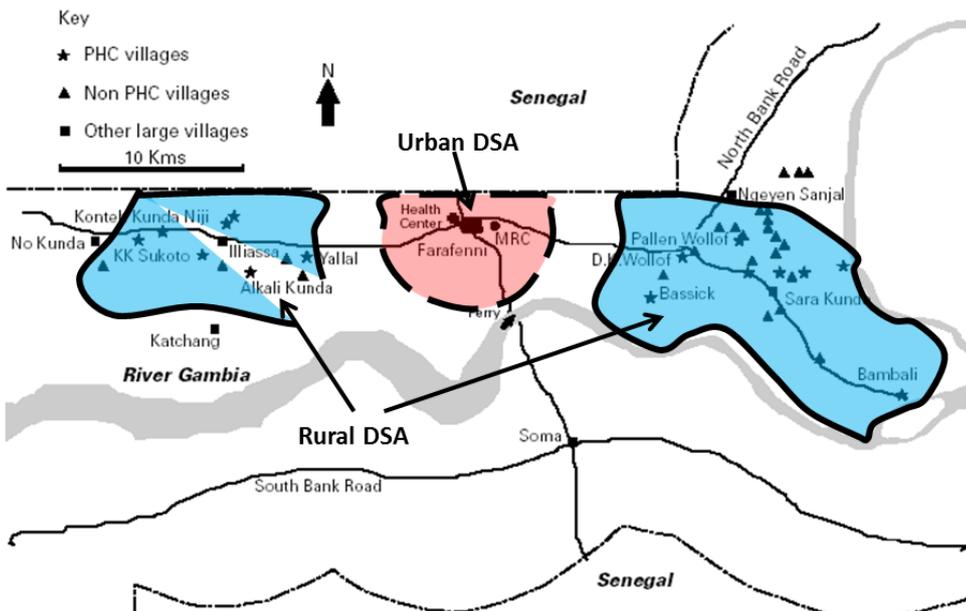
MRC Unit, The Gambia, Tuesday 7th-Friday 10th November 2017



(Thanks to MRCG Comms team who shared the visit news <http://www.mrcg.com/precise-network-team-visits-mrcg/>)

The Gambia site leads Umberto D'Alessandro and Anna Roca took us to visit the Farafenni field station as a proposed option for the PRECISE data collection site in The Gambia. Following a bustling ferry crossing over the River Gambia we met with colleagues working in the Farafenni Health Centre and visited the labs to establish what capacity existed for handling samples and storage. A brief meeting with the Director of the hospital demonstrated strong support from local health sector leaders for introducing PRECISE as a research project at the hospital, and full support and integration of PRECISE field staff was emphasised.

Pierre Gomez runs the Demographic Surveillance System (DSS) in Farafenni and the surrounding villages, the map shows the proposed villages on the East and West of the Referral Hospital that Pierre advises we work in. Donna assessed the sites to ascertain the feasibility of high quality sample collection and logistics and it is believed to be a suitable set of sites from the bio-banking perspective. Farfenni has the additional advantage of access to both rural and semi-urban populations as well as enabling strong linkage with the ongoing DSS.





The PRECISE budget for each site is a maximum of £1.4million and following detailed discussions The Gambia team have verified that this will be sufficient to cover costs for data collection and sample storage as well as some tests and analyses, from the referral hospital and 4 Primary Health Centres. Further discussion of the priority tests and analyses will be needed with all PRECISE Investigators at the January kick off meeting. The Keneba and Fajara sites have exceptional bio banking and laboratory facilities. It is envisaged the samples will be moved from Farafenni to Banjul for short-medium term storage and transferred periodically to Fajara for long term storage. If space allows we

