

# Workshop Report

**Writing a Teaching Case in Public Health**  
**17 August 2019, New Delhi**



## Contact

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This report titled 'Writing a Teaching Case in Public Health' has been developed by Health Systems Transformation Platform (HSTP) and the partner(s) to share the summary of proceedings of this workshop.

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Our mission is to enable Indian health systems respond to people's needs. We do this in collaboration with Indian & Global expertise through research for health systems design, enhancing stakeholders' capabilities and fostering policy dialogue.

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# Workshop Objectives

**Health Systems Transformation Platform** is incubated in the Tata Trusts family. HSTP is an enabler of systems change in Indian healthcare. India's progress towards Universal Health Coverage depends on re-design of health system's architecture & function based on systems assessment, policy relevant research/evidence synthesis and conducting experiments that focus on health outcomes to re-engineer health interventions. HSTP's objectives are:

- Develop and articulate medium & long term health systems strategies for India and states, learning from Indian and global experiences, best practices, innovations.
- Nurture talent and enhance capability in India on health systems research, leadership, policy & strategy formulation.
- Collaborate with governments, research/ academic institutions, experts and practitioners to create a platform for health systems thinking and attempt to solve health systems challenges.
- Foster a safe space for health systems stakeholders for policy dialogue, knowledge sharing & learning.

This workshop on **Teaching Case Writing in Public Health** is part of HSTP's program for enhancing capacities of Indian researchers and is executed in collaboration with Harvard School of Public Health. The workshop provided a learning opportunity to twenty-two (22) Indian researchers across India working in universities/school of public health/public policy/technical support organizations.

**The objective** of the workshop was to train researchers and academicians involved in teaching or development of case studies in public health on approach to write a teaching case with a focus on public health. It is widely recognized that case studies are effective learning tools. They act as problem based exercises and help simulate public health challenges and functions in practice. To be effective in driving home the message, case studies have to be rooted in local context, and culture but should be lucid, engaging and underpin issues that are globally relevant for learning.

**The Workshop was developed and taught by Prof. Michael Reich**, Taro Takemi Research Professor of International Health in the Department of Global Health and Population at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and Director of the Takemi Program in International Health. He has a Ph.D. in Political Science, Yale University; M.A. in East Asian Studies (Japan), Yale University; and B.A. in Molecular Biophysics & Biochemistry, Yale University. Dr. Reich's research program addresses the political dimensions of public health policy. His research interests include health system strengthening and reform, access to medicines and pharmaceutical policy, and the political economy of policy-making processes. He has worked on health systems issues with colleagues at Harvard for over three decades and is faculty director of the World Bank Flagship Course on Health Sector Reform and Sustainable Financing.

*We duly acknowledge the guidance and contribution of the HSTP Board, Rajeev Sadanandan CEO-HSTP, Winnie Yip & Anuska Kalita (Harvard), Rahul Reddy, Bhupendra Prabhakar & Peter Parekattil (HSTP).*

# Learnings

*The material presented below is adapted from Prof. Michael Reich's presentations and discussions during the session – which were [Adapted from materials by Susan L Madden, SM Assoc. Director, Case-Based Teaching and Learning Initiative, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health]*

- **A teaching case is a vehicle** for applying skills with a specific teaching purpose. It is a narrative of something specific and real – a challenge or a decision that needs to be made - something that a public health professional might encounter in his/her career. The situation presented in the case is complex, where different viewpoints/approaches can be applied. This creates an opportunity to apply skills/judgment and analysis, allowing students learn how to approach these kinds of challenges.
- **Constructing a good teaching case is an art.** The components of a good teaching case are –the opening (set the scene), the narrative (what has happened so far?), the case question (what is the challenge facing the protagonist?) Shorter cases are better if structured well. Exhibits in a case should be limited and focused.
- **The opening should** introduce the reader to the story, to the issue facing them - so they have an overview and can read the rest of the case critically - looking for information that is relevant to understanding the problem and coming up with ideas for how to approach it, and possibly solve it. It should cover Who is the protagonist, what is his/her role? What is the timing – when is this taking place? What is the situation facing the protagonist, briefly? Why is this important/relevant to public health? What is the controversy that makes a decision or intervention challenging?
- **The narrative** is where the reader is presented with what has happened so far that has led to this moment. It should cover - Key facts/occurrences that have happened, why is this issue important? What role has the protagonist played? What are the key points in the story that give context to the decision/issue/challenge? What do you leave out in the story?
- **The case question** is the ending and often restates what the case's central question or challenge: What must the protagonist do now? What is the task/decision/issue? What makes it complex/challenging?
- **While writing a case** - structure the case to tell a good story, avoid jargon and technical terms, if possible, use an excellent editor to assure writing quality, use the past tense, length? 4 – 6 pages plus a few exhibits, write in a neutral voice and avoid judgments, use quotes from interviews for judgments or opinions.
- **A teaching note** is prepared for every case so that other instructors can teach the case. It should provide a case synopsis, clear learning objectives, background reading/s, assignment questions, road map of class discussion and a board teaching plan.

For more resources for writing and teaching case studies visit the Harvard T.H. Chan School Case Resources Website which hosts a case library of 81 cases and other material [www.caseresources.hsph.harvard.edu](http://www.caseresources.hsph.harvard.edu)

## What Next ?

Robust scientific research and evidence synthesis is fundamental to evidence based policy making in India. At the core of this are the Indian researchers. We value their contribution to current understanding of the Indian health systems. To enable transformation and lead the system on the path towards universal health coverage and achieving Sustainable Development Goals India needs enhanced research capacities especially in health systems diagnostics, design, policy, strategy and measuring performance. HSTP's program on enhancing capacities of Indian researchers is committed to continue conducting activities in this direction.

This workshop provided the participants an approach to writing a teaching case in public health. From the participant feedback received, we envisage to engage with Indian researchers and academicians to curate a one or two-day case writing workshop and develop a continuous mentoring program involving experts from our partner institutions who would guide interested researchers/academicians and explore the possibility of discussing/ initiating writing case studies relevant to Indian health systems and public health issues.

# Workshop Agenda

**Venue – Tango, Vivanta Ambassador, Sujan Singh Park, New Delhi.**

<b>Day 1</b>	<b>17 August 2019</b>
9.15 - 9.30	<p><b>Welcome and Introductions</b>            Prof. Michael Reich, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health            Rajeev Sadanandan, CEO - Health Systems Transformation Platform            Prof Winnie Yip, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health</p>
9.15 - 10.15	<p><b>Demonstration of a Public Health Case Discussion</b>            Prof. Michael Reich, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health</p> <p>Reich, M.R. (2012). Adopting National Health Insurance in West Africa. Teaching Case. Boston, MA: Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.</p>
10.15 - 11.00	<p><b>What Makes a Good Teaching Case?</b>            Prof. Michael Reich, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health</p> <p>Abell, D. (1997). What Makes a Good Case? ECCHO: The Newsletter of the European Case Clearing House (397-119-6).            Linder, Jane C. Writing Cases: Tips and Pointers. Harvard Business School Background Note 391-026, August 1990. (Revised April 1994.)</p>
11.00 - 11.30	<b>Break for Tea</b>
11.0 - 12.00	<p><b>What Makes a Good Teaching Note?</b>            Prof. Michael Reich, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health</p> <p>Kane, N.M., and Madden, S.L. (2014). Guidelines for Writing a Teaching Note. Boston, MA: Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.            Guyer, A.L., and Reich, M.R. (2017). Teaching Note: Partnering to Eliminate Malaria in Zambia. Boston, MA: Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.</p>
12.00 - 12.20	<b>What Makes a Good Teaching Discussion?</b>
12.00 - 12.30	<b>Conclusions</b>
12.30 - 2.00	<b>Break for Lunch</b>

## Participants & Observers

Sudha Chandrasekhar	Consultant - Health Systems Transformation Platform New Delhi
Indranil Mukhopadhyay	Associate Professor - Jindal School of Governance and Public Policy Sonapat
Pradeep Guin	Assistant Professor - Jindal School of Governance and Public Policy Sonapat
Rakhal Gaitonde	Professor, Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies Trivandrum
Ravi Prasad Varma	Associate Professor - Achutha Menon Centre for Health Science Studies Trivandrum
Sandhya Iyer	Professor - Tata Institute of Social Sciences Mumbai
Dorothy Lall	Associate Director - Institute of Public Health Bengaluru
Arun Tiwari	Health Insurance Specialist - Asian Development Research Institute, Patna
Arun Nair	Health Financing Specialist - Access Health International New Delhi
Anuska Kalita	Coordinator & Specialist India Health Systems Project - Harvard School of Public Health
Chaitra Khloe	Research Associate - Tata Institute of Social Sciences Mumbai
Abhishek Kumar	Research Associate - Indian Institute of Public Health Bhuwnaeshwar
Shyama Sundari	Research Associate - Indian Institute of Public Health Bhuwnaeshwar
Paramjot Panda	Research Associate - Indian Institute of Public Health Bhuwnaeshwar
Shuchisree Akhouri	Research Associate - Indian Institute of Public Health Bhuwnaeshwar
Pujitha Padmanabhan	Program Coordinator - Indian Institute of Public Health Bhuwnaeshwar
Mrinal Mohapatra	Research Associate - Indian Institute of Public Health Bhuwnaeshwar
Vivek Panwar	Research Associate - Health Systems Transformation Platform New Delhi
Nachiket Sule	Consultant - Assessment & Impact Measurement, Tata Trusts
Satish V Kahlikar	Program Manager - Health Systems Strengthening Telangana, Tata Trusts
Aditi Bhargava	Young Professional - National Health Authority
Rahul Reddy	Senior Fellow - Health Systems Transformation Platform
<b>Observers</b>	
Winnie Yip	Professor - Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
Rajeev Sadanandan	Chief Executive Officer - Health Systems Transformation Platform
Jack Langenbrunner	Principal Technical Adviser - Health Systems Transformation Platform New Delhi
Devadasan N	Technical Adviser - Health Systems Transformation Platform
Bhupendra	Program Manager - Health Systems Transformation Platform
<b>Operations Support</b>	
Peter Parekattil	Operations - Health Systems Transformation Platform