



DR. MICHAEL N. WALEKHWA

PhD (Medical Immunology) · MSc (Infectious Diseases) · MBA (Strategic Management) · BSc (Medical Laboratory Sciences)

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Dr. Michael N. Walekhwa is a distinguished Medical Immunologist, Strategic Leader, and Quality Management Systems expert with over 15 years of applied expertise spanning laboratory medicine, national health regulation, and institutional governance. He holds a PhD in Medical Immunology from Kenyatta University, with doctoral research on *Streptococcus pneumoniae* epidemiology and vaccine immunogenicity conducted at Gertrude's Children's Hospital and the KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme.

Dr. Walekhwa currently serves as Senior Lecturer and Head of Department of Medical Laboratory Science at Kabarak University, Member of the Board of Management of the National Quality Control Laboratory (NQCL) where he chairs the Technical, Standards and Compliance Committee, Member of the ISERC of the National Cancer Institute and Member of the Operational Research Committee of the Pharmacy and Poisons Board. He is thereby embedded at the convergence of Kenya's health regulatory, academic, and research ecosystems.

His leadership record encompasses strategic direction of academic departments, governance of national regulatory bodies, mobilization and stewardship of nine competitive research grants totaling USD 59,349, and supervision of twelve researchers whose outputs have advanced peer-reviewed science and national health policy. He brings a rare combination of scientific depth, regulatory fluency, and executive governance to every institutional mandate he holds.

CORE COMPETENCIES

- ◆ Strategic Leadership & Institutional Governance
- ◆ Research Grants Mobilization & Stewardship
- ◆ Public Sector Regulatory Compliance
- ◆ Organizational Development & Capacity Building
- ◆ Financial Accountability & Reporting
- ◆ Quality Management Systems (ISO 9001 / 15189 / 17025)
- ◆ Health Systems Strengthening
- ◆ Policy Formulation & Advisory
- ◆ Multi-Sector Stakeholder Coordination
- ◆ Disease Surveillance & Health Data Systems
- ◆ Board Governance & Advisory Leadership
- ◆ Scientific Communication & Evidence Translation

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Member, Board of Management | Chairman, Technical, Standards & Compliance Committee

May 2024 – Present National Quality Control Laboratory (NQCL), Nairobi

- Chairs the Technical, Standards and Compliance Committee, directing development of ISO 9001:2015 alongside the existing ISO/IEC 17025 accreditation framework, setting Kenya's national reference laboratory compliance agenda for medicines and health commodities.
- Reduced sample turnaround time from 75 to 42 days through introduction of risk-based quality control processes and a comprehensive review of standard operating procedures across all testing functions.
- Directs internal audits, risk assessments, and annual quality reviews that sustain NQCL's accreditation status as Kenya's authority on pharmaceutical and diagnostic quality.
- Coordinates across regulatory bodies, pharmaceutical industry stakeholders, and laboratory management to enforce quality and safety standards protecting Kenya's medicines supply chain.
- Serves concurrently on the HR Committee, contributing to governance of recruitment, performance evaluation frameworks, and staff welfare policy.

Member, Operational Research Committee *March 2024 – Present Pharmacy and Poisons Board (PPB), Nairobi*

- Contributes to the development of national guidelines for pharmaceutical operational research and regulatory compliance at Kenya's central medicines regulatory authority.
- Advances evidence-based policy formulation by integrating current research findings into PPB's regulatory frameworks and advisory outputs.

Head, Department of Medical Laboratory Sciences | Senior Lecturer *April 2021 – Present Kabarak University, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Nakuru*

- Leads a department of 12 academic and support staff with full accountability for curriculum delivery, faculty performance evaluation, departmental budget management, and infrastructure planning.
- Directed development and implementation of Diploma, BSc and MSc programmes in Medical Laboratory Sciences; BSc Forensics and Molecular Sciences; MSc Biosafety & Biosecurity; and BSc Biomedical Engineering.
- Supervised six masters and six undergraduate researchers to completion, with outputs in infectious disease epidemiology, vaccine science, and health systems published in peer-reviewed journals.
- Conceived and delivered the Central Rift Innovation Week (CRIW) for four consecutive years, establishing Kabarak University as the primary research-industry engagement platform in the Rift Valley region.

