Applied Monitoring and Evaluation Postgraduate Course Launched in Tanzania

Background

Capacity building for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is the foundation of MEASURE Evaluation–Tanzania's work—funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)—and is systematically woven into the project's workplans, benchmarks, and deliverables. The project creates products to support systems at the national and subnational levels of government for health areas related to HIV and malaria. M&E systems for measuring the effectiveness of this work and the required human skills to conduct M&E are, therefore, critical.

MEASURE Evaluation–Tanzania (MEval-TZ) assists the government to develop and implement M&E plans, guidelines, programming in the DHIS 2 health data platform, supervision, data quality, and data review—all through the lens of capacity building.

Beyond capacity building for specific M&E activities, professionals in the field expressed a need for more systematic access to learning opportunities and platforms to share knowledge and experiences. Training in M&E was limited, even though the emphasis on data-informed decision making continues to grow and the introduction of electronic data collection and real-time data reporting creates a market for those with master's level training.

In response, MEval-TZ partnered with Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS), and the Global Evaluation and Monitoring Network for Health (GEMNet-Health), coordinated by the parent project, MEASURE Evaluation, to support faculty in the development of a two-year degree program: Project Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation in Health (PMMEH).

The PMMEH course aims to create competent professionals with the skills to manage and evaluate the benefits or deficits of healthcare interventions. The course provides graduates with skills to assist organizations to integrate management and M&E concepts, approaches, and methods into their programs and projects for more effective interventions.

Building Synergies

In 2016, MEval-TZ signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with MUHAS to support the development of the PMMEH master's degree program. MEval-TZ took responsibility to support the development and launch of the

program through training and developing competencies among faculty and developing course content and learning resources.

In April 2016, a two-week training for MUHAS faculty in M&E fundamentals was co-led by a GEMNet consultant from the University of Pretoria and MEval-TZ's chief of party. MUHAS faculty then developed the curriculum and submitted it to the Tanzania Universities Commission for approval. While the proposed course wound its way through the system, MEval-TZ supported MUHAS faculty for further training in a GEMNet course on the use of qualitative methods for impact evaluation.

The course was approved in July 2017, and the first group of students arrived in September. More than 130 applications were received, indicating the demand for the course.

In October 2017, a team from MEASURE Evaluation headquarters and GEMNet held a two-day meeting with faculty to assess the key M&E competencies and content to be included in the new course. A one-week training of trainers was then organized in February 2018 to provide further training to faculty as they launched the course.

The connections that MUHAS has established with GEMNet members through MEval-TZ are expected to provide access to essential resources, peer networking for continued learning, and opportunities for knowledge exchange among students.

More about GEMNet-Health

GEMNet-Health (GEMNet) was established in 2012 to foster organizational growth, collaboration, and peer-to-peer support for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of health programs globally. It is a consortium of institutions with strong experience in capacity building, curriculum development, international workshops, and training of trainers.

In competency and curriculum development, GEMNet has developed core competencies for M&E training programs and postgraduate-level evaluation courses; curricula on M&E of health programs, impact evaluation, and qualitative evaluation; and a postgraduate-level module on evaluation theory. As a network with a diverse set of skills and experiences—and with members located across the world—GEMNet is well placed to be a global resource for consultancy services to build capacity in the field of M&E, including work with health information systems, data dissemination and use, health informatics, and many specialized evaluation topics.

Through the graduate program at MUHAS, the university already is linked with two GEMNet members—Pretoria University and the University of Ghana—and now is poised to become an active member of the network.

The nine member institutions of GEMNet-Health are:

- Addis Ababa University
- Addis Continental Institute of Public Health
- Centre Africain d'Etudes Supérieures en Gestion
- Instituto Nacional de Salud Publica - English Version
- Kenyatta University, School of Public Health
- Mahidol University, Institute of Population and Social Research
- Public Health Foundation of India
- University of Ghana, School of Public Health
- University of Pretoria, School of Health Systems and Public Health

MEASURE Evaluation, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), serves as the secretariat for GEMNet-Health.