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HERE ARE SIX  
EXAMPLES.



# Building Capacity Overseas

## Faculty Lend Expertise to Public Health Efforts Abroad

As each day brings new evidence

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—Dr. Linda Rosenstock

that we are living in a global community, the school is strengthening its commitment to improving the health of people outside the United States — particularly in developing countries, where the needs are most urgent.

“In addition to helping to fulfill our important research and teaching mission, a significant number of faculty — and many students as well — are working internationally with government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and academic institutions to help build the public health capacity of these entities,” says Dr. Linda Rosenstock, dean of the UCLA School of Public Health. “At a time of enormous challenges in global health, we have an obligation to continue to support these efforts.”

Following are six among the many examples in which the school’s faculty and students are providing service that is contributing to a healthier global community.

As part of a program established by the Anderson School of Management at UCLA, two UCLA School of Public Health faculty participated in a training effort to build management capacity for HIV/AIDS providers in developing countries of Africa.



**In East Africa**, two UCLA School of Public Health associate professors of health services recently took part in a Johnson and Johnson-funded pilot program for a worldwide training effort to build management capacity for HIV/AIDS providers in developing countries. **Drs. Fred Hagigi and Jeff Luck** helped to develop the curriculum and teach modules in financial management and health management information systems, respectively.

The program was established by Senior Associate Dean Victor Tabbush of the Anderson School of Management at UCLA, based on the premise that limited management capacity is often the impediment to successful delivery of HIV/AIDS services. Conducted in cooperation with the African Medical and Research Foundation, a leader in African community health care, the pilot program drew participants from Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, and Ghana, coming from the ranks of management at community-based organizations involved in the care, treatment and support of HIV/AIDS patients.

Low-cost generic antiretroviral medication has opened new possibilities for treating HIV and AIDS in developing countries, Luck notes. Non-governmental organizations, funded by international donors and governments, are attempting to rapidly scale up their treatment programs. "To do that effectively requires a multidisciplinary clinical team, strong community involvement and a well-organized management structure," Luck says, "so it is especially important to have strong management capacity."

One of the main goals, adds Hagigi, is to ensure the sustainability of the teaching efforts. "We used North American instructors for the pilot program, but we wanted African faculty to be able to continue the program and teach future generations," he says. To that end, each Western faculty member was paired with a faculty member from an African university who participated in teaching the sessions and will carry the program forward beginning this fall.



**Dr. Paul Torrens (r.)**, in Shanghai, China with one of several visiting scholars who came to the UCLA School of Public Health as part of a program to train Chinese hospital administrators in management concepts.

**In China** and Los Angeles, **Dr. Paul Torrens**, professor of health services, worked with the Chinese Ministry of Health to organize and conduct 12 hospital management training workshops for nearly 1,000 Chinese hospital administrators between 1999 and 2004. Four were held in China – in Shanghai, Nanjing, Beijing, and Zhuhai – and eight were in Los Angeles. The workshops were carried out with the cooperation and participation of many Los Angeles-area hospital administrators, who taught in the seminars and made their hospitals available for site visits. Most of the administrators were UCLA School of Public Health alumni, including Kenny Deng (M.P.H. '96), a Beijing University Medical School graduate now working for Blue Cross in California. Deng served as the link with the Ministry of Health and hospitals in China.

As a result of the effort, a new journal of hospital administration was established in China and continues to be published regularly, with Torrens serving as the honorary editor. In addition, seven postdoctoral scholars have spent between six months and one year at the school, sponsored either by their government, their university, or the World Health Organization.



**Dr. Ralph Frerichs (seated) with attendees of his workshop on rapid surveys at the Hanoi School of Public Health.**

**In Vietnam, Dr. Ralph Frerichs**, professor of epidemiology, provided assistance to the Hanoi School of Public Health by conducting a five-day workshop on rapid surveys for faculty, staff and associates last August. Rapid surveys are small, two-stage cluster surveys of about 300 people that usually take less than a month to complete. The methodology – combining sample survey methods with computer software programs used in portable, battery-powered microcomputers – enables decision-makers in developing countries to obtain quick answers to questions about the health status and activities of people in the community.

The Hanoi School of Public Health faculty intend to expand their curriculum in this area, Frerichs says. Since the workshop, they have translated the slides Frerichs presented into Vietnamese and are incorporating them into a course at the school on rapid surveys. Other participants were there to learn the approach and apply it in field studies in northern Vietnam.

The workshop was based on EPI 418: Rapid Surveys in Developing Countries, a course Frerichs teaches at UCLA. “Over the years, I have had many students from Vietnam take EPI 418, most being supported by the school’s Fogarty International AIDS Training Program,” Frerichs says. “These two groups – the Fogarty graduates and faculty at the Hanoi School of Public Health – help ensure that small community-based surveys will increasingly be done in Vietnam.”

