



International Program in Public Health Leadership Program Evaluation

Summary Report – October 2020

Prepared by Global Impact Advisors for the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance at the University of Washington

Summary of Key Findings and Recommendations

IPPHL has driven personal and professional growth of its participants through a strong core curriculum and a connected community of alumni within cohorts. Evidence also suggests initial positive effects on organizational and health program outcomes. These early gains can be amplified by: (1) providing context-relevant adaptations and improved operational integration across courses, (2) identifying opportunities to address organizational challenges that alumni face, and (3) designing more formal ways to drive alumni engagement.

Evaluation Background and Methods

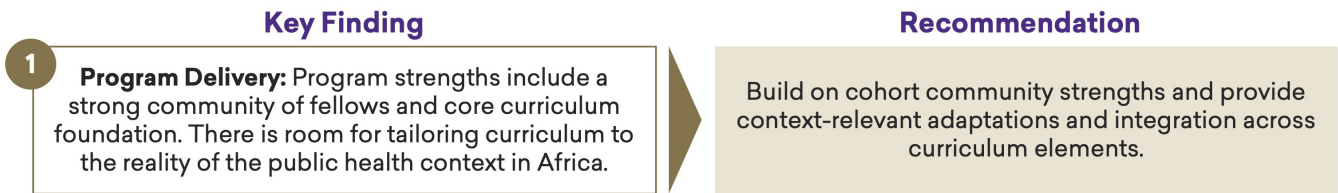
The International Program in Public Health Leadership (IPPHL) is a public health leadership and policy training program that was launched in 2017 with support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as a collaboration between the Evans School of Public Policy and Governance at the University of Washington (UW) and the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL). To date, the program has completed training of 45 public health leaders across three cohorts, representing more than 10 African countries. As the program enters its fourth year, it is an opportunity to assess the program's progress to date, along with successes and opportunities for improvement. The evaluation will inform program adaptations and the strategic direction of the program moving forward.

This evaluation focuses on four key areas: insights on program delivery, the program's impact on participants to date, the alumni network, and a forward-looking view to inform program strategy. The evaluation methodology relied on a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative data including desk reviews, a mixed methods survey and interviews. The survey was completed by 30 out of 45 alumni and interviews were conducted with 13 of those alumni, representing all three

cohorts, eight countries and five program areas. In addition, interviews were conducted with 10 program stakeholders including UW, CCL, and funder representatives. The interviews provided the depth in qualitative context that built on the desk review and survey.

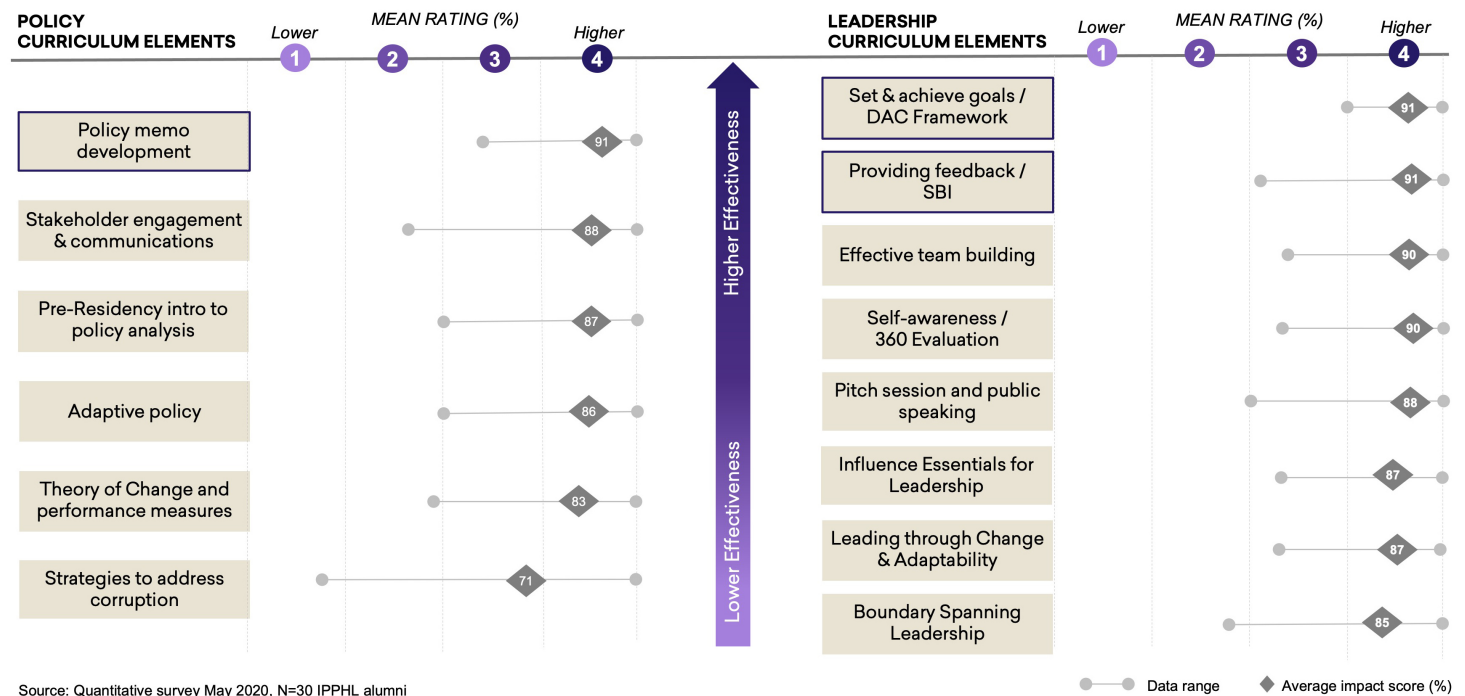
Key Findings and Recommendations – Look Back

