



**EMERGING  
VOICES2018**

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**EV4GH**  
Newsletter

SWITCHING THE POLES

IN THIS ISSUE

Dear Reader,

Welcome to the 5th edition of the Emerging Voices for Global Health Network (EV4GH) newsletter. This is an exciting time for us. We recently, in September 2019 launched the call for applications to EV4GH2020 – do watch out for it and apply before the deadline! This edition of EV4GH is particularly special as we will also celebrate the 10th Anniversary of EV4GH. Although fundraising is never easy, there's thus already a bit of a festive EV mood (or is it 'EV vibe?') in the air! The EV governance update below provides a summary of the preparations ongoing for the EV4GH 2020 venture and read our 10th Anniversary special microblogs from EV alumni who in the run-up from various cohorts, take us through their experiences as emerging voices. But new voices and stories from the global South remain very much needed, hence the [call for EV 2020!](#) In case you also want to weigh in on the 10th EV anniversary, other micro-blog contributions remain very welcome till we are into 2020.

At the time of drafting this newsletter, two EVs, in-residence (Sophie - EV-2013 and Renzo – EV 2014) were present at the World Health Summit (WHS), Berlin. This newsletter presents their reflections from the WHS, and also the experiences of Charles' (EV 2016) in ITM, Antwerp as EV-in-residence. And finally! We're on the lookout for a new logo and invite EV alumni to seize the opportunity to participate in the brand new EV logo competition! For now, enjoy your reading and we look forward to keeping you updated!

**Sophie Vusha Chabeda (EV, 2013) and Charles Ssemugabo (EV, 2016)**

## **Gearing up for Dubai 2020! An update on EV 2020 and the EV network**

**Dorcus Kiwanuka-Henriksson (Chair, EV4GH) and Sara Ardila (Co-Chair, EV4GH)**

As the EV4GH network continues to grow and expand in its membership and geographical representation, so do the institutional collaborations. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the Emerging Voices (EV4GH) blended training program will take place August – November 2020 in Dubai linked to the [Sixth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research](#). As part of the Dubai 2020 edition, the network has the pleasure of welcoming two new institutional partners, the [Muhammad Bin Rashid School of Government](#) (MBRSG), Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and the [Knowledge to Policy centre \(K2P\)](#) at the American University of Beirut (AUB), Lebanon. As has been the case in all editions of the EV4GH, the Dubai 2020 edition will have a host institution – this time, the MBRSG. The Face-to-Face phase of the blended training program will take place at MBRSG and the school will also provide logistical, financial and technical support to the EV4GH program in Dubai. The Knowledge to Policy Centre will be part of the selection team for the 7<sup>th</sup> edition and will provide facilitators for the blended training program.

The MBRSG and K2P Centre join other partner institutions – the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM), Antwerp, Belgium; Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Liverpool, UK; Peking University Health Science Center, Beijing, China; the University of Cape Town (UCT), Cape Town, South Africa; and Institute of Public Health Bangalore (India). Other organisational partners over the years include the [World Health Organization's Alliance for Health Policy and Systems Research](#), USAID through the [Human Resources for Health \(HRH2030\)](#) program, and [Health Systems Global](#).

Partner institutions and organisations take part in the selection process of new emerging voices, provide facilitators for the blended training program, fundraise and provide scholarships for the blended training program, and support the EV4GH secretariat. Partnerships and collaborations ensure continuity of the programme and facilitate the involvement of our growing community of young professionals in "local" (within-country and -region) initiatives and global initiatives, especially in Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).

## EV4GH 2020

The EV 2020 edition is organised around the overall theme for the sixth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research, "*Re-imagining health systems for better health and social justice*". Sub-themes of the training program will include governance and corruption in health systems, engaging economic, environmental and social forces and innovations for health systems.