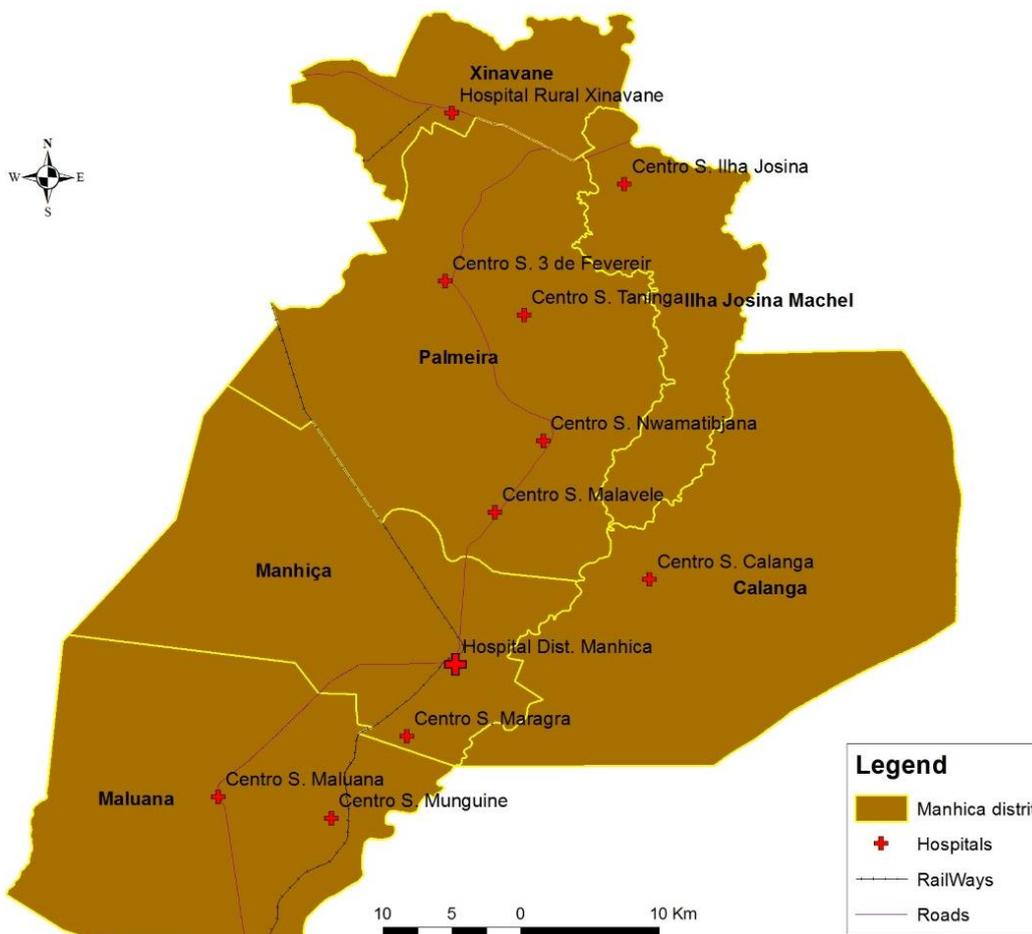
would ideally have all samples split between Keneba and Fajara for resilience against natural and man-made disasters.

The Gambia team organised a meeting with the Director of Health Services for The Gambia, it was a very positive discussion and the Director confirmed support for the PRECISE work taking place in The Gambia and highlighted an interest in utilising the outputs and evidence produced by PRECISE to inform future policy.



CISM, Mozambique, Monday 13th-Tuesday 14th November

We travelled the 1hour 20mins from Maputo to Manhica with Espernaca Severne, our Mozambique Principal Investigator at CISM. The map shows Manhica District Hospital which will be one of our data collection sites, and Xinavane Rural Hospital that will be the other. Both hospitals deliver thousands of women every month but also serve as antenatal facilities so we will be able to track women through pregnancy as is required for PRECISE data collection.



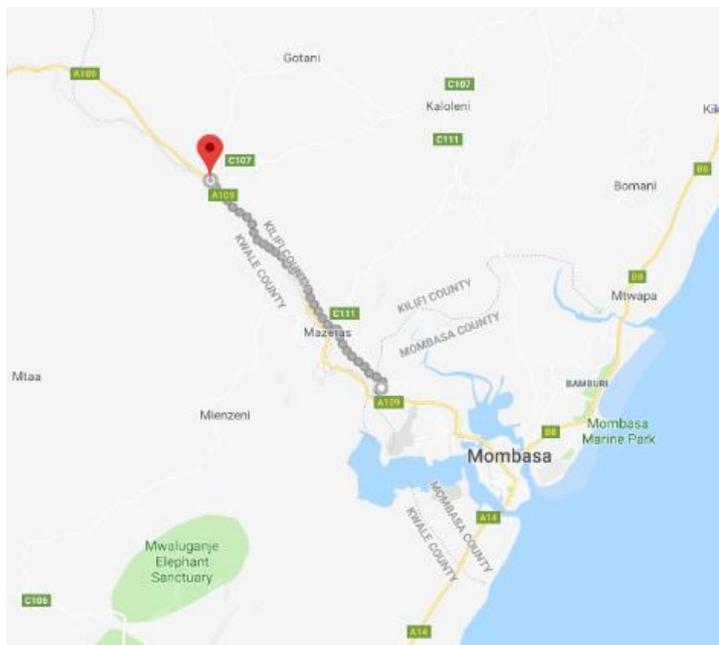
We met with the CISM team including lab managers, procurement leads, social scientists, finance and project managers, medical Doctors and others who will be involved in the leading the successful delivery of PRECISE in Mozambique, it was great to meet everyone and we look forward to working with them all. Again, budget discussions helped to inform thinking about the feasibility of high quality data collection from multiple sites but the fantastic facilities and experienced staff at CISM will support data collection, analysis and storage for PRECISE samples.