In reflecting back on the program’s first three years, the evaluation identified three key findings and recommendations related to program delivery, impact and alumni network.



The assessment of the program delivery and curriculum identified key strengths to be leveraged moving forward including the cohesion among the community of fellows within cohorts and a strong core curriculum foundation and effective teaching methods. Alumni on average **rated very highly nearly all components of the curriculum** in terms of usefulness in contributing to their effectiveness at work, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Curriculum Survey Ratings



The highest rated components across both surveys and interviews from the leadership side were the **Feedback (SBI) learnings**, the **Direction, Alignment and Commitment (DAC) model**, and the **self-assessment** process that fellows found illuminating and helpful in understanding their leadership style and how to be effective. On the policy side, alumni describe the **policy memo** as a useful exercise attributed with improving analytical and writing skills, and in some cases resulting in implementation contributing to health program outcomes. Alumni also identified **stakeholder engagement** as a skill that has supported them in resolving challenges and working across departments that often operate in silos or even compete.

“IPPHL gave me opportunity to learn from other people’s experiences and examine my competencies, skills, weaknesses. I was very good at exploring [other] people’s weaknesses, abilities, especially those under my leadership, but the fellowship helped me to explore myself.” – IPPHL program alum

Opportunities for improvement include **context-relevant adaptations** to some curriculum elements. For example, alumni suggested integrating perspectives from individuals who have applied skills such as combatting corruption in an African context. Additionally, **enhanced operational integration** through coordination and communication across faculty could improve delivery of the curriculum in support of clear learning objectives. The evaluation also identified opportunities for improvement in the **structure and sequencing of wrap-around support areas** including executive coaching and mentoring, to better align with the timing and duration of program elements as well as support in clarity of expectations.

The program should leverage and build on the strengths related to the cohesion of the cohort community and strong foundations of the curriculum, with context-relevant adaptations to better address the challenges that alumni face in applying the skills to their work environment. The program can also improve the structure of wrap-around supports for more effective delivery of mentoring and coaching in support of core curriculum learnings. Opportunities include engagement of alumni as guest speakers or through a curriculum advisory panel and matching alumni to fellows to serve as mentors during and after program completion of the program, increasing cross-cohort connections.

Key Finding

2

Impact: After 3 years, IPPHL has created a program that is highly rated by alumni as creating meaningful impact in their personal and professional growth and contributed to their ability to affect change in their organizations. Some, but more limited evidence was found of indirect outcomes of health programs in which the alumni work.