Coordinator, Research Grants and Resource Mobilization

January 2022 – Present Kabarak University, Nakuru

University, Nakuru

- Coordinates institutional research grants processes, ensuring alignment with funder requirements, university policies, and national regulatory frameworks.
- Provides fiduciary oversight of externally funded projects, including compliance monitoring, financial accountability, and reporting integrity.
- Strengthens institutional systems for grants management, encompassing frameworks for tracking, reporting, and accountability.

- Liaises with funding agencies, regulatory bodies, and internal stakeholders to ensure effective communication and compliance.

Acting Director, Research, Innovation and Outreach *May 2021 – September 2021 Kabarak University, Nakuru*

- Oversaw institutional research, innovation, and outreach functions during a leadership transition, ensuring continuity of core operations.
- Coordinated grants management processes, including compliance, reporting, and stakeholder accountability.
- Managed external engagement and institutional linkages with government, industry, and community stakeholders.

Coordinator, Research Ethics *August 2020 – January 2022 Kabarak University, Nakuru*

- Coordinated establishment and operationalization of the Kabarak University Research Ethics Committee (IREC), supporting policy development, SOPs, and review framework alignment with national standards.
- Facilitated accreditation with NACOSTI, ensuring compliance with national research ethics requirements.
- Coordinated institutional linkages with NACOSTI, KAVI-University of Nairobi, and KEMRI.

Member, Innovation and Business Incubation Committee *January 2019 – Present Kabarak University, Nakuru*

- Contributes to institutional strategy, governance frameworks, and operational models for innovation and business incubation.
- Facilitates linkages with government, industry, and private sector stakeholders to support innovation, entrepreneurship, and technology transfer.

Executive Director *January 2017 – Present MJM and Biolabs, Nairobi*

- Sets strategic direction and manages all operations of research and biolabs enterprise covering laboratory services, academic journal publishing, and scientific consultancy.
- Directs editorial and digital operations of three peer-reviewed journals, including peer review management, indexing, and journal visibility.
- Oversees laboratory operations and regulatory compliance in accordance with Kenya's laboratory governance framework and Good Laboratory Practice standards.

Editor in Chief *January 2023 – November 2025 Kabarak Journal of Research & Innovation*

- Provided strategic and editorial leadership for the journal, ensuring quality, integrity, and alignment with international publishing standards.
- Guided journal indexing, visibility, and adherence to scholarly publishing frameworks.

Visiting Doctoral Fellow *September 2017 – November 2017 KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Research Programme, Kilifi*

- Conducted pneumococcal serotyping by Quellung Reaction, Latex Agglutination, and Multiplex PCR, producing data for the doctoral thesis on post-PCV-10 serotype distribution in Kenya.

Doctoral Research Fellow *February 2017 – March 2018 Gertrude's Children's Hospital, Department of Pathology & Laboratory Sciences, Nairobi*

- Designed and executed a cross-sectional study of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* among PCV-10-vaccinated and unvaccinated children, yielding four peer-reviewed publications and informing the national pneumococcal vaccination programme.

Part-Time Lecturer *January 2016 – December 2018 University of Embu | University of Eastern Africa, Baraton*

- Taught Immunology, Microbiology, and Medical Laboratory Sciences while completing doctoral research, supervising undergraduate projects and contributing to assessment design.

BOARD & ADVISORY ROLES

Member, Institutional Scientific and Ethics Review Committee (ISERC) | National Cancer Institute of Kenya

April 2026 – To Date

- Participate in the scientific and ethical review of research protocols to ensure compliance with national and international standards.
- Assess methodological rigor, risk–benefit balance, and participant protection measures in cancer-related research.
- Contribute to regulatory oversight by ensuring adherence to established ethical guidelines and review procedures.
- Support continuous improvement of review processes through committee deliberations, policy input, and stakeholder engagement.