We were fortunate to meet with the Director of CISM, Eusebio Macete, who offered full support for PRECISE following a great relationship that has been established through the CLIP study as part of PRE-EMPT.



Aga Khan University, Kenya, Wednesday 15th -Friday 17th November

On Wednesday evening we arrived at The Concord Hotel in Nairobi (where the January kick off meeting will be held) just in time to have dinner with Tatenda Makanga, the PRECISE Health Geography lead. It was great to discuss the plans for taking forward the health geography work with Kenya, and on Thursday morning we went to meet with Byron Anangwe at the Regional Centre for Mapping Resources for Development; <http://www.rcmrd.org/> who was keen to work with PRECISE to share data and build a partnership as our plans develop. Tatenda has already contacted mapping agencies across Senegal, Gambia and Kenya and



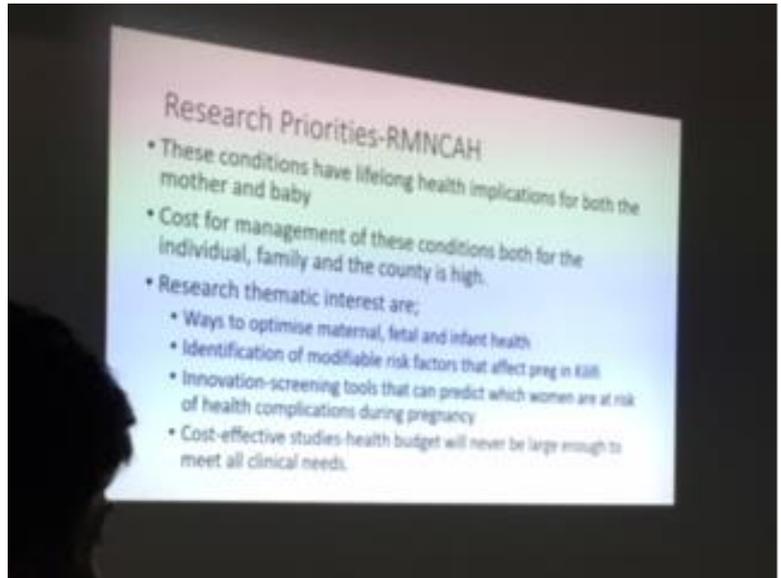
will be at the PRECISE kick off meeting to discuss how his work will support the objectives of the network.

Marleen Temmerman (Kenya PI and PRECISE Advocacy lead) and Angela Koech (Kenya Co-I) had organised a full schedule for the rest of the visit. We started with a meeting at AKU in Nairobi with senior staff from the Medical and Research faculties including Robert Armstrong, Dean of the Medical College. The meeting discussed the recruitment site options to be explored for PRECISE and after the visit to Mombasa the following day it was agreed that two sites in Kilifi county would work well for the needs of the project; 1 subcounty hospital (Mariakani hospital) and 1 health centre (Rabai) which are about 30 minutes apart on good tarmac. Both recruitment sites have basic laboratories and the wards also have areas which we can adapt for initial placental processing.



On Friday morning we met with Kalifi County Director of Health and his team and had a fantastic presentation from them about the research priorities they have identified in RMNCAH, as shown in the image below. The team were enthusiastic about PRECISE taking place in Kalifi and it was very encouraging to make such a positive start with the local health leadership.

The rest of Friday was spent visiting the Mariakani and Rabai sites and meeting the amazing teams that work there. We also had the privilege of a quick tour around the Coast Provincial General Hospital (CPGH) where Marleen and colleagues have been working for many years to improve sexual and reproductive health services. We would like to congratulate Marleen and colleagues for the recent UNESCO recognition of the Gender Based Violence Recovery Centre based at CPGH which provides post rape support for victims of sexual violence. It is amazing to be working with such an inspiring team of collaborators to get the PRECISE network off the ground.



In addition to the wonderful meeting planning, site scoping and warm welcome by our site teams we also enjoyed some cultural delights of the beautiful countries PRECISE will be working in. The below pictures show a Gambian Fish stew, Mozambican mango tree and Mombasa sunset, all of which were enjoyed during the trip 😊 **A huge thank you to all who enabled such a fantastic trip, we learnt so much and it is very exciting to visualise how the project will work in all of the partner countries. We look forward to more discussions and idea sharing at the Nairobi meeting.**

