

Global Health Effectiveness Program at Harvard: Training the Next Generation of Health Leaders

On July 3, 2009, twenty four students and four visiting faculty from sixteen countries arrived at Harvard School of Public Health for the inaugural session of the Global Health Effectiveness (GHE) Program. Developed by the Global Health Delivery (GHD) Project and co-sponsored by [Harvard Medical School](#) and [Harvard School of Public Health](#), GHE is a three and half week program designed to train health care professionals to effectively design, manage, evaluate and improve health care programs and services in resource-limited settings.

The wide array of participants' experiences, from medical students to public health officials, contributed to a complex and dynamic classroom environment in which students and faculty collaborated to explore the most critical health care delivery issues. "The GHE course is invaluable to medical students who wish to direct and streamline their education in the hopes of becoming efficient implementers of global health care," says [Matthew Akiyama, fourth year medical student at McGill University](#). [Olubadewa Fatunde, MS, MPH](#), expressed enthusiasm over the course structure: "The case study format combined with the Socratic pedagogy fostered an environment very conducive to debate and allowed me to really learn from my classmates and the discussion leaders for that class."

The spine of the program was made of two courses: "Epidemiological Methods for Global Health" and "Introduction to Global Health Delivery", and a seminar: "Principles of Management in Global Health." Innovative case studies developed by GHD are the core of "Introduction to Global Health Delivery," integrating theory, practice and experience while presenting real-life examples. The "Principles of Management in Global Health" seminar provided a unique classroom experience by inviting global health leaders – a different one each day – to address specific operational challenges, from supply chain management to Health IT, and discuss frameworks for designing and managing innovative health interventions with limited resources.

[Johanna Daily M.D., M.S., an infectious disease specialist at Brigham and Women's Hospital](#), shared unique expertise during the "Establishing a national malaria program in Swaziland" seminar, discussing key areas for malaria diagnostic test implementation with students.



From right: Raymond Dusabe, MD, who works with Inshuti Mu Buzima in Rwanda, Mary Mwanyika, MD, clinical activities and training coordinator at the MDH program in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; and Matthew Akiyama, a fourth year medical student during an off-the-cuff discussion with Dr. Daily on malaria treatment on July 9, 2009.

Lisa Hirschhorn, Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School, Associate Director of International Monitoring and Evaluation, and senior clinical advisor on HIV/AIDS at JSI Research and Training in Boston, and Nava Ashraf, Assistant Professor in the Negotiations, Organizations, and Markets Unit at [Harvard Business School](#), provided tremendous insights on the challenges of evaluating impact through monitoring and evaluation practices.

Salmaan Keshavjee, Chair of the [WHO Green Light Committee Initiative](#) and a moderator of the [Drug Resistant TB community on GHDonline](#), discussed managing multilateral partnerships, while Paul Zintl, Chief Operating Officer at [Partners In Health](#), and also a moderator of the GHDonline DR TB community, addressed program design and management issues.



Paul Zintl addressing students' questions during the "Principles of Management in Global Health" seminar on July 23, 2009

Outside of the classroom, students used a private community hosted on GHDonline.org, the platform of communities developed by GHD for global health implementers, to expand upon in-class discussions, and communicate with faculty, staff and guest lecturers. In one such GHDonline discussion, students described their most arduous challenges in the field, from human resources shortages to integrating “vertical” disease programs into comprehensive primary care models, sharing how they had addressed similar issues. And as members of GHDonline, students are able to contribute to the global dialogue happening in the public communities. “With the GHE course and GHDonline, the opportunity starts now! If three years down the road I start an initiative in Pakistan in which I want a wider community of people who understand global health to join in, it would just make sense for me to go on GHDonline.,” notes [Lubna Samad, M.D., Pediatric Surgeon at the Indus Hospital in Karachi, Pakistan.](#)

The GHE program concluded on July 24th with a graduation luncheon in the Atrium of the François-Xavier Bagnoud building at the School of Public Health. The event was attended by many guests among the Harvard and Brigham communities, showing their support of the program and its students. Dean David E. Golan, Harvard Medical School, gave uplifting remarks as the luncheon began.



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Dr. Gary Gottlieb, President of Brigham and Women's/Faulkner Hospitals, further encouraged students to continue their work and engage in more collaboration in the future. Dean James Ware, Harvard School of Public Health, awarded students with certificates, giving each of them kind words of encouragements and congratulations.



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“I don’t know how best to describe the value of this course and how great an opportunity this is. We just have to keep the ball rolling!” concluded student [Mary Mwanyika, M.D., Clinical Activities and Training Coordinator at the MDH program, a collaborative between Muhimbili University, the Dar es Salaam City Council, and Harvard School of Public Health, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania,](#) in moving remarks. The Global Health Effectiveness Program is scheduled to be offered in the summer of 2010 in an expanded form.



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The first graduating class of the Global Health Effectiveness program striking the pose with faculty, coordinators and guests at the GHE graduation luncheon on July 24, 2009.

Becky Peters, Christina Bethke, and Sophie Beauvais contributed to this article.