

## IPA-GAVI-UNICEF National Pediatric Immunization & MDG Champions Workshop Participant Survey Feedback Report



The first IPA-GAVI-UNICEF National Pediatric Immunization and MDG Champions Workshop was held in Johannesburg, South Africa in August 2010. Forty-seven participants came from Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Benin, Burkina Faso, D.R. Congo, Ethiopia, Cameroon, Ghana, Haiti, India, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, Malawi, Nepal, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Lao PDR, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and South Africa. Pre-workshop and post-workshop surveys were completed by the participants to evaluate the effectiveness of the program's curriculum.

### Findings:

- **38** of the workshop attendees reported they **had experience doing advocacy** in some capacity.
- **12** stated they **had no prior advocacy experience**.
- **45 post-workshop surveys** were collected from the 47 participants.
- Before the workshop began, attendees relayed what topics relating to advocacy would be particularly useful and important for the workshop to cover.
  - Among the choices given, **learning how to talk to policy-makers garnered the most responses** (35), followed closely by discussion with other scientists or health professionals (33), engaging the public (30), working with media (28), and theories underlying advocacy and communications (21).
  - Participants also mentioned the following topics:
    - Creating advocacy materials and adapting them to local situations
    - Talking to small interest groups and persons of influence
    - Addressing and working with religious leaders
    - Communicating with labs
    - Doing research on immunization
    - Using advocacy to build team spirit
- **Parents (38), government officials (38), the media (37), and scientist and doctors (36) were consistently identified as critical target audiences** for information about immunization and child survival by all country representatives.

- Health organizations and hospitals (32), average citizens (20), and children in schools (26) were less likely to be chosen among the options as priority targets.
- Other audiences mentioned specifically by attendees include teachers, community leaders, international NGOs supporting child health, practitioners of alternative medicine, orphanage managers, and religious/traditional leaders.
  - **Religious and traditional leaders** represented an additional target group mentioned most often by participants.
- The participants were asked to share some of the actions they plan to undertake as a result of the training. **Overall, the champions planned to be, as one participant put it, more “systematic” in their advocacy activities.** There was a wide range of responses, from the very broad to the very specific. One specific activity was to organize a walk to parliament during a January 2011 Pediatric Conference. **Follow-up** with this participant about whether the march took place would be beneficial. Below are some of major steps champions plan to take as a result of this workshop:
  - Identify targets of advocacy
  - Do a situation analysis/data collection to help advocate for the development of policies that will push for the achievement of MDGs and immunization among members of pediatric societies, stakeholders, media groups, and ministries of health
  - Present arguments for why saving children’s lives is an economic issue
  - Establish networks with key immunization actors and other IPA champions
  - Design a way forward and build an advocacy action plan for vaccines that will advocate for not only jurisdiction but also sustainability and universal access
  - Brief members of their pediatric associations with information and skills learned at workshop and furthermore empower society members to become champions
  - Form groups within pediatric societies that will advocate for immunizations and MDG
  - Arrange meetings with Minister of Health, EPI directors, hospitals, community leaders
  - Work with the media and others to promote cause: Set up press conferences, write to journals/newspapers, engage movie makers and musicians to advocate for vaccines, have a public forum
  - Develop educational programs that reach out to parents and the general public
  - Explore interaction with the public on immunizations via faith based organizations
  - Celebrate World Pneumonia Day:
    - Chose an ambassador within the country
    - Apply for a small grant
    - Apply to become a GAVI Country
- **The majority of participants (32) felt that the timing of the workshop was just right.** 9 felt that it was too short and 2 felt it was too long
- **34 participants felt that the information presented was just the right amount.** 2 felt that there was too much and 7 felt that there was too little.
- The **exercise portions of the workshop were met with much positive response.** 27 participants felt that the timing of the exercises were just right, 13 felt they were too short, and 2 felt they were too long.
- **Participants felt that they were either likely or very likely to personally use and share the information and materials presented.**
- The information was presented clearly. No one indicated otherwise.

- **Group work was generally thought to have been productive**, with only one person responding otherwise. Participants generally wanted **more time** allotted to group activities.
- **Participants agreed that the workshop speakers and facilitators were knowledgeable.**
- The participants were also asked what information or activities at the workshop were most useful. **20 participants directly mentioned advocacy training and techniques.** Other topics frequently mentioned were communication skills, working with the media, addressing policy makers, and the group activities. Responses are given in more detail are listed below:
  - The importance of vaccines in saving children’s lives
  - Tools of Advocacy – choosing the right audience, creating a message, A-framework
  - Developing a plan of action that are practical and useful in regards to attaining MDGs – participant commented that “developing the action plan helped me to crystallize my vision and follow-up activities”
  - Information about crucial vaccination counterpoints
  - Media relations/communication tips
  - The sharing of ideas, experiences, and challenges between champions
- **Topics the participants indicated they would have liked to have covered or to have covered in more depth are listed below:**
  - Elaboration of current epidemiology of/scientific information about vaccine preventable disease in the world (disease burden of pneumococcal and diarrheal disease and post-immunization reduction in mortality)
  - Vaccines
    - Vaccine (ROTA & PCV) overview
    - Biotechnology and synthesis
    - Information on how to improve traditional vaccine coverage (e.g. BCG and Pertussis)
    - Information on cost – one participant felt “presence of manufacture of vaccine in the meeting could give better idea about cost and development”
    - How to handle anti-vaccine groups and sentiment
  - Brief overview and update of MDGs progress (especially MDG 4 & 5) in participating regions
    - Allow more time for countries to share their experiences
    - Exemplary case studies
    - Discussion of the obstacles and barriers countries face and overcome
  - Advocacy
    - Building the skills needed for different forms of successful advocacy
    - Economic arguments as an advocacy tool and as a way to reach out to politicians and policy makers
    - How to develop key messages, a shared vision, and a way forward
    - More exercise on how to encourage people to participate in advocacy activities
  - Communication skills revisited with opportunity for practical demonstrations
  - Interview advice
  - Address GAVI engagement, how to complete a GAVI application, and touch on GAVI support to pediatricians
  - How to lobby for funding

## Survey Conclusions:

The workshop met with **extremely positive response** from the participants. **Participants felt the information was presented clearly and by knowledgeable people in the field.** The IPA champions appreciated the opportunity to not only learn but also to share their experiences with others.

The general feeling from participant feedback, however, indicated that while it was helpful, **for the amount of information presented a longer workshop should be considered in the future.** One person

commented: “The time