Training the next generation of health leaders: CDC understands that a robust, well-trained public health workforce is essential to protecting America’s health, safety and security—and the health of the world—now and in the future.

Developing disease fighters

The issue: The United States is experiencing a public health workforce crisis, with some estimates indicating that 250,000 more public health workers will be needed by 2020 to maintain public health capacity. On the global front, today we face a severe worldwide shortage of skilled disease detectives trained to find and stop health threats in a world where the next outbreak is only a plane ride away.

Why it matters: A robust, well-trained public health workforce is essential to protecting America’s health, safety and security—and the health of the world—now and in the future. Boots on the ground across the globe are key to detecting, responding and protecting us all from dangerous outbreaks.

Solution and impact: The CDC Foundation advances a number of training and development efforts of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including:

- Workforce and training initiatives led by CDC’s Center for Surveillance, Epidemiology and Laboratory Services (CSELS), such as fellowships and learning opportunities.
- The CDC Foundation manages the Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS) Alumni Association, as well EIS-related funds and endowments. The EIS is a unique two-year post-graduate fellowship for future disease detectives who detect and respond to disease threats at home and abroad.
- The Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP), modeled after EIS, trains a global workforce of disease detectives in over 70 countries.
- Improving Public Health Management for Action (IMPACT) is a two-year training program owned and managed by ministries of health. Building on the success of EIS and FETP, IMPACT aims to create a cadre of in-country public health professionals trained to strengthen health program management.
- The Tom Frieden Future Leaders Fund supports three CDC-led early-career training programs: EIS, the Public Health Associate Program and the recently-established Laboratory Leadership Service fellowship program.

250,000 additional U.S. public health workers are needed by 2020 to maintain health capacity. Countries worldwide also face a severe shortage of skilled disease detectives.

How you can help: Developing disease fighters is crucial to the health and safety of America and the world. Join with the CDC Foundation to cultivate and nurture the next generation of public health leaders who will protect us all.

Learn more: Contact Advancement at the CDC Foundation: advancement@cdcfoundation.org, 404.653.0790.

About us: The CDC Foundation is an independent, nonprofit organization and the sole entity created by Congress to mobilize philanthropic resources to support CDC’s critical health protection work. Since 1995, we have launched nearly 1,000 programs in more than 130 countries and raised over $800 million through engagements with philanthropies, corporations, organizations, governments and individuals.
Without strong public health management and efficient organizational performance, many important global health initiatives in low-resource countries fall short of their intended goals. How can this challenge be addressed?

One approach is to provide a high-quality, accelerated training experience for public health managers in developing countries. To meet this goal, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed an initiative called Improving Public Health Management for Action (IMPACT), which works with ministries of health to strengthen public health management by developing skilled public health advisors.

IMPACT received initial support through a one-year planning grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to CDC through the CDC Foundation. The program is led by the Division of Global Health Protection in CDC’s Center for Global Health.

In each country, the program is owned and managed by ministries of health and will target training to develop program- and operations-level managers for their public health system. Participants are selected competitively for the competency-based training and service program, with structured mentorship and supervision to help them advance the future of health in their countries.

The program builds on the successes of CDC’s Epidemic Intelligence Service, Field Epidemiology Training Program, Sustainable Management Development Program and Public Health Associate Program.

Launched in Bangladesh and Kenya in 2016, plans call for the program to expand to additional countries in the future.

Kenya’s two-tier program features a five-month Distinguished Fellows course for senior-level managers, and a two-year Master of Public Health Program for early professionals. Kenya’s first cohort of 12 Distinguished Fellows graduated from IMPACT in October 2016; 78 percent of the fellows reported using their new management skills prior to graduation. Five of the graduates are now mentoring and supervising the master’s program, which began in 2017.

In Bangladesh, where IMPACT launched in spring 2016, six top-performing doctors from the Ministry of Health have been strategically placed in field assignments outside of the national Ministry of Health Offices to build capacity in Areas beyond the capital city.

“In 60 years, IMPACT will be the same kind of signature program as the Epidemic Intelligence Service.”

—Dr. William Foege

“In 60 years, IMPACT will be the same kind of signature program as the Epidemic Intelligence Service and will address one of the major gaps in global health today—the gap between tools available and delivery of those tools,” said Dr. William Foege, former CDC director and senior fellow at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

“I am grateful for this program. It is a great opportunity to increase our knowledge and experience and to help our country too,” noted a Bangladesh fellow.

Learn more: Contact Advancement at the CDC Foundation: advancement@cdcfoundation.org, 404.653.0790.