The [call for applications to join the EV 2020 edition](#) was launched on 26 September 2019. The summary of the call is also available in [Arabic](#), [Russian](#), [Chinese](#), [French](#) and [Spanish](#). Summarising the call in five other languages is in line with one of the goals of the EV4GH network which is to increase membership and participation from so far underrepresented regions, for example, the Spanish speaking, Americas, the former Soviet Union, those from conflict-affected states and fragile states, and Francophone Africa. The network also strives to include young professionals who are not necessarily researchers but are passionate about strengthening health systems within their local and national context through, for example, health advocacy, policy brokering and/or health journalism with a view on advancing health equity and social justice. For this reason, we introduced two tracks during the 5<sup>th</sup> edition of the EV program. There are two tracks for the Dubai 2020 edition as well – track 1: Researchers' track and track 2: Other health system actors' track.

The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of the EV program also marks the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the EV4GH network. As part of the 10<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebrations a series of activities have been planned such as [short blogs from the EV alumni](#) from various cohorts (on their journey since their EV participation), short videos highlighting the EV program and journey over the past decade, a commentary in the BMJ global health and a logo contest for designing a new EV logo.

## 10 th EV anniversary

Diljith Kannan and Ketki Shah (EV4GH secretariat and IPH Bangalore)



The seventh venture of the EV4GH program marks an important milestone in the EV4GH journey. It has been 10 years since the EV Journey started with 52 EVs from 31 countries in Antwerp/Montreux, linked to the First Global Symposium on Health System Research. Over the years, the network has grown to 260 EVs from over 60 countries. The program has evolved considerably since the first venture and so, in order to commemorate this special occasion, we are organizing a series of activities as follows:

- **Micro-blogs by EV Alumni:** From August 2019 on, we have been running a series of short blogs by EV alumni from various cohorts. The blogs are published fortnightly on the [EV Website](#), and the intention is to have this series running till well into 2020. The aim of the blog series is not only to celebrate this occasion, also in the hope that it helps with fundraising and community building. So far, we have uploaded seven blogs on the website. In these blogs, EV Alumni reflect on their own EV experience and membership of the network, how the EV program and network have helped them, what it feels like to be an EV, They also dwell on the 'EV vibe' and the everlasting friendships built through the network, the continued alumni engagement after the program, the relevance of the program, things they would like to add/change in the program; and you also get their take on how the program has evolved since its inception. (P.S.: if you would like to contribute to this micro-blog series, please write to the EV4GH secretariat at [ev4gh@iphindia.org](mailto:ev4gh@iphindia.org))
- **Video Series:** A team at IPH Bangalore is in the process of developing few promotional videos a number of short to mark this occasion. These videos will be uploaded from November 2019 on, and circulated via social media. The videos will be a mix of promotional videos for the EV2020 call for applications, short video bytes from EV alumni and friends, a photo collage from previous EV ventures, and short videos highlighting the program and EV journey over the past 10 years. As you might have noticed, the first video was already launched early November.
- **EV Commentary:** In the run up to the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a commentary on the EV4GH program and network is planned for BMJ Global Health. A few of the EV4GH governance members will take the lead to compile and draft the document, incorporating the contributions of all EV alumni (which they'll be able to make in a Google document). EV alumni can also co-author (if they contribute and agree with the final viewpoint) (*More updates to follow soon!*)
- **Logo Contest:** As you notice elsewhere in this newsletter, a logo contest for designing the new EV logo (2020) is launched. The logo will be printed on the EV merchandise for the 2020 venture.

We look forward to celebrating this 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with new EVs, EV alumni and the wider global health family.

# Reflections from World health summit 2019

## The Planetary Health Summit is born?

**Renzo Guinto (EV, 2014)**

In October, I was privileged to attend the World Health Summit (WHS), one of global health's annual reunions. Like in most global health conferences, I was expecting that this year's WHS would put climate change and planetary health in the sidelines. To my surprise, the opening ceremony began with these remarks from WHS President Detlev Ganten: "Planetary health defines climate and environment as important determinants of human health." It was then followed by a magnificent tribute to Alexander von Humboldt, the "most celebrated naturalist in the world," delivered by his biographer Andrea Wulf of the widely-acclaimed "The Invention of Nature." This year, Germany and the world are celebrating Humboldt's 250th birthday. Humboldt's legacy to the world is wide-ranging – he was the first to describe nature as a web of life and the Earth as a living organism; as early as the 1800s he predicted the occurrence of climate change resulting from the "production of huge masses of steam and gas in the centers of industry," among others; he was first to elucidate the services of forest ecosystems; and he pushed for the democratization of the sciences by pioneering the first international academic conferences. To my mind, Humboldt is the Father of the Anthropocene and the first planetary health doctor.

