

IFPW Foundation Delivers STEP-Kenya Leadership Development Program

(Source: An Article by Bruce Bennett)

The IFPW Foundation, in partnership with key stakeholders including the Global Fund, successfully delivered the Strategic Training Executive Program (STEP) to 24 healthcare professionals during the first week of June. This intensive workshop focused on leadership and change management skills specifically tailored for Kenya's healthcare supply chain environment. Namrata Singh, Bruce Bennett and Daljit Singh played an important role as course facilitators, along with corporate partners Pfizer, Merck, Sanofi, IQVIA, and Red Lightning. Generous financial support from People that Deliver and operational support from the Empower School of Health were also vital to the STEP course's success.



The program brought together diverse healthcare leaders from across Kenya, including representatives from the Kenya Ministry of Health, the Kenya Medical Supply Authority and healthcare facilities from various counties. Participants represented multiple disciplines—operations, logistics, clinical care, compliance, and finance—united by their commitment to strengthening Kenya's public health supply chain and improving patient care delivery.

The workshop was held in the scenic Lake Naivasha area outside Nairobi, providing an ideal environment for intensive learning and collaboration.

The training employed a "facilitated learning" methodology, emphasizing active engagement and real-world application. Participants were encouraged to ground theoretical concepts in their actual work environments through interactive group discussions, real-life case studies and table-based collaborative exercises led by the course facilitators.

A unique feature of the program was the integration of private sector coaches at each table group. These experienced professionals provided practical insights on navigating organizational challenges through proven leadership and change management principles.

At the program's core is the "Transformation Challenge" which includes a personalized improvement project that each participant develops and commits to implementing within their organization. This initiative ensures direct application of learned concepts, sustained engagement post-workshop, ongoing support from private sector coaches, and measurable impact on healthcare delivery.

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Around the Globe...

- ◆ South Africa's pharmaceutical industry is increasingly targeted by illicit traders looking to undercut legitimate sellers and producers and sell potentially harmful products, according to **Transnational Alliance to Combat Illicit Trade (TRACIT)** in its *2025 Illicit Trade Index*. The organization said countries struggle to combat illicit trade of fake medicines because they tend to give it low priority compared to other crimes. The global illicit trade in pharmaceuticals is estimated to be worth US\$200 billion (R3.6 trillion) per year, which can make up around 10% of all medical sales in some countries.

- ◆ The **European Union, Gates Foundation with Global Citizens** as a key partner, and **Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance** hosted "The Health and Prosperity Summit Through Immunization" in Brussels, Belgium. The event focused on securing the US\$9 billion needed to immunize 500 million more children and prevent 8-9 million deaths over the next five years. Separately, the Trump Administration recently announced its intention for the U.S. to withdraw its support for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance. This is a significant setback for global public health and poses a serious risk to children both here in the U.S. and worldwide. Vaccines distributed by Gavi have effectively prevented the spread of various infectious diseases, including measles and polio. Since its establishment in 2000, Gavi has provided life-saving vaccines to over one billion children in low-income countries across the world.

- ◆ Bacterial breath tests could soon become a new tool in the arsenal against antimicrobial resistance, by enabling doctors to

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Highlights From This Year's World Health Assembly

(Source: A Press Release by the World Health Organization)

The World Health Assembly 2025 marked both milestones in global health and significant progress for the WHO Foundation's mission. *The Pandemic Agreement* was adopted by member states – the result of more than three years of hard negotiations and a testament to the power of collective action to enhance global preparedness for future infectious disease outbreaks. The accord aims to improve the response to future pandemics. It emphasizes the principles of equity, solidarity, transparency, and accountability, and mandates the sharing of genetic data on potential pandemic pathogens and ensuring equitable access to vaccines and treatments.

Member states committed to a 20 percent uplift in their contribution to WHO's 2026-2027 budget, a valuable affirmation at a time when WHO faces a funding shortfall as a result of the US withdrawal, USAID cuts and reductions in contributions from other member states. Above all, the WHA confirmed that:

WHO is not retreating—it's evolving. Strategic adjustments and organizational restructuring are designed to strengthen delivery, not diminish it.

All core programs - emergency preparedness, disease control, health systems strengthening, digital health, NCDs, climate and health - remain fully supported and prioritized.

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STEP (cont.)...



Special recognition goes to Namrata Singh and the Empower School of Health team for their exceptional operational and logistical support. Their dedication and expertise were instrumental in creating an environment conducive to meaningful learning and professional development.

