Episode: *Author Interview: "How Should a One Health Perspective Promote Cross-Disciplinary Research About Bat-Associated Viruses in Uganda?"*

Guest: John Timothy Kayiwa, MSc
Host: Tim Hoff
Transcript: Cheryl Green

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[00:00:04] HOFF: Welcome to another episode of the Author Interview series from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics*. I'm your host, Tim Hoff. This series provides an alternative way to access the interesting and important work being done by Journal contributors each month. Joining me on this episode is John Kayiwa, a laboratory scientist-manager in the Department of Arbovirology, Emerging and Re-emerging Infectious Diseases at the Uganda Virus Research Institute in Entebbe. He's here to discuss his article, coauthored with Benard Matovu, Michael Mutebi, Charity Angella Nassuna, Leonara Nabatanzi, and Drs Kevin T. Castle, Robert M. Kityo, and Rebekah C. Kading, "*How Should a One Health Perspective Promote Cross-Disciplinary Research About Bat-Associated Viruses in Uganda?*," in the February 2024 issue of the Journal, *Health Ecology and Disease Transmission*. John, thank you so much for being on the podcast. [music fades]

JOHN KAYIWA: Hi, Tim.

[00:01:00] HOFF: So, to begin with, what is the main ethics point that you and your co-authors are making in your article?

KAYIWA: The key ethics point about our article is the cross-disciplinary collaboration. This multidisciplinary approach that we used achieves optimal health outcomes that recognize the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and the environment they live in. And we think that from the perspective of our study of the viral ecology of bats in Uganda, specifically the northeastern part of Uganda, we assume that these interdisciplinary approaches within this One Health framework are essential drivers to the successful investigation and response to zoonotic infectious disease outbreaks. And our article presents key considerations for effective cross-disciplinary engagement. And to highlight this cross-disciplinary collaboration, the study involves scientists from Uganda, the Uganda Virus Research Institute, from the Uganda Wildlife Authority, academic institutions such as Makerere University, and also, Colorado State University, but also brought on other science experts from the US.

[00:02:46] HOFF: And so, what do you see as the most important thing for health professions students and trainees to take from your article?

KAYIWA: The most important thing for health professionals, students, and trainees to take from our article, in my view, is the importance of having highly trained infectious disease scientists who are groomed early in their academic careers. Also having

specialized and capable laboratory infrastructure that supports the safe handling of zoonotic disease outbreaks and investigations while at the same time promoting biosecurity during research and emergency response situations. Fortunately, UVRI, through its collaborations with international partners, has been at the forefront of early detection, response, containment, and reporting to the Ministry of Health and its international partners all major outbreaks, such as Ebola, Marburg, the COVID-19 pandemic, the influenza H1 pandemic of 2009, commonly called the swine flu, and Rift Valley fever, among so many other outbreaks. This has been made possible because of the highly trained scientists.

[00:04:24] HOFF: And finally, if you could add a point to your article that you didn't have the time or the space to fully explore, what would that be?

KAYIWA: Policies that make a One Health approach deal with cross-reservoir spread but are, in most cases, restrictive concerning human actions than policies that focus, say, on a single reservoir. As such, the burden of justification lies with the more restrictive policies, and we think that an ethical justification for preferring a One Health policy or One Health approach over less restrictive alternatives relies on empirical evidence, such as in our study as well as our theory. The ethical justification of these policies is based probably on two arguments. One is the effectiveness, and two, the moral responsibility. The empirical assumptions on which claims rest are limited by existing empirical knowledge. Using our study as an example, we suggest, or we reason, that scientific research in the context of the viral ecology of bats in Uganda, with an emphasis on the partnerships that I have mentioned before and the interactions for a successful One Health engagement and linking these practices to outcomes will be guided, at least in part, by the imperative to provide context-specific data that will be needed to ethically justify deferring the One Health approach. [theme music returns]

[00:06:45] HOFF: John, thank you so much for your time on the podcast, and thanks to you and your co-authors for your contribution to the Journal this month.

KAYIWA: Thank you so much.

HOFF: To read the full article, as well as the rest of this month's issue for free, visit our site, journalofethics.org. We'll be back soon with more *Ethics Talk* from the *American Medical Association Journal of Ethics.*