

INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS FOR APPLIED EPIDEMIOLOGY AND GLOBAL HEALTH LEADERSHIP

WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH ISSUE?

Every day around the world, foreign ministries of health are making life and death decisions regarding health emergencies, disasters, disease outbreaks, and emerging health problems. The lack of informed decision-making has caused numerous inefficiencies in the management, evaluation, and delivery of health services that ultimately results in a lower quality of life for many of the world's citizens. To address complex public health issues quickly and efficiently, there must be central and frontline staff who are trained in both leadership skills and applied epidemiology (the use of quantitative methods to define, solve, and evaluate public health problems). Unlike the public health workforce in the United States, however, the majority of international public health staff rarely has access to public health training. Making programs that provide training in leadership and applied epidemiology available internationally is essential to building public health systems and improving global health.

WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

Over the last 20 years, CDC has collaborated with international partners to build 27 long-term applied public health training programs outside of the United States. These Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) are modeled after CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service. The 2-year training and service programs are intended to build national and regional capacity in applied epidemiology and to enhance public health practice. During their training and service assignments, participants conduct epidemiologic investigations and field surveys to strengthen their skills in conducting public health surveillance; evaluate disease control and prevention measures; and train other health workers.

- Seven programs are under development in Brazil, China, India, Jordan, and Central Asia.
- About 1,200 persons have graduated to date, and 600 are in training.
- Over 95% of the graduates still work in public health, managing surveillance and public health intervention programs.

To support the strengthening of health services, CDC has also implemented training for sub-national health staff and decision-makers. Major areas of emphasis are communication, management, and evidence-based public health. These programs enhance local level capacity to prevent and control health problems.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

In the past year, China and India, which together represent almost half of the world's population, have formally requested CDC's assistance in developing FETPs. In addition, CDC intends to continue providing assistance through TEPHINET, a network of International Training Programs. CDC will also continue to develop training programs and materials to support the strengthening of international health services.