However, the following day, to my dismay, the global health elite of the WHS were back to business as usual. While there were two sessions on climate change and health, the rest of the program failed (to a greater extent) to connect (at least tangentially) diverse global health agendas such as universal health coverage, noncommunicable diseases, migrant health, mental health, pandemic preparedness, antimicrobial resistance, big data, digital health, etc. to the broader existential planetary crisis we are facing. It is a reflection that after all, planetary health is still "icing on the cake" rather than the chiffon itself; conference architects are still stuck in 'downstream' issues like healthcare and diseases; and session panelists are mostly silo professionals housed in orthodox global health organizations and not systems thinkers devoted to overall planetary healing.

Because of the huge chasm between opening salvo and the main attraction, I am not yet sure if this year we have seen the birth of a true planetary health summit. There seems to be no real sense of urgency within the global health community about the catastrophic health impacts of climate change and other forms of environmental degradation. There is no guarantee that next year's WHS and those that are yet to follow will continue to give the spotlight to these civilizational threats. However, I think Germany can be not just a global health leader, but a true planetary health steward if it wants to, and it can start with a yearly planetary health-oriented WHS (and Berlin can proclaim itself as the world's first planetary health city). Discussing the world's health through a planetary health lens should not be a difficult task if we view planetary health not merely as a collection of environmental health problems or a new discipline for the new normal – we must treat it as a new frame for debating and envisioning health in the era of the Anthropocene.

## Reflections from the World Health Summit 2019: Three days with much to chew, including for global health leaders

**Sophie Vusha (EV, 2013)**

I've been involved with the International Health Policies newsletter for a few months now, as an IHP resident. Last month, I attended the [World health Summit \(WHS\)](#) in Berlin, Germany, with 2400 participants and 300 speakers. With the abundance of exciting sessions scheduled over the three days (27-29 October), I was spoiled for choice. I'll just take you here through brief highlights of some of the sessions I attended. You can read the full summary in the [IHP editorial](#) from a few weeks ago.

I first attended a panel session on gender equality in the global health workforce, organized by Women in Global Health. In an encouraging sign of the times, one of the chairs of the session, H  l  ne Boisjoly (Dean of Medicine, University of Montr  al), mentioned an increase in women occupying her University's (top) positions since last year's meeting. Nevertheless, there are still (too) many global health organizations in which men remain the main drivers. References in the session mostly pertained to the situation in high-income countries, data on institutions and organizations based in low- and middle-income countries are still mostly missing.

The first day ended with the opening plenary. The (rather long) list of speeches enunciated unexpectedly resounding message on climate and health, as a special tribute to Alexander von Humboldt, celebrating his 250<sup>th</sup> birthday. Andrea Wulf, a well-known biographer of von Humboldt, gave a vivid speech on the man's significance, citing the way he passionately conveyed his holistic vision on the environment, planet and atmosphere, so important also to tackle the wicked challenges in our age.

In many of the subsequent sessions, even though myriad issues exist in global health, the current most important topic (i.e. the climate emergency) could not be ignored, with exception of a few keynotes in the final day perhaps. But in most panel sessions I attended, the ([syndemic](#)) links between climate change, food,... and health were at least mentioned, for example in a session on commercial determinants of health, or one on the need to introduce climate health lessons in public health courses at the university.

Ilona Kickbusch (in one of the final plenaries) and Margaret Chan, former DG WHO (in the Monday panel session on UHC), both stressed that "Health is a political choice", and Dr. Tedros reiterated this stance even more empathically, in his own final address. I personally feel that indeed, it is time to move the politics (also) to the global agencies and to have, if needed, even "uncomfortable" discussions of working together in the partner countries, moving towards "real" multilateralism.