**In Delhi, India, Dr. Roshan Bastani**

represented the UCLA School of Public Health in a successful collaborative effort to address India’s severe shortage of public health professionals. In March, Prime Minister Manmohan Singh announced the launch of the Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI), which will address this shortage through capacity-building in public health education, training and research. Through the Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH), Bastani and other public health school representatives have spent the last two years providing input for this effort, working with various stakeholders in India and the international community, including state and central government health authorities, academicians from renowned Indian and international public health institutions, and public health agencies such as the WHO and World Bank.

“The primary purposes of PHFI are to act as a think tank on policy issues related to the health system, to establish standards in public health education, and most importantly, to create a network of innovative, world-class, India-relevant institutes of public health in India,” explains Bastani, professor of health services, associate dean for research at the school and co-director of the school’s Center to Eliminate Health Disparities. “This is a first-of-its-kind autonomous public-private partnership in this sphere in India.”

The effort, which is to include the establishment of five new schools of public health as well as the strengthening of existing schools, has received substantial support in India and in the global community, Bastani says. The Indian government has set aside part of the seed capital for the initiative, and the Gates Foundation has committed \$15 million. Other funds have been secured from several Indian corporations and private donors. ASPH will continue to remain an active partner and offer technical assistance. A number of UCLA faculty have expressed interest in becoming involved through curriculum development, short-term teaching assignments and long-term sabbaticals.



**In the Middle East, Dr. Osman Galal**, professor of community health sciences at the school and secretary general of the International Union of Nutritional Sciences, has worked to develop human and institutional capacities in nutrition. Galal helped to establish the Middle East and North African Nutrition Association as part of a global health initiative spearheaded by the United Nations University and International Nutrition Foundation. The initiative, which aims to develop and enhance national and institutional nutrition leadership capacities, had not included the Middle East region prior to 2003. Galal convened a task force, housed at the Egyptian National Nutrition Institute, that has provided technical support to national institutions and helped to build nutrition capacity through the pooling of resources.

“We wanted to create a political, social and economic environment in the region that is conducive to effective participation of nutrition and public health organizations in strengthening the capacity to prevent malnutrition and diet-related chronic diseases,” Galal explains.

The first regional workshop was held in July 2004 in Cairo, with representatives of 13 countries attending. Among other things, the group resolved to establish a regional Nutrition Capacity Building website that will include a database of simple nutrition status indicators to monitor regional nutrition status; conduct short-term regional training courses; and prepare a 10-year plan of action in the areas of nutrition research, training, education and advocacy. Already, the initiative has resulted in development of a nutritional status monitoring system in the Middle East and establishment of an iron and vitamin fortification program in Libya.

**In Kinshasa**, the capital of and largest city of the **Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)**, **Dr. Anne Rimoin** works closely with the Congolese Ministry of Health as she heads the first study to examine the dramatic changes in the epidemiology of monkeypox and viral hemorrhagic fevers in the last 20 years. Rimoin, assistant professor of epidemiology, runs disease surveillance for these infectious diseases for an entire district of the DRC. Her project is housed at the National Laboratory, where her co-principal investigator is the director, Dr. Jean Jacques Muyembe, considered the world’s leading expert on the ebola virus. Rimoin’s field director is the national director for monkeypox and viral hemorrhagic fevers, and her group supports all disease surveillance activities in the region.

“Our focus is on monkeypox and viral hemorrhagic fevers, but we do trainings with the Ministry of Health that include all diseases of epidemic potential,” Rimoin explains. “Our surveillance project is, in essence, a pilot program for the rest of the country. Our forms, educational materials, and operations manuals will be adopted by the rest of the country as part of the national program.”

Like the other faculty featured in this article and many others at the UCLA School of Public Health, Rimoin is dedicated to ensuring that her contributions will have a lasting impact. Her group is working to expand the DRC’s laboratory capability and train as many Congolese scientists and lab technicians as possible. “My goal is sustainable research,” Rimoin says. “I’m interested in developing research and public health infrastructure in the country. I am very committed to the DRC and intend to have a long relationship with my Congolese collaborators.”

**Above left: Representatives of 13 countries attended a task force meeting in Cairo, Egypt, to establish the Middle East and North African Nutrition Association, an effort spearheaded by Dr. Osman Galal.**

**Below: Dr. Anne Rimoin works closely with the Congolese Ministry of Health in building capacity to fight monkeypox, viral hemorrhagic fevers, and other diseases of epidemic potential.**

