

Building Successful Interdisciplinary Collaborations

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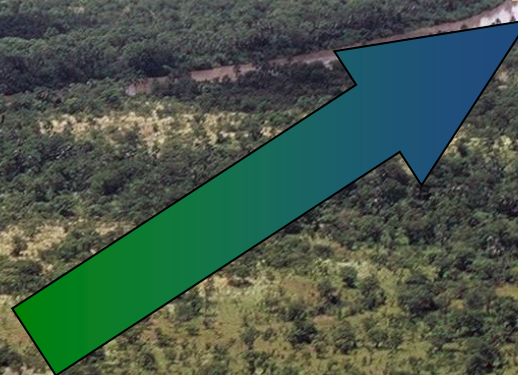
Ecological mechanisms of sylvatic arbovirus emergence



Dengue; Zika;
Chikungunya;
Yellow Fever



sylvatic *Aedes* mosquitoes



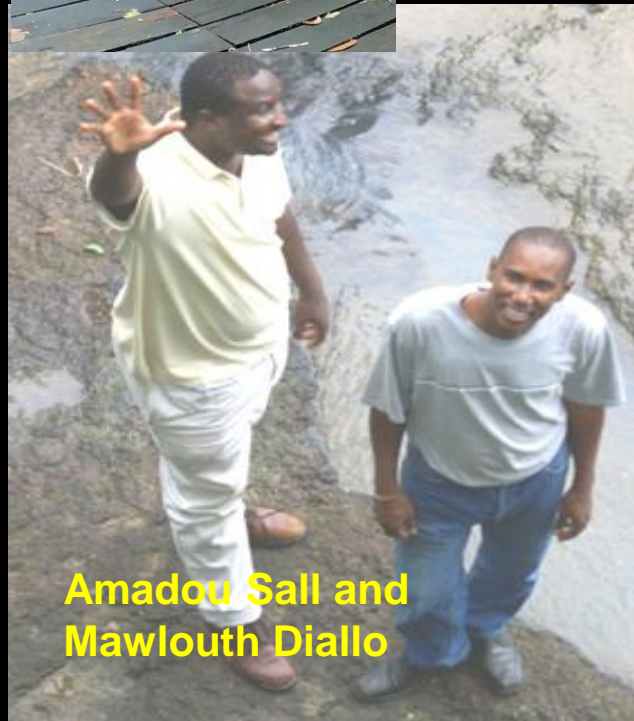
Hanley Lab Collaborators



Nik Vasilakis



Derek Cummings



**Amadou Sall and
Mawlouth Diallo**



Scott Weaver



Brenda Benefit



**Michaela
Buenneman and
Diawo Diallo**

Keys to a Successful Interdisciplinary Collaboration

1. Think holistically about your project. What expertise is needed?
2. Is there someone at your institution with that expertise?
-Never underestimate the value of talking about data over coffee. And buy the coffee!
3. If the answer to point 2 is no, then look to the literature for someone with the expertise you need, and make contact.
4. Don't be a jerk. You are building a collaboration, not hiring a contractor. There's a difference.
5. Life is too short to work with jerks (see point 4). Get to know someone before committing to a collaboration.

Keys to a Successful Interdisciplinary Collaboration

6. Communicate very clearly what you need from the collaborator.

7. Communicate very clearly what you can offer her/him. Expectations differ enormously among disciplines.

- Pay?
- Co-mentorship of students?
- Resources?
- Publications? If so, what will the role of the collaborator be?
- Data for their own use?

8. Communicate very clearly the research question and goals of the project.

Keys to a Successful Interdisciplinary Collaboration

9. Be prepared to gain enough expertise to communicate well with your collaborator. You don't need to duplicate what he/she does but you do need to understand it.
10. Communicate regularly during the project. Make an effort to go to his/her building/institution/country.
11. Come to agreement on schedules for completion of sub-projects.
12. Check periodically that collaborator is satisfied with the project progress and his/her role.
13. Co-mentorship of students and post-docs is a great way to foster collaboration and communication.

Rebecca Richman: First NMSU Interdisciplinary Geography/Biology graduate student!