## EV residence reflections

### A summer experience at the Institute of Tropical Medicine in Antwerp

**Charles Ssemugabo (EV, 2016)**

"It is mid-summer, many people are beginning their holidays, things at the Institute of Tropical Medicine (ITM) are a bit slow", wrote a colleague at ITM in his welcome email. It sounded a bit sad but to me it was a blessing in disguise as I was longing for uninterrupted time to make progress with my PhD proposal. Indeed, it was rather quiet at ITM from mid-July to mid-August. But most interesting, certainly given my increasing planetary health lens, I experienced one of the hottest days in Europe with temperatures as high as 41.6  C. The short nights and long days allowed me to dedicate more time to the write-up of a couple of blogs, my PhD proposal and pending manuscripts. In addition, I was involved in a new project on pesticide exposure and chronic kidney disease of unknown origin (CKDu). My knowledge on pesticide exposure enabled me to appreciate its link with several outcomes including CKDu, but also develop similar research ideas for Uganda.

As it was summer, my jogging habits were renewed, on my arrival in Antwerp I weighed 96 kilograms. Many of my old pants were really tight or didn't fit anymore. The summer environment coupled with the safe and levelled terrain of Antwerp city were very supportive for early morning jogging. I decided to jog for 30 minutes every morning during the week and 2 hours on Saturdays. Thanks too to Prof. Wim Van Damme who introduced me to some nice jogging tracks. My jogging habits did not change when autumn started even if the temperatures were a little nagging. By the end of the EV residence programme, I weighed 84 kilograms. I have continued to pursue my weight management programme that paid dividends during the EV residence. One of the underestimated "spin-offs" of an EV residency (although I'm not sure it works for everybody)!

While at ITM, I attended the [31<sup>st</sup> International society of Environmental Epidemiology conference in Utrecht from August 25 – 28, 2019](#). Among the conference highlights was the fact that despite cities being perceived as spaces for good living they are sources of inequalities. The urban poor might be better off than the rural poor, but the gap between the poor and rich in many cities around the world is very wide. As such, cities present a great opportunity to think about inequalities and are a great place to mobilise for global health issues. Among the global health issues that cities should consider is the effect of human activities to the environment (planetary health in the Anthropocene). It is important to understand where we are, what we are doing and what it means for our future. We are moving into a future that is unknown and as such, global health experts need to be ready to work with experts from across disciplines.

As ITM got busier, it became more interesting. With the new academic year starting, I had an opportunity to meet students but also attend Wim's lectures delivered the old school way. I also on a couple of occasions had a chance to chat with the new director Dr. Marc-Alain Widdowson about the EV4GH programme. Lastly, I went on a trip to Bokrijk, to experience life as it used to be in Belgium in the 1700's and 1800's. In fact, there was no big difference with how our grandparents in Uganda lived their lives.

Overall, summer holidays allowed me clarity in thinking while writing, establish a weight management programme, and an opportunity to expand my networks.

## EV Logo Competition

### Calling all EV artists!

#### EV secretariat

As part of the EV 10th Anniversary celebrations, the EV governance board has decided to organize an EV logo design contest. The logo for 2018 was designed by EV Alumna Angeli Rawat (EV, 2014). This was the logo back then:



The purpose of the logo contest is to design a logo that represents "the DNA" of the EV4GH network equally well. It will be printed on all EV2020 merchandise in Dubai.

All entries must be submitted to the EV Secretariat at [ev4gh@iphindia.org](mailto:ev4gh@iphindia.org) in .jpeg or .psd format with a brief description of the intended meaning behind your logo design. Up to three colors maximum can be used for designing the logo. Deadline for receiving the entry is January 30, 2020.

The winner will be selected by the EV governance board based on (1) the aesthetic quality of the logo and (2) relevance of the logo to the EV network. The winner will be announced via the EV4GH google group and the EV4GH website.

## EV alumni - recent achievements

- **Charles Birungi (EV, 2013)**; successfully defended his PhD in Health Economics at University College London on 2 Oct 2019.
- **Renzo Guinto (EV, 2014)**; submitted his doctoral dissertation entitled "Local health system responses to climate change: lessons from coastal municipalities in the Philippines"; he will officially receive his Doctor of Public Health degree from Harvard University this November 2019. From September 29 to December 7, he joins the Institute of Tropical Medicine Antwerp as visiting scholar as part of the EV residency program. He was also recently selected as an Obama Foundation Asia-Pacific Leader.
- **Nasreen Jessani (EV, 2014)**; was selected to be the Head of Strategy for the Africa Evidence Network at the Africa Center for Evidence - University of Johannesburg in South Africa.
- **Anteneh Asefa (EV, 2014)**; has been accepted for the <https://www.prb.org/work-with-us/fellowships/Policy-Communications-Fellowship> which aims to bridge the gap between research findings and the policy development process. The fellowship is designed for doctoral students in the final phase of their candidature and is administered by the Population Reference Bureau (PRB) in collaboration with the African Institute for

