

DPHSWD in Tanzania



Accomplishments in Tanzania

- In 2010, the T-FELTP staff and residents participated in the country assessment of the revised International Health Regulations (IHR) core capabilities, and played a key role in the development of the assessment report.
- 83% of T-FELTP graduates have remained in the MOH at the central and regional levels, one of whom is the focal point for IDSR in Zanzibar.
- Two graduates have joined the T-FELTP as coordinators for short-courses and Non-Communicable Disease.
- In March 2012, the rural villages of Mango and Kitandu in the Kilimanjaro region experienced 14 cases and 1 death from suspected Anthrax. T-FELTP established control measures by closing the implicated butchery, supervising burials, and delivering health education messages which resulted in decreased cases within one week.
- 10 oral presentations and 10 posters from T-FELTP residents were accepted at the 4th AFENET Scientific Conference held in Dar es Salaam, Nov 2011.
- A T-FELTP resident won the award of Best Overall Oral Presentation at AFENET for "Suitability of Visual Inspection with Acetic Acid and Visual Inspection with Lugol's iodine as Methods for Choice in screening for Cervical Cancer in low-income countries", 2011.
- T-FELTP is working with the Ministry of Livestock Development on the introduction of special seminars for zoonotic diseases.

Overview and Goals

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), through its Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development (DPHSWD), launched the Tanzania Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program (T-FELTP) in 2008. The program builds public health workforce capacity and strengthens public health systems and institutions. This hands-on approach builds capacity while providing epidemiologic and laboratory services to national, regional, and district health authorities throughout Tanzania.

The goal of T-FELTP is to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare (MOHSW) to collect and utilize disease data, and manage national programs by expanding and strengthening surveillance programs and improving laboratory management. The Government of Tanzania (GoT) is committed to strengthening its response to communicable and non-communicable diseases through building the capacity of its health workers in areas of surveillance, epidemiology, and improving diagnosis through training in epidemiology and laboratory management.

Program Description

Building Workforce Capacity

DPHSWD supports the T-FELTP by assigning experienced Resident Advisors in-country to ensure quality training outcomes and to provide technical assistance to residents in training and to key stakeholders involved in the program, including field site coordinators and program staff. Residents of the program are medical doctors, public health practitioners, and laboratorians with a minimum of two years of work experience. T-FELTP emphasizes public service and providing tangible results to the MOHSW. Residents pursue a Master of Science (MSc) awarded through Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS). The two-year MSc program offers two tracks: one in Applied Epidemiology and one in Epidemiology and Laboratory Management. The field epidemiology component focuses on disease surveillance, outbreak response, and evaluation through programs in applied epidemiology. The laboratory management component is based on CDC's Emerging Infections program which is a one-year applied laboratory training program.

Strengthening Public Health Systems

Residents of the T-FELTP program carry out surveillance system evaluations, respond to outbreaks, and train health care workers, thereby strengthening the health system to respond to emergencies. The program's focus on field training further strengthens regional and district levels of the health system by directly training health care workers. T-FELTP also offers short courses for health workers (clinicians, health officers/assistants and laboratory technicians) who are not covered by the graduate course, to equip them with essential skills in epidemiology, disease surveillance, and outbreak management. By building workforce capacity at multiple levels the public health response to priority diseases, especially HIV/AIDS, is strengthened.



Dr. Rogath Saika Kishimba, Tanzania FELTP resident, drawing blood samples from a suspected measles case in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region of Tanzania, 2012.



Violasia Mushi, Tanzania FELTP resident, interviewing the cholera index case, Lukuledi B Masasi District in Mtwara Region, 2012.



Dr. Rogath Saika Kishimba, Tanzania FELTP resident, interviewing mother of a measles case in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region of Tanzania, 2012.

Strengthening Public Health Infrastructure and Institutions

Since T-FELTP began in 2008, 18 public health leaders have graduated and 15 of those graduates are currently employed in the MOHSW at the national, regional and district levels of service, on both the mainland of Tanzania and in Zanzibar. Led by the MOHSW, T-FELTP provides unique opportunities for strengthening the capacity of central and lower levels of government in epidemiology and laboratory management. The program also works closely with the national university (MUHAS) in strengthening training curricula related to epidemiology and laboratory management. The field placement component of the program provides additional support and capacity building for selected Regional Health Management Teams and national placements at institutions such as the National Malaria Control Program (NMCP) and the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) providing additional capacity to these institutions.

Future Plans

Tanzania's FELTP priorities over the next few years are to:

- Increase the number of residents enrolled to at least 15 per year.
- Strengthen at least 10 regional field sites for field placement of residents.
- Build an effective mentorship and supervisory network that supports capacity development in the field.
- Conduct short courses for frontline health workers.
- Ensure that laboratory personnel have expertise in epidemiology.
- Strengthen the FELTP field experience by establishing stronger linkages to other USG/CDC supported programs.
- Develop an FELTP Alumni Association to mentor and support graduates as they establish their careers.

Key Partners

- African Field Epidemiology Network (AFENET)
- CDC Tanzania
- Ministry of Health and Social Welfare
- Ministry of Livestock Development
- Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences
- National Medical Research Institute
- President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR)
- President's Malaria Initiative
- The World Bank

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