Recommendation

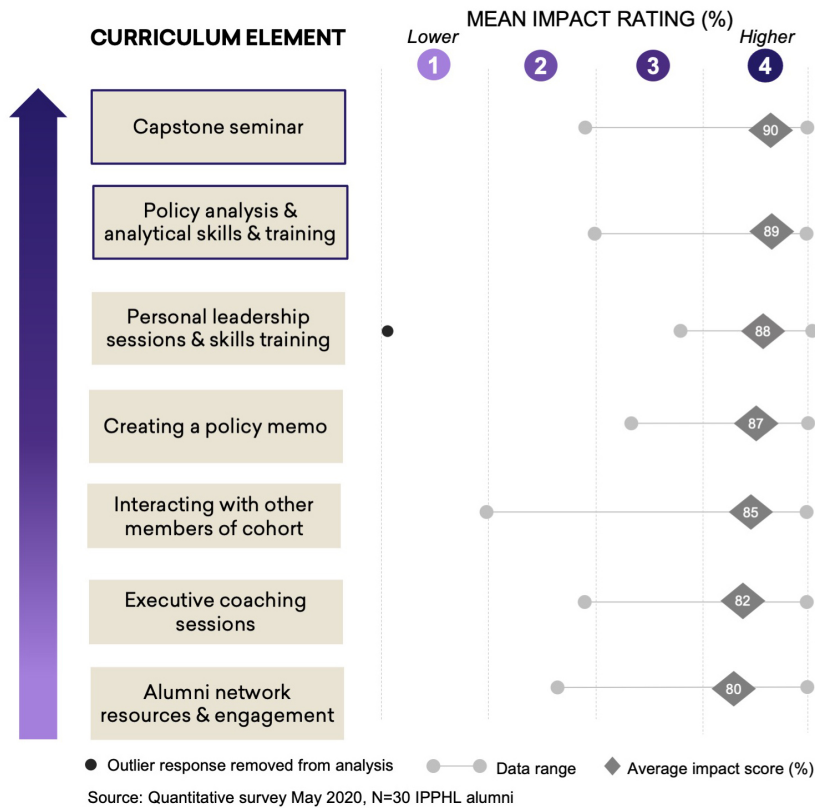
Maintain and continue to strengthen core program focus, while identifying opportunities to support alumni in addressing organizational challenges. Over time improve tracking of contribution to organizational and health program outcomes.

The program’s impact on alumni has many facets. Impact was assessed quantitatively through survey questions, which were complemented by interviews that provided more in-depth insights and examples of impact and outcomes to which the program contributed. The evaluation team categorized these insights and examples into three categories: personal and professional growth, organizational outcomes, and health program outcomes.

Survey responses indicated high ratings on average in terms of how impactful key program elements were in contributing to alumni’s ability to lead and manage change. See Figure 1 for details on the impact ratings across curriculum elements.

The evaluation found that the interweaving of personal and professional growth in the IPPHL program is uniquely impacting alumni’s continuous growth as public health leaders. Alumni have also contributed to organizational culture changes at the workplace. And thirdly, the program has contributed to some health program outcomes that may not have otherwise been achieved by alumni. Evidence of contribution to health program outcomes is more limited, which is expected given the longer time frame needed to achieve more distal outcomes.

Figure 2: Program Impact Survey Ratings



50% OF ALUMNI EXPERIENCED EITHER A PROMOTION OR JOB CHANGE WITH INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY SINCE PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM

82% OF ALUMNI PARTIALLY OR FULLY IMPLEMENTED THEIR POLICY MEMO DEVELOPED DURING THE PROGRAM.

Case Example: Personal & Professional Growth

Reflecting on the program, one alum noted that he now has the ability to step back and allocate the time and provide a setting to **reflect before engaging with peers**. He also believes as a result to be able to more objectively respond and take on the responsibility of being a change leader. He believes that both the skills acquired and the increased confidence enabled him to better apply himself and take on more challenging work. This includes applying learnings from the policy memo development process, a key component of the overall program, and as a result, **securing funding for an initiative to combat the spread of COVID-19**. Another policy memo he worked on resulted in funding secured by USAID to have moveable water, sanitation, & hygiene facilities.

Alumni interviewed reported **huge boosts in confidence as a result of participating in the program**, as well as stronger influencing and persuasion abilities, specifically increasing their **effectiveness when interacting with political leaders in their country**. Half of the alumni who completed the survey have had an upward vertical job changes since completing the program. Alumni also noted stronger teamwork across technical, managerial and cross-division teams.