Development Policy (AFIDEP). Based on his PhD study findings, he has developed a policy brief that will contribute to evidence-driven decision making to advance respectful maternity care in Ethiopia and other similar settings.

- **Dr. Sameera Hussain (EV, 2014);** successfully completed a two-year CIHR Health System Fellowship in September 2019. Cross-appointed at the University of Ottawa and the Canadian Society for International Health, her work was focused on knowledge mobilization around the Sustainable Development Goals as a policy framework for health equity and health systems strengthening. As part of this endeavour and with support from the World Health Organization, she guest edited a forthcoming special issue of BMC's Globalization and Health titled "Health in the SDGs: intersectoral action for health". Sameera is now working as Senior Advisor, Strategic Policy and Development at the Canadian Society for International Health.
- **Sameh Al-Alwaqi (EV, 2018);** defended his dissertation in June 2019 (two years Master of Public Health at the University of Sheffield in the UK and Jagiellonian University in Poland). He evaluated the performance of the national health cluster in Yemen during the conflict period as a dissertation project. Sameh worked as a project manager for a project funded by WHO in Yemen in delivering a minimal health service package for three months (July-Sep 2019), and is currently a resident at ITM in Antwerp. Having started his residency mid-September 2019, he will be working on analysing health systems in fragile states.

## Upcoming Events and opportunities

- **Call for applications for Emerging Voices for Global Health 2020:** The emerging voices call for applications is out. It will be linked to the Sixth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research to be held in Dubai from August to November 2020. The application **deadline is February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**
- **The Sixth Global Symposium on Health Systems Research:** The conference will be hosted by the Muhammad Bin Rashid School of Government (MBRSG), Dubai from 8-12 November 2020, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The conference theme will be *Re-imagining health systems for better health and social justice*. The **deadline for individual abstracts is February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**
- **The 6<sup>th</sup> World One Health congress:** The University of Edinburgh, Scotland from 14<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020 will be hosting the 6<sup>th</sup> World One Health congress at the Edinburgh International Conference Centre. The congress will focus on the theme; *Creating a healthy future for humans, animals and their environments*. The **deadline for submissions is 15<sup>th</sup>, January 2020.**
- **The 23<sup>rd</sup> International AIDS conference -AIDS 2020:** conference HIV and AIDS in San Francisco and Oakland, US will be held from 6<sup>th</sup> -10<sup>th</sup> July 2020. The theme of the conference is *resilience*. The early **registration closes on 15<sup>th</sup>, July 2020.**
- **World Health Summit (WHS) regional meeting:** The Makerere University in partnership with the government of Uganda will be organizing and hosting the WHS regional meeting at Speke Resort Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda on **27-28<sup>th</sup> April 2020.** The topics to be covered will focus on the African journey towards meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goals and achieving universal health coverage.
- **Planetary Health Conference 2020:** The London school of Hygiene and tropical Medicine is organizing the planetary health conference to be held on 22-24<sup>th</sup> January 2020 at Kairaba Beach Hotel Banjul, The Gambia. The theme will be; *Climate Change and Planetary Health in West Africa: Reviewing the evidence; Identifying the gaps; and finding the solution.* There will also be an Art Competition for school children; this is open from **18<sup>th</sup> November to 14<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

## ITM Vacancies

- **PhD Student Fellowship:** A PhD opportunity for a citizen from a sub-Saharan African country with a Master's degree or equivalent in biomedical or other relevant sciences and specialization in infectious diseases. The deadline for application is **16<sup>th</sup> December 2019.**

Send in your feedback/comments to us at [ev4gh@iphindia.org](mailto:ev4gh@iphindia.org). Do mention "EV4GH Newsletter" in the subject line