



RePORT International Newsletter

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In This Issue

- Alix Boisson-Walsh Appointed Director of Research Operations
- A RICC Post-Doctoral Fellow's Journey in Global TB Research
- Meet the RePORT Indonesia Team

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SUBMIT

ALIX BOISSON-WALSH APPOINTED DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH OPERATIONS



Rutgers University's Dr. Alix Boisson-Walsh has accepted the position of Director of Research Operations of the Data and Operations Management Center (DOMC).

Alix assumes this leadership role at a pivotal time, as evolving policies and priorities are reshaping the landscape of international research. Throughout her involvement-to-date with the DOMC, she has demonstrated exceptional judgment, dedication, and a deep commitment to scientific excellence and collaboration.

The DOMC has been an invaluable resource for Rutgers investigators and their collaborators, providing data management, operational support, and strategic guidance, essential to the success of many research programs.

A RICC POST-DOCTORAL FELLOW'S JOURNEY IN GLOBAL TB RESEARCH

From the Field to Seeing the Big Picture

For years, Dr. Mandar Paradkar worked deep in the field of tuberculosis research as part of RePORT India, generating the kind of data that fuels scientific progress but rarely gives researchers a view of the bigger picture. That changed when he joined the RICC Post-Doctoral Fellowship in 2024, a program designed to mentor early-stage researchers how to translate their scientific interests into meaningful careers and the development of far-reaching research portfolios. He didn't just want to



keep doing ‘good’ research; he wanted to understand how research gets built, funded, and scaled across borders.

"I applied because I wanted to better understand how large, multinational research collaborations are translated into impactful scientific projects through grant development," he says, "and to learn all essential skills for successful grant writing."

A Global Classroom

Ask Mandar what stood out most about the fellowship, and he doesn't point to a single lecture or milestone. Instead, he describes something less tangible: the experience of sitting alongside investigators, expert researchers, and fellow RePORT colleagues from different networks around the world, working through rigorous coursework in TB epidemiology, immunology, data visualization, and professional development.

Despite working in vastly different settings, he found that he and his peers were often chasing the same scientific questions and wrestling with the same operational hurdles. That realization reframed how he saw his own work.

"Those discussions highlighted how diverse perspectives can strengthen research," he explains. "It reminded me that advancing TB research is truly a global effort, and meaningful progress depends on learning from one another."

The fellowship also opened doors beyond its own curriculum, giving him access to external programs like Johns Hopkins' Summer Epidemiology course and McGill's Advanced TB Diagnostics course, resources he now counts among the most valuable parts of his training.

A Shift in Perspective

If there's one throughline in how Mandar describes his growth, it's a shift in scale. He came into the fellowship focused on individual studies; he's leaving it thinking about research as part of a much larger ecosystem. One where standardization, data quality, and implementation matter as much as the science itself, and where findings need to speak directly to policy and practice.

That shift has come with new confidence, as well. Mandar now feels equipped to step into leadership roles within multicentric collaborations, contribute to consortium-wide initiatives, and engage in scientific conversations that stretch well beyond his own immediate projects.

The proof is already in print or on its way there. During his fellowship, Mandar completed two manuscripts: one on the incidence and timing of asymptomatic TB recurrences, accepted for publication in the *International Journal of Tuberculosis and Lung Disease*, and another examining the prevalence and incidence of asymptomatic TB among TB-exposed household contacts, currently under journal submission. Both, he says, were made possible by critical mentorship from senior researchers across the RePORT consortium and RICC's investigator network.

What's Next?

With the fellowship behind him, Mandar's focus is turning toward deepening his role within RePORT India while broadening his footprint in multicentric clinical research and implementation science. His scientific interests are converging on the early spectrum of TB including pediatric diagnosis, biomarker research, and strategies to improve case detection and prevention.

Grant writing, once a skill he set out to learn, is now central to how he plans to move forward. He's looking to lead larger collaborative projects capable of answering, in his words, "vital and novel scientific questions," putting the tools from his fellowship directly to work.

The Ten-Year Vision

Asked to look further down the road, Mandar doesn't hesitate. In a decade, he hopes to be leading internationally collaborative research programs tackling some of the biggest challenges in TB and other infectious diseases not only through research and publishing, but through taking study outcome to the next level and shaping public health policy itself.

"Ultimately," he says, "I would like my work to have a lasting impact with a contribution to improving health outcomes for communities most affected by infectious diseases."

It's a fitting endpoint for a journey that began with a simple desire to understand how research is structured and has grown into a mission to help make it matter.

MEET THE RePORT INDONESIA TEAM



Bijak Rabbani is a statistician with a background in data science and computational statistics, currently serving as the Lead of Data Management and Biostatistics at INA-RESPOND. His work sits at the cross section of mathematical modeling and real-world clinical applications, with a strong focus on infectious diseases. He has hands-on experience building risk models for several conditions and translating complex clinical study data into clear, actionable medical insights through statistical analysis.

Upi Nurhayati is an epidemiologist and Clinical Operations Lead at INA-RESPOND with over 20 years of experience in infectious disease research. She has supported the implementation and management of multicenter clinical studies on TB, HIV, COVID-19, and other infectious diseases across Indonesia. Her work focuses on clinical research operations, study coordination, strengthening research capacity across study sites.



Mochammad Helmi Azis is a Clinical Microbiologist and serves as scientific support at INA-RESPOND with expertise in infectious diseases, antimicrobial resistance (AMR), and public health research. He has extensive experience supporting multicenter studies through protocol development, data analysis, scientific writing, and stakeholder engagement. His work spans clinical microbiology, laboratory systems strengthening, biosafety and biosecurity, and AMR surveillance, with a strong commitment to translating scientific evidence into meaningful public health impact.

Eka Windari Rusman is a Site Management and CRU Specialist at INA-RESPOND with more than 15 years of experience in clinical research operations, site management, and regulatory affairs. Since

joining INA-RESPOND in 2018, she has supported the implementation of multicenter infectious disease studies, including COVID-19, HIV, and RePORT International study. Through her work with RePORT Indonesia, she is committed to strengthening research capacity and supporting collaborative efforts to improve tuberculosis research and public health outcomes in Indonesia.



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Newsletter Team:

Editor: Rajita Bhavaraju

Content Management: Daphne Martin

Layout & Design: Colter Billings

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

Rutgers University | 225 Warren St | Newark, NJ 07103 US

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