National Quality Control Laboratory (NQCL)

2024 – Present

- Member, Board of Management, one of nine board members with oversight of institutional strategy, budget, performance, and governance of Kenya's national quality control authority for medicines and medical devices.
- Chairman, Technical, Standards and Compliance Committee accountable for the laboratory's compliance roadmap, quality standards implementation, and audit governance.
- Member, Human Resource Committee, responsible for HR policy review, recruitment governance, and staff performance management.

Pharmacy and Poisons Board (PPB)

2024 – Present

- Member, Operational Research Committee, advises Kenya's primary medicines regulatory authority on pharmaceutical research policy, evidence use in regulation, and research governance.

EDUCATION

Doctor of Philosophy - Medical Immunology
Nairobi

2015 – 2020 Kenyatta University, School of Medicine,

- Thesis: Evaluation of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* serotype epidemiology, antimicrobial susceptibility patterns, and immunogenicity of PCV-10 among vaccinated and unvaccinated children at Gertrude's Children's Hospital.
- Research conducted at Gertrude's Children's Hospital and KEMRI-Wellcome Trust Programme, Kilifi; yielded four peer-reviewed publications.

Master of Science - Infectious Diseases (Immunology Option) 2011 – 2016 Kenyatta University, School of Medicine, Nairobi

- Dissertation: Immunogenicity of the 10-Valent Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine among vaccinated infants at Mbagathi District Hospital. Published in F1000Research.

Master of Business Administration - Strategic Management 2019 – 2025 Kabarak University, School of Business and Economics, Nakuru

- Thesis: The Influence of Total Quality Management on the Strategic Competitiveness of Selected Diagnostic Laboratories.
- Coursework in strategic planning, organizational management, financial management, and corporate governance.

Bachelor of Science (Hons) - Medical Laboratory Sciences 2004 – 2010 University of Eastern Africa, Baraton, School of Health Sciences

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Kenya School of Government - Senior Management Course
- State Corporations Advisory Committee - Mwongozo Board Induction for Boards of State Corporations
- Kenya School of Government - Capacity Building Programme for Regulatory Authorities and Agencies
- University of Washington, Department of Global Health - Leadership and Management in Health (Graduate Certificate)
- University of Washington, Department of Global Health - Introduction to Epidemiology for Global Health (Graduate Certificate)
- Global Health Network - Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP)
- Global Health Network - Good Clinical and Laboratory Practice (GCLP)
- African Population and Health Research Center (APHRC) - Grants Proposal Writing; African Journal Visibility and Website Optimization
- CBEC-KEMRI Bioethics Training Initiative - Research and Public Health Ethics
- Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) - Internal Quality Auditing, ISO 9001:2015

RESEARCH GRANTS PORTFOLIO

Nine competitive grants secured and managed across national and international funders, totalling **USD 59,349**.

Grant Title	Funder	Amount	Status
Cultural Factors & Traditional Healing Practices on the Clinical Course of Snakebite Envenomation: A Study in Marigat Subcounty, Kenya	The Royal Society of Tropical Medicine & Hygiene	USD 4,549	Ongoing
Performance Evaluation of LIAISON XL QUANTIFERON-TB Gold Plus Assay	Surgipath Services East Africa	USD 16,600	Completed

Grant Title	Funder	Amount	Status
Evaluation of Streptococcus Pneumoniae Serotype Epidemiology, Antimicrobial Susceptibility and Immunogenicity of PCV-10 among Children at Gertrude's Children's Hospital	Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	USD 10,000	Completed
Development of Organisational Strategic Plan 2026–2030	Touch Africa Development Organisation, South Sudan	USD 6,000	Completed
Development of Organisational Strategic Plan 2025–2029	Women for Justice & Equality	USD 6,000	Completed
Exploring Cultural Dynamics and Determinants of Disease Distribution for Precision Health Interventions	Kabarak University	USD 5,000	Completed
Digital-Based Nutrition Intervention Model to Improve Hypertension Prognosis	Kabarak University	USD 5,000	Completed
Evaluating Effect of Storage Time on Immunogenicity and Reactogenicity of PCV-10	Kabarak University	USD 5,000	Completed
Immunogenicity of PCV-10 among Vaccinated Infants at Mbagathi District Hospital	NACOSTI	USD 1,200	Completed
TOTAL PORTFOLIO		USD 59,349	

POLICY & GOVERNANCE CONTRIBUTIONS

Kenya National Research Policy | NACOSTI

- Represented Kabarak University in the national consultative process for Kenya's National Research Policy, convened by NACOSTI.

Kabarak University Research Policy

- Co-authored the Kabarak University Research Policy across five pillars: Research Ethics; Innovation and Business Incubation; Grants and Resource Mobilization; Editorial and Conferences; and Outreach and Linkages.

In-Service BSc Medical Laboratory Sciences Curriculum Validation | KMLTTB

- Represented Kabarak University at the national in-service curriculum validation workshop organized by the Kenya Medical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists Board, contributing to national competency standards for Kenya's disease surveillance and diagnostic systems.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Books

1. Walekhwa, M. and Otieno, F. (2022). Instructional Immunology: A Textbook for Beginners. Utafiti Foundation Publishers, Kenya.

2. Walekhwa, M. and Suge, V. (2023). *Research Methods: Essential Tools and Techniques*. Utafiti Foundation Publishers, Kenya.
3. Thiga, M., Kimeto, P., Walekhwa, M., et al. (2024). *Essential Guidelines for Writing Scientifically and Ethically Sound Research Proposals*. Utafiti Foundation Publishers, Kenya.

Peer-Reviewed Articles - Infectious Diseases, Vaccines & Health Systems

4. Walekhwa, M., Shiundu, M. and Suge, V. (2025). The Role of Vaccines in Pneumonia Prevention in Kenya: Progress, Challenges, and Future Directions. *East African Journal of Nursing*, 1(01), 61–66.
5. Walekhwa, M., Maiyo, F., Kerubo, T. and Kipsang, F. (2024). In Vitro Evaluation of Effect of Storage Time on Immunogenicity of the 10-Valent Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine. *Kabarak Journal of Research and Innovation*, 14(01), 16–25.
6. Walekhwa, M., Kagia, R. and Muturi, M. (2021). Immune Responses to SARS-CoV-2: A Scoping Review. *European Journal of Medical and Health Sciences*, 3(2).
7. Njuguna, A.G., Wangombe, A.W., Walekhwa, M.N. and Kamondo, D.K. (2024). Clinical Course and Factors Associated with Hospital Admission and Mortality among SARS-CoV-2 Patients within Nairobi Metropolitan Area. *medRxiv*. doi: 10.1101/2024.05.15.24307403.
8. Walekhwa, M., Muturi, M., Kenya, E. and Kabera, B. (2019). Streptococcus pneumoniae serotype-specific antimicrobial susceptibility profiles among PCV-10-vaccinated and unvaccinated children. *F1000Research*, 8:1699.
9. Wambani, J., Walekhwa, M., Otieno, F. and Suge, T. (2022). Sensitivity and Specificity of Rapid Biosensors for Diagnosis of Malaria in Kenya. *African Journal of Medical Biosciences*, 1(1), 1–8.
10. Chepkemoi, J., Walekhwa, M., Suge, V. and Otieno, F. (2023). Inadvertent Effects of COVID-19 Preventive Measures on Communicable Disease Incidence among Patients at Kabarak Health Centre. *African Journal of Medical Biosciences*, 1(1), 21–31.

Selected from over 45 peer-reviewed publications. Full publication list available upon request.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

- African Society of Laboratory Medicine (ASLM) | Active since June 2020
- Federation of Clinical Immunology Societies (FOCIS) | Active since January 2016
- Kenya Medical Laboratory Technicians and Technologists Board (KMLTTB) | Active since January 2004
- Kenya Society of Immunology (KSI) | Active since May 2024
- Kenya Universities Quality Assurance Network (KUQAN) | Active since January 2024
- Bioethics Society of Kenya (BSK) | Active since January 2025

REFEREES

Available upon request. Contact details provided below.

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