

CoLab: An international colposcopy collaboration!

This month the Fusco group held a week-long intensive workshop in Madagascar on colposcopy, female genital schistosomiasis (FGS) and cervical cancer. We had the incredible opportunity to welcome participants from seven different countries including Gabon, Kenya, Tanzania, Italy, Spain, Germany, and Madagascar. The diverse group came from varied professional backgrounds including doctors, midwives, nurses, laboratory researchers and students – all united under the common goal to broaden their knowledge on colposcopy, FGS and cervical cancer.



The 2024 CoLab group at the CICM in Antananarivo, Madagascar.

Colposcopy is essential when it comes to the visualization, diagnosis and assessment of conditions including FGS and cervical cancer. However, the service remains scarce in many low- and middle-income countries. Factors including the lack of a trained workforce as well as medical tools and electricity all contribute to this shortage of screening. CoLab therefore strives to train health-care professionals in colposcopy while raising knowledge on FGS in order to contribute to increasing access and availability of women's health services worldwide.

The training began at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire (CHU) Androva in Mahajanga, where the experts Prof. Dr. med. Monika Hampl, Dr. Zoly Rakotomalala, Dr. Bodo Sahondra Randrianasolo and Dr. Darja Sempf led a practical training on colposcopy and shared their expertise in recognizing cervical cancer lesions as well as FGS in patients. Trainees were able to deepen their theoretical understanding of these conditions and see first-hand their manifestation on the cervix. The second part of the workshop took place in Antananarivo, where the participants visited the



Participants discussing the signs of FGS with Dr. Bodo before performing colposcopies.

laboratories of the Centre d'Infectiologie Charles Mérieux and speakers including Dr. Mandranto Rasamoelina, Dr. Daniela Fusco, Dr. Valentina Marchese, and Dr. Sonya Ratefiarisoa dove deeper into the diagnosis, burden and awareness of FGS in Madagascar and other endemic countries.

Overall, the CoLab experience was an enriching intracultural and intra-disciplinary exchange among both participants and experts. In addition to sharing knowledge from diverse specialties, trainees were able to gain an overarching understanding of the differences in accessibility, technology, practices, and treatment in low- to high-income countries, in



Trainee familiarizing herself with the colposcope at the CHU Androva.

regard to colposcopy.

We had a fantastic time together and would like to thank everyone who participated and contributed to this **CoLaboration!**