OVER 75% OF ALUMNI PARTIALLY OR FULLY IMPLEMENTED THEIR POLICY MEMO DEVELOPED DURING THE

The evaluation identified **several concrete examples** of policy memos and application of program skills that **contributed to health program outcomes**, with examples related to either policy or legislation changes, or secured funding and resources for health programs. 82% of survey respondents were able to at least partially or fully implement their policy memo after participation in the program.

“Diagnosing and preventing corruption.... opened my eyes to see. There are funds directed toward Covid-19 but we saw people still working without PPEs... we told them we cannot give you cash, give us a list of materials and we’ll buy them for you, and deliver to health facility, not to management. Some funds, we don’t know where they went. In this way we prevented abuse of funds.” – IPPHL program alum

The **overarching takeaway around the program’s impact** is that the program, as currently designed, is effective in achieving core outcomes at the individual level. There is strong evidence of impact on personal and professional growth, which the evaluation team believes is a key intermediate outcome that will translate into greater contribution to organizational and health program outcomes as alumni progress in their careers. At the same time, there are opportunities to address challenges to support increased contribution to organizational outcomes, with the tools and operating context more clearly understood. In the longer-term, the program could improve the tracking of contribution to health program outcomes, and create areas for support for alumni to expand and sustain impact and contributions over time.

Key Finding

3

Alumni Network: Although the program’s alumni network engagement is relatively nascent, it is evident that alum social interactions foster a sense of connection that serves as leverage to advance intentional ways of engagement. Longer term priority areas for the alumni network still need to be defined and tested to create a stronger base for systems-level change.

Recommendation

Continue to build the alumni network into an effective platform for knowledge-sharing and collaboration among alumni, their peers in public health in Africa and the program, using more demand-driven and formal engagement mechanisms.

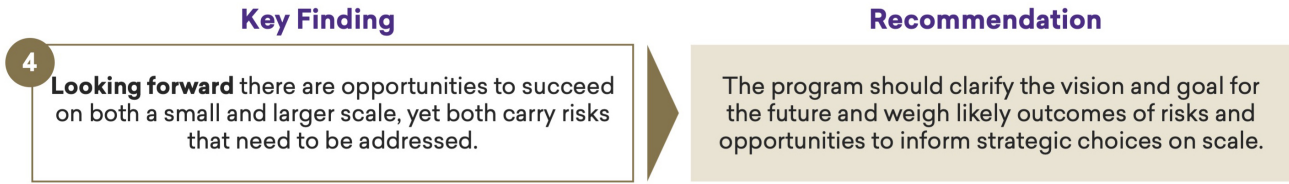
The IPPHL program’s engaged alumni network points to the strong connections created even during the pre-residency’s remote interactions, and is maintained throughout and following program participation, in particular through social group threads. This has enabled most alumni to not only create, but also maintain personal and professional relationships with their cohort peers, engaging with them opportunistically. A higher degree of and more consistent means of engagement requires better defining and understanding what would be most helpful to alumni’s professional development, and for the amplification of the program’s network as well.

With the recent launch of alumni engagement activities, such as the “hotline” and webinars, there is an opportunity to quickly assess, adjust and further shape effective means of engagement. There are also other low-hanging opportunities, namely mentor-matching fellows with alumni, and enabling more cross-cohort engagements. Identifying other alumni engagement opportunities may require a broader landscaping of similar alumni engagement programs, to understand what options are likely to drive engagement and right-size efforts based on available resources.

Look Forward

The evaluation aimed to provide insights on risks, tradeoffs and opportunities related to key considerations the program has identified as part of an overall strategic planning process. These strategic considerations all relate to questions of larger scale versus smaller, more concentrated efforts. To inform the program’s discussions related to scale the evaluation team asked

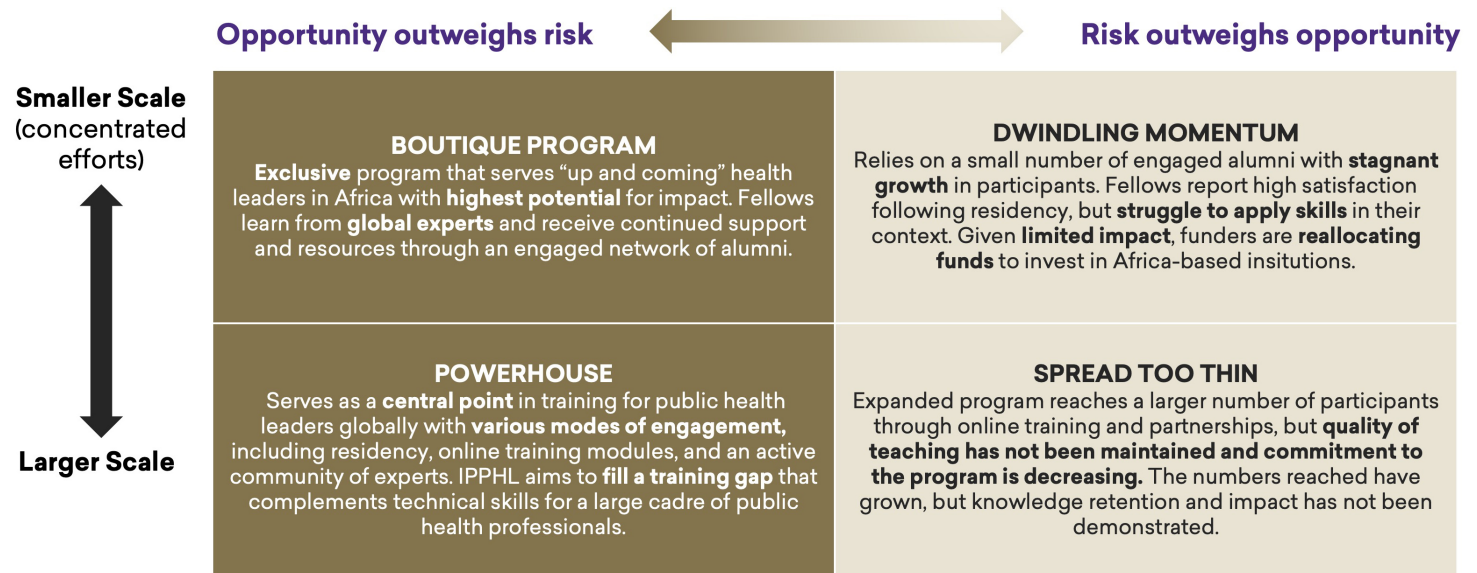
program stakeholders for their perspectives on these options to reach larger scale versus concentrating efforts on a smaller scale program.



Stakeholders identified key risks of maintaining a smaller scale program including reduced momentum and challenges with sustainability. However, opportunities were also identified in concentrating efforts to achieve greater impact through enhanced engagement with alumni and the foundation and more in-depth supports for fellows. In regard to scale, stakeholders identified risks of spreading the program too thin and losing the key strengths of the program including the cohesion among fellows and quality teaching. Opportunities were also identified to reach more individuals at scale, leveraging the current momentum in online learning as well as trends in donor funding shifting to Africa-based programming.

In considering the risks and opportunities around scale, the evaluation team developed a set of narrative scenarios of what the program could look like in the future if the program pursues larger scale versus more concentrated efforts. The scenarios describe two potential outcomes for each choice. One in which the opportunities outweigh the risk (a “boutique program” for more concentrated efforts and a “powerhouse” program at larger scale), and one outcome in which the risks outweigh the opportunities in the future (a program with “dwindling momentum” with more concentrated efforts or “spread too thin” in the case of larger scale).

Figure 3: Potential future scenarios based on strategic choices



The program will need to align on the vision and goals for the future and weigh the likelihood of risks versus opportunities in determining strategic choices.

Conclusion

The evaluation found evidence to support several aspects of the program’s theory of change. In terms of learning outcomes, there was evidence of knowledge retention, application and relevance of skills gained through the program. The evaluation found strong evidence of contribution to intermediate outcomes of personal and professional growth that is likely a key step towards alumni’s ability to contribute to organizational, policy and program outcomes. Evidence of positive contribution to organizational outcomes was identified as well as some, but more limited, evidence of policy and program outcomes. On activating organizational and systems change through networks of support, the evaluation found evidence of commitment and interest from alumni in ongoing engagement through the alumni network, but the implementation of that ongoing support is still in early stages.

The IPPHL leadership team can use the insights from this evaluation to further refine the program’s theory of change in support of a clarified strategic vision for the future. To achieve that vision, the program will need to consider risks and opportunities of strategic choices related to scale and resource considerations in support of the overall vision for the program.