

State of the Journal: 2023

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EDITORIAL

KEYWORDS: Journals, JIEPH, Publication

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RECEIVED

31/01/2023

ACCEPTED

16/02/2023

PUBLISHED

17/02/2023

LINK

<https://www.afenet-journal.net/content/article/6/5/full/>

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CITATION

Sheba Nakacubo Gitta. State of the Journal: 2023. Journal of Interventional Epidemiology and Public Health. 2023 Feb; 6(1):5

DOI:

<https://www.doi.org/10.37432/jieph.2023.6.1.77>

Editorial

Welcome to 2023: the Journal of Interventional Epidemiology and Public Health (JIEPH)'s fifth year of existence. Now publishing its sixth volume, JIEPH's mission (To build capacity for public health evidence generation and context-specific dissemination from Africa to the rest of the world.) continues to further the vision of the African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET): "A Healthier Africa". Outbreaks, epidemics and pandemics continue to occur; most important among them is COVID-19 and several disease outbreaks which included Mpox (formerly Monkeypox), Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) and cholera [1]. The contributions of field (and applied) epidemiology programs to the response efforts addressing the aforementioned and other public health priorities are documented in JIEPH's fifth volume and two special supplements.

Preparedness and response to COVID-19 in Africa (Volume 2)

Volume two of the special supplement on "Preparedness and Response to COVID-19 in Africa" contains articles from ten countries covering a spectrum of topics [2]. Topics include an innovative solution to recruiting a new cohort to the Liberia Intermediate field epidemiology program during the disruptive phases of the COVID-19 response, children's understanding of COVID-19 and its preventive measures in Uganda, a COVID-19 super spreader event in South Africa, increase of measles cases in Mozambique, COVID-19 outbreaks in Zimbabwe schools, and homecare of COVID-19 cases in Nigeria.

The AFENET WAHO Supplement

JIEPH published a special supplement on behalf of the West Africa Health Organization (WAHO) titled: "Preparedness and Response to public health emergencies in the ECOWAS region" [3]. Two articles detailed findings from pre-covid assessments of workforce capacity for public health emergencies and a scoping review of strengths, gaps and challenges in epidemic preparedness and response in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Another article focused on the COVID-19 pandemic response capacity assessment in the region. The rest of the articles were individual country accounts of the general epidemic preparedness and response status in Burkina Faso, Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Nigeria, Senegal and Sierra Leone.

Notably, the WAHO supplement was bilingual with some articles published in French and others in English. This was a first for JIEPH. With the in-house

capacity built, we are ready to publish other bilingual supplements upon request.

Quarterly Webinars

Besides processing manuscripts for publication, the journal editorial team in collaboration with science writers from AFENET member field epidemiology training programs organized four quarterly webinars. The quarterly webinars are a forum for engaging the journal's target authors, peer reviewers and readership. A total of 734 participants attended the four webinars. Topics covered were: 1) Getting your manuscript published. A guide to success. 2) Manuscript Peer review: Tips on what facilitates a quick review and handling reviewers' comments. 3) Scientific writing in the field and applied epidemiology. 4) Pragmatic Approach to Transforming Field Epidemiology Training Programme Outputs into Publishable Manuscripts

During the Quarter four webinar, we piloted simultaneous language translation in French and Portuguese to cater for the different AFENET official languages. We plan to continue providing this service during future webinars and hope that it will result in better engagement of the journal's audience.

Fifth Year Plans

In November 2023 we shall celebrate five years of existence. During this landmark year, we pledge to continue championing our vision: to make JIEPH a veritable platform which provides culturally and technically specific evidence that drives public health and field epidemiology practice and policy. We hope to publish 100 articles and two special supplements in Volume 6. We also plan to apply for accreditation to the Directorate of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and Pubmed Central.

To achieve these ambitious targets, we call upon volunteers to serve as peer reviewers and speakers for quarterly webinars. Potential authors are encouraged to submit high-quality manuscripts, follow the instructions for authors and adhere to the different timelines.

Looking forward to an exciting and productive 2023!

Competing interests

The author declares that they have no competing interests.

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