As the Kenya cohort moves into the implementation phase of their Transformation Challenges, there is significant anticipation for demonstrating the program's effectiveness. The participants are well-positioned to drive meaningful improvements throughout Kenya's healthcare supply chain, ultimately benefiting patient care across the country.

World Health Assembly (cont.)...

The WHO's global mandate and reach, coupled with its ability to convene and coordinate, continues to offer unmatched value to governments and partners alike.

The WHO Foundation affirmed that it remains steadfast in its belief that not only collective action, but cross-sector collaboration is essential to address the most pressing health challenges of our time.

The Foundation convened, co-hosted and participated in strategic events on topics as diverse as childhood obesity and oral health to the role of the insurance sector in protecting people's health in extreme weather.

Key moments included:

The Triple Win Event organized by Boehringer Ingelheim and the NCD Alliance which focussed on integrating lived experiences into health systems and policies, co-creating value for patients, governments, and providers.

Global Coalition on Oral Health Workshop furthered the call to action to advance universal health coverage for oral health by 2030 and mobilized non-state actors around the global oral health agenda.

Childhood-Onset NCDs spotlighting the growing public health challenge of diabetes and obesity..

Digital Innovation Investment Platform demonstrating strategic cross-sector investments can accelerate digital health at scale.

The Role of Insurance in Climate and Health with Prudence Foundation with an examination of the role of the insurance industry in strengthening community health resilience to climate shocks and climate-sensitive diseases.

Digital Wellbeing - two powerful sessions co-hosted with Sync/Ithra and TikTok, examined mental health in the digital era, data ethics, and empowering youth-led health innovation in health.

Across these sessions, one theme stood out: the future of global health will be built not just in ministries or boardrooms, but through meaningful partnerships and local innovation.

This WHA was marked by major funding announcements that underscore how philanthropy and business can unlock systems-level

change.

The ELMA Foundation pledged US\$2 million—to be matched for a total of \$4 million—to scale the GMRLN rubella and measles laboratory network. This investment will accelerate regional disease detection and outbreak response.

Laerdal Global Health announced a US\$12.5 million commitment to support acute emergency response and health systems resilience, especially critical in the face of climate-related health crises and is aiming to raise an additional US\$12.5 million to scale the impact of this important work.

Beyond side events and pledges, the WHA delivered on several historic policy decisions that matter deeply to our partners and supporters. These included but are not limited to:

The draft Political declaration of the fourth high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the prevention and control of noncommunicable diseases and the promotion of mental health and well-being was released on May 13, 2025. This draft forms the core framework for the new, ambitious political declaration on NCDs and mental health conditions that heads of state are set to adopt at the UN General Assembly in September 2025.

Also, member States unanimously adopted a resolution declaring skin diseases a global public health priority. Recognizing their significant burden, visibility, and potential for stigma, the resolution addresses critical gaps in awareness and surveillance.

The Commission on Social Connection: Addressing Loneliness as a Public Health Priority: WHA agreed the first ever resolution on integrating social connection into national and international health efforts. It has been recognized that addressing social factors like loneliness and isolation plays a crucial role in reducing the risk of non-communicable diseases such as strokes and dementia, not just in the context of mental health.

From financial pledges to digital innovation and inclusive governance, this year's WHA was a clear turning point in how the world approaches health equity, resilience, and innovation.

Around the Globe (cont.)...

streamline infection diagnosis and identify the most appropriate treatment without the need for lengthy lab procedures. That idea comes from an international team of engineers, microbiologists, and machine learning specialists writing in a recent issue of *Cell Biomaterials*. The researchers say that detecting signature volatile compounds emitted by microbes will enable doctors to make faster and more informed diagnoses and reduce the overuse of broad-spectrum antibiotics for common illnesses such as urinary tract infections.

- ◆ On *World Health Day 2025*, the **United Nations Network on Migration (UNNM)**, with the **World Health Organization (WHO)** as a member of its Executive Committee, reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that every pregnant migrant woman, mother and newborn has access to essential health care, regardless of migration status. This priority aligns with the WHO global action plan on promoting the health of refugees and migrants and is upheld in the *Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration*. In its newly released statement, UNNM, together with WHO and its partner organizations, issues a call to action to urgently remove barriers that prevent migrant women and newborns from accessing essential prenatal and postnatal care.

(Sources: Various Press Releases)