

# COLLABORATIVE PREVENTION RESEARCH AND TRAINING FOR SCIENTISTS FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: A 12-YEAR OVERVIEW OF THE CENTER FOR AIDS PREVENTION STUDIES' INTERNATIONAL TRAINING PROGRAM

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## ABSTRACT

**Issues:** Training of developing country scientists in U.S. academic institutions has traditionally been through formal instruction leading to advanced degrees or postdoctoral fellowships. We describe an alternative training model, which we have successfully offered for 12 years, that emphasizes short-course training in the U.S. and practical on-the-ground mentoring in scientists' home countries.

**Description:** We sponsor three types of training: (1) a short-course in designing and conducting prevention research, (2) a writing sabbatical program and (3) opportunities for formal graduate study. Each summer 8 to 10 visiting scientists from developing countries come to a 10-week intensive training program in San Francisco, USA. The product of this course is a study protocol. Visiting scientists subsequently receive funds to conduct pilot studies with technical assistance from a CAPS faculty mentor. Those who complete their projects and wish to conduct further research can receive an "Innovative Interventions" grant, which can fund a larger scale prevention intervention study. Every 2 to 3 years, we invite back alumni who have completed data collection for a writing sabbatical, in which we provide the statistical support and faculty consultation needed to complete a manuscript. We also serve as a "portal of entry" for the Fogarty Center-funded AIDS International Research and Training Program at Berkeley for advanced study leading to MPH and doctoral degrees in epidemiology. We have trained 91 scholars from 32 countries, completed 65 pilot and 15 innovative intervention projects. Our alumni have obtained independent funding for 19 follow-up studies and published 117 papers and 354 abstracts.

**Conclusions:** Our model of collaboration is unique in that we provide short-term training in prevention research, pilot study funding and technical assistance and training in writing scientific manuscripts to selected developing country scientists. Our model encourages visiting scientists to set their own prevention research for their own countries and cultures, rather than imposing an agenda formulated by a U.S. research institution

## DESCRIPTON: SEQUENCE OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

- Short-course in designing and conducting prevention research
- Innovative interventions program
- Writing sabbatical program
- Opportunities for formal graduate study through Fogarty Center's AIDS International Research and Training Program at the School of Public Health, University of California, Berkeley

## DESCRIPTION AND PRODUCTIVITY OF SCHOLARS

- Program has been in continuous operation since 1987
- Trained 90 scholars from 32 countries
- Completed 65 pilot studies
- Funded 15 innovative interventions
- Obtained funding for 19 follow-up studies
- Published 117 papers and 354 abstracts

## INTRODUCTION

- Training of scientists from developing countries in U.S. academic institutions has traditionally been through formal instruction leading to advanced degrees or postdoctoral fellowships
- In-country short courses have also been used to provide short-term instruction in selected aspects of HIV/AIDS
- We have developed an alternative training model, which combines short-course training in the U.S. and faculty-supervised pilot studies in scientists' home countries

## SUMMER SHORT COURSE

- 10-week intensive training program that focuses on developing skills to conduct prevention research in developing countries
- Built around UCSF summer Research Methods course and supplemented by additional didactic coursework
- Scholars come with their own research questions
- 8-10 scholars chosen each summer from developing countries in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, Eastern Europe and Latin America
- Countries of current emphasis are Brazil, China, India, Vietnam and Zimbabwe
- Product of summer short course is a research protocol
- Each scholar is assigned to faculty mentor who assists scholars in development of research protocol
- Scholars return to their home country and implement their research protocol on a pilot basis with technical assistance from faculty mentor
- Studies are co-approved by an institutional review board in scholars' home institutions, their national AIDS control programs and UCSF's Committee on Human Research
- Scholars who complete their projects and wish to conduct further research can apply for an "Innovative Interventions" grant, which can fund a larger scale prevention intervention study

## EXAMPLES OF RECENT SCHOLARS' PROJECTS

Year	Country	Project Title
1999	Georgia	HIV infection & HIV related risk behavioral factors among the Abkhazan refugees in Georgia
1999	Brazil	Evaluation of factors associated with the level of adherence to targeting antiretroviral therapy-naïve patients in a government institution in Salvador, Brazil
1999	Thailand	HIV related risk behaviors during incarceration among intravenous drug users in Bangkok, Thailand
1999	Brazil	Reducing AIDS risk in a cohort of men who have sex with men in São Paulo, Brazil
1999	Zimbabwe	Alcohol use and high risk sexual behavior among adolescents and young adults in Harare, Zimbabwe
1999	Vietnam	HIV risk factors and migration pattern among sex workers along the Cambodian border

## EXAMPLES OF RECENT SCHOLARS' WRITING SABBATICAL PROJECTS

Year	Country	Project Title
1999	Brazil	Seroprevalence and risk factors for HIV infection among incarcerated men in Brazil
1999	Tanzania	HIV-related sexual behavior and its sociodemo-graphic correlates in a community sample in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania
1998	Brazil	Prevalence of HIV infection and syphilis and behavioral risks for HIV infection among Brazilian male sex workers
1998	Vietnam	Visits to female commercial sex workers by male STD clinic attendees in Vietnam
1998	Zimbabwe	HIV counseling and testing in Zimbabwe: experiences in a male factory worker cohort
1998	Trinidad and Tobago	HIV-related risk factors in a population-based probability sample in North and Central Trinidad

## COUNTRIES OF PREVIOUS SCHOLARS

### Asia

Thailand (11)  
 China (4)  
 India (4)  
 Philippines (3)  
 Vietnam (3)  
 Indonesia (2)  
 Cambodia (1)

### Africa

Uganda (7)  
 Nigeria (4)  
 Kenya (2)  
 Zimbabwe (2)  
 Egypt (1)  
 Ethiopia (1)  
 Ghana (1)  
 Rwanda (1)  
 Senegal (1)  
 Zambia (1)

### Latin America and

#### Caribbean

Brazil (16)  
 Dominican Republic (2)  
 Guatemala (2)  
 Chile (1)  
 Costa Rica (1)  
 Ecuador (1)  
 Mexico (1)  
 Peru (1)  
 Puerto Rico (1)  
 Venezuela (1)

#### Eastern Europe

Czech Republic (1)  
 Georgia (1)  
 Russia (1)

## EXAMPLES OF RECENT SCHOLARS' INNOVATIVE INTERVENTIONS

Year	Country	Project Title
1998	China	Behavioral surveillance of STD patients in China
1998	Zimbabwe	Focus group of HIV counseling and testing
1997	Thailand	Risk factors for HIV infection among Burmese migrant workers in Chiang Mai, Thailand
1997	Guatemala	Reducing high-risk sexual behavior among seasonal migrant workers in Mam-speaking rural communities in Guatemala
1997	India	Impact of a comprehensive risk reduction intervention on HIV-related drug and sexual behaviors, attitudes, knowledge, perceived stress and coping, and job placement in children of Nizammudin, New Delhi
1995	China	A community-based AIDS education and prevention program: a prospective study of AIDS prevention strategies among adolescents in Yunnan, China

## RESEARCH PUBLICATIONS

AIDS prevention research in the developing world series:

- AIDS 1995 Jul; 9 (suppl 1):S1-S75.
- AIDS 1997 Sep; 11 (suppl 1):S1-S127.
- AIDS and Behavior 2000 Mar; 4 (1):1-135

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