

# Brief Report: Course in Strengthening Human Resources in Health

## Harvard School of Public Health, Boston MA, USA

First of all I would like to thank the Norwegian Research School in Global Health for the support to be able to follow the course in Course in Strengthening Human Resources in Health at the Harvard School of Public Health, Boston MA, USA. This course took place from June 10<sup>th</sup> – June 20<sup>th</sup> 2019. This course was selected as it suited very well with the PhD project on quality of caesarean sections related to task-sharing in Sierra Leone. The lecturers with a lot of experience in the field of human resources for health (HRH) from Harvard University, The Worldbank, WHO and USAID.

The lectures covered a lot of different subjects such as: Intrinsic motivation and pay for performance, financing of the HRH, health labour market model, Management Capacity and leadership, education of HRH, HRH density and planning, rural retention, mapping policy dimensions and the discrete choice experiment.

One of the most relevant of these topics was the rural retention what is also a major concern in the setting of Sierra Leone. For this lecture the structure WHO recommendations “Increasing access to health workers in remote and rural areas through improved retention” published in 2010. In these guidelines 16 different interventions are suggested in the area of education, regulation, financial incentives and professional and personal support. During the course I was able to present and discuss the experiences from Sierra Leone, both the challenges and the possibilities with the interventions. The feedback from both the teachers and the other students were inspiring to work on and provided new input for the PhD project.

Other lectures that were inspiring was the discrete choice experiment applied in the area of rural retention. This was a scientific way of measuring the effect of potential interventions to improve rural retention. Another topic which was interesting was the mapping of the policy dimensions using software called PolicyMaker. This program helps to map out all the stakeholders, their position and their influence. In addition an intervention scenario can be introduced to try to move stakeholders in a certain direction. This can help the political arena where HRH interventions can take place. I was so inspired that I am now trying to implement with one of my Master students this mapping for task-sharing in Liberia.

The most inspiring part were the interaction with the other students. The other students came from Canada, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, Senegal, Ethiopia, India, Polinasia, Indonesia and Saudia Aribia. Most of the participants were government officials responsible for HRH or working for NGOs or academia in the same area. It was fantastic to share experiences, challenges and potential solutions. On each day we had group exercises and after classes the discussions continued. I am sure that relations buildt up during this course will be useful for the further development of the coming manuscripts and later on. Attached some pictures that testify the energy and joy of the group working on HRH even in areas with extraordinary challenges.





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*Aalke Johan van Duinen*

*has participated in the course*

**STRENGTHENING HUMAN RESOURCES FOR HEALTH**

**Boston, Massachusetts**  
**June 10 - 20, 2019**

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