Stanford Center for Innovation in Global Health

Stanford MEDICINE

ENSURING THAT STANFORD'S COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE BENEFITS EVERYONE, EVERYWHERE

At the Stanford Center for Innovation in Global Health, we envision a world where everyone lives a healthy life on a thriving planet. Our commitment to this knows no boundaries. Stanford physicians, scientists, faculty, and students travel to all regions of the world, crossing continents to increase health, well-being, and equity in health care.

"We work to bring education, resources, and trained professionals to deliver health care to those who do not have it," notes Michele Barry, MD, FACP, senior associate dean of Global Health, Drs. Ben & A. Jess Shenson Professor, and director of the Center for Innovation in Global Health (CIGH). More than 200 members of Stanford's faculty are on the case. Leading experts in emergency medicine, surgery, infectious disease, oncology, and primary care collaborate with colleagues in bioengineering, data science, economics, and public policy. Every year, members of this extraordinary interdisciplinary network engage in over 400 projects around the world—and every project is guided by our partners in those areas.

"The requests for our involvement come from the grassroots," Dr. Barry explains. "We respond to the needs of people in resource-limited settings, and all projects are initiated by our partners on the ground."

Michele Barry, MD, FACP
Director of the Center for Innovation in Global Health

Diversifying Leadership in Global Health

We collaborate with organizations like Women-Lift Health, founded by CIGH, to drive impactful change for women leaders in global health and research topics such as the role of male allyship in advancing female leadership.

Developing Solutions to Climate Change-Driven Health Risks

Climate change and environmental degradation threaten human health. Interdisciplinary teams at Stanford seek to understand the impact of our changing world and find solutions that help people and protect the planet.

Bringing Health Equity to Refugees and Vulnerable Populations

In partnership with those most impacted, we aim to enhance clinical care and improve the lives of vulnerable and in need populations—with an emphasis on refugees and migrants impacted by conflict and climate change.

Catalyzing Women's Leadership in Global Health

To improve human health, we empower women leaders. In health care, women make up 70% of the workforce but hold less than 25% of leadership positions. Ministers of health and corporate executives—largely male—determine which research projects are funded, which services are provided, and how the workforce is deployed. In health care, this often means that the concerns of women and children are overlooked.

When Dr. Barry hosted the first Women Leaders in Global Health Conference at Stanford in 2017, she launched a movement that continues with conferences in Rwanda, Tanzania, and elsewhere, along with the creation of the international Gates Foundation-funded WomenLift Health.

WomenLift Health has now equipped more than 4,400 women across 20 countries through leadership development programs, including the year-long Leadership Journey, institutional trainings, and workshops. "We need to recognize the women leaders who are in the pipeline and remove barriers so they can do their best work. We developed leadership training and created an enabling environment for more inclusive leadership," Dr. Barry says.

Now, CIGH is collaborating with WomenLift Health to find effective ways to promote male allyship in advancing women's leadership. "Where you have greater gender equity, men's and women's longevity improves," said Gary Darmstadt, MD, professor of pediatrics.

◂ *Global attendees gather for a photo at a Women Leaders in Global Health Conference.*

Global Health & Planetary Health

Our health is intrinsically linked to our environment. A changing climate has led to rising sea levels, more frequent wildfires, and longer periods of drought—all of which threaten agriculture and increase food insecurity, malnutrition, and conflict. Pollution and warmer air cause—and exacerbate—asthma and cardiovascular conditions. Tropical storms and flooding lead to more widespread waterborne illnesses and tropical diseases.

At CIGH, our physician-scientists collaborate with experts from the Stanford Center for Human and Planetary Health, the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment, based in the Stanford Doerr School of Sustainability, the Stanford Graduate School of Business, the Stanford School of Engineering, and all other Stanford schools, so that we can predict, mitigate, and prevent challenges to global health.

◂ *A seed grant explores connections between seafood-borne disease and food security.*

Building Healthier Futures with Global Partnerships

The Stanford African Scholars in Global Health (SASH) program creates a two-way bridge between Stanford and African medical institutions, pairing mid-career leaders from low- and middle-income countries with Stanford mentors for six weeks of immersive learning to gain a skill they have identified as a need in their country.

In times of constrained global health funding, SASH demonstrates how resilience and creativity, including co-designing research and training, sharing cost-effective approaches, and building sustainable workforces, can accelerate outcomes. Scholars bring frontline insights—from anti-microbial resistance programs in Kenya to vaccine uptake efforts in Ethiopia—while Stanford experts bring research capacity, mentorship, and access to cutting-edge facilities, programs, and technology.

The program culminates in mentored year-long improvement projects that scholars lead at their home institutions. This collaboration strengthens patient outcomes, expands local expertise, and cultivates lasting partnerships dedicated to advancing global health across continents.

Learn More ›

◂ *Two SASH scholars and a student attend a knowledge-sharing event on campus.*

Concentrating Efforts on Communities with the Greatest Needs

CIGH strengthens capacity within local communities around the world. The Families at the Border program trains midwives at the U.S.–Mexico border. Other faculty-led projects are designed to prevent and reverse blindness, bring cancer care to impoverished women, address chronic diseases, prevent parasitic diseases, end gender-based violence, and improve the humanitarian response in areas of conflict. Our faculty travel the world to train doctors, nurses, and other health care workers and to improve the quality of care in low-resource settings.

◂ *Core leader Manu Prakash, PhD, conducts innovative global health research.*

Identifying Lasting Solutions

We understand that solutions to today's challenges must be sustainable. Professor of Oceans and of Earth System Science, Giulio De Leo, PhD, found a novel solution to control schistosomiasis, a potentially deadly parasitic disease that infects 240 million people worldwide. In Senegal, he showed that freshwater prawns, a natural predator of parasite-infected snails, can effectively curb the spread of the disease. Another member of our core leadership, Geoff Tabin, MD, co-founded the Cure Blindness Project, which invented a $4 disposable technology for cataract surgery and trained local physicians to use it. Ami Bhatt, MD, PhD, director of Global Oncology at CIGH, led a campaign to provide HPV vaccines to prevent cervical cancer in Nigeria, benefiting millions of girls.

With your help, we will increase the health and well-being of millions of people on this planet. Our faculty and staff will continue to collaborate with communities around the globe to find sustainable solutions to recurrent problems. With your philanthropic investment, CIGH will be able to equip more partners and communities with Stanford innovations and discoveries to help people around the world live longer, healthier lives.

◂ *Researchers aided by a seed grant investigate nature-based solutions to schistosomiasis.*

Small Seed Grants, Big Impacts for Health

Dengue fever, a life-threatening mosquito-borne illness, is on the rise globally. Climate change, urbanization, and other factors contributed to a doubling of global dengue fever cases between 2023 and 2024, driving outbreaks beyond the virus's historical range. Stanford researchers are at the forefront of efforts to understand this disease's growing threat—and innovative strategies to mitigate it. One simple and cost-effective strategy is to clean up trash near homes.

Stanford researchers and their international partners aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the transmission of three diseases transmitted by the *Aedes aegypti* mosquito—dengue, Zika, and chikungunya—in young children in two high-risk areas, Fiji and Indonesia. Children living in households with regular garbage removal had a significantly lower risk of getting dengue than children whose homes had trash around them. Researchers are now utilizing drones and AI to help identify the most hazardous trash while educating communities about the importance of proper waste disposal.

"Trash disposal can have a real impact on dengue risk," said Assistant Professor of Medicine–Infectious Disease Joelle Rosser, MD. "This highlights an important area where we have an opportunity to intervene and improve the health of humans and their environment."

◂ *Faculty fellow Joelle Rosser, MD, uses drones and AI to study mosquito-borne diseases.*

Michele Barry, MD, FACP, is the senior associate dean of Global Health, the Drs. Ben & A. Jess Shenson Professor, and director of the Center for Innovation in Global Health. She was elected to lead the board of directors for the Consortium of Universities for Global Health in 2019. The founder of the Stanford/Yale Global Health Scholars Program, Dr. Barry has sent more than 1,500 physicians overseas to underserved areas. As a past president of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, where she helped start the first U.S. certification in tropical disease and travelers' health, Dr. Barry's scholarly interests include tropical medicine, global health ethics, and the impact of climate change on health.

Dr. Barry served on President Barack Obama's Women's Health subcommittee and is an elected member of the National Academy of Medicine, the Council on Foreign Affairs, and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. She's a recipient of the Elizabeth Blackwell Medal for outstanding contributions to women in the field of medicine and the Ben Kean Medal for dedication to clinical tropical medicine and training students, fellows, and practitioners. Dr. Barry is the founder of WomenLift Health, a non-governmental organization incubated at Stanford that expands the power and influence of talented women in global health and catalyzes systemic change to achieve gender equality in leadership.

Professorship | **$6M each**

An endowed professorship is the highest honor the university can bestow upon a faculty member. Established as permanent funds that provide an annual payout, endowed professorships play a vital role in recruiting and retaining world-renowned scholars and educators while allowing the department to lead major advances in research and treatment. With this funding, investigators can pursue their most promising and creative ideas to improve lives amongst the world's most vulnerable populations.

Directorship | **$5M each**

An endowed directorship provides stability while allowing the director to drive the vision of the program and identify new opportunities for growth and impact. It provides resources for the director to pursue their own research and collaborate with partners here and abroad.

Media Fellowship | **$100K each**

The need for effective communication skills among emerging doctors is at an all-time high. The public health landscape necessitates experts who can listen empathetically and convey complex ideas simply. Trust is paramount in communication, and health care professionals are among the most trusted figures in society. This program provides one fellow annually the opportunity for training from the Stanford Journalism program, embedding experiences with CNN and leading global health organizations, and a mentored capstone project in which fellows report an untold global health story.

Seed Grants | **$50K increments**

Seed funding for early-stage research launches new interdisciplinary projects and allows our researchers to accumulate sufficient "proof of concept" data to successfully apply for follow-on grants from traditional funding sources such as the National Institutes of Health. Competitive seed grant awards enable faculty to train the next generation of global health leaders, create equitable partnerships, and fuel true innovation—high-risk, high-reward ideas that establish new realms of discovery and spark groundbreaking solutions.

General Operating Support | **Any amount**

This funding is always the most difficult to raise but crucial to sustaining a productive and ongoing center. Discretionary support enables strategic investments in salary support for the most promising and timely projects, including nimble responses to emerging global health challenges as well as urgent convenings. General funds can also support important technology development in low-resource settings and new fellowships.

The Center for Innovation in Global Health welcomes inquiries about supporting our work. We have a variety of projects with varying funding needs, including: seed grants, field research support, fellowships, development of educational materials, research and educational platforms with local partners in key geographies, endowed directorship or professorship, and expendable monies for faculty or students to globalize research projects.

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Join us in our mission to transform global health care. Your gift empowers our ability to support emerging leaders worldwide, drive collaborative research, and expand access to life-saving care—to build a future where everyone lives a healthy life on a thriving planet.

To learn more about how you can support these efforts, please contact:

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