

Abstract:

The Institute of Primate Research (IPR; www.ipr.or.ke) is a WHO collaborating center for research in reproductive biology, infectious diseases and ecology/conservation. It includes a fully equipped surgical complex, >5000 square feet of laboratory space, a quarantine facility, library, conference room, administrative offices, etc. More than 500 primates can be housed at IPR, mainly baboons. Reproductive research at IPR is applied to endometriosis, assisted reproduction, prevention of heterosexual transmission of HIV and includes the investigation of immunocontraceptives and placental retroviruses. Reproductive research capacities of IPR include: videolaparoscopic surgical equipment, surgical experience, endometrial biopsies and uterine flushes, ovarian stimulation, laparoscopic oocyte aspiration, hormonal analyses in baboon blood and urine, sperm assessment, in vitro culture and reproductive immunological investigations. During the last years, simultaneously with the development of baboon IVF, there have been contacts with several Kenyan gynecologists at the level of KEMRI (Kenya Medical Research Institute), KOGS (Kenyan Obstetrical and Gynecological Society), Kenyatta National Hospital and Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi to develop clinical infertility services including low-budget high-quality IVF in Nairobi. The logic behind this initiative is that the Kenyans trained in non-human primate embryology, and IVF would be natural partners to develop human IVF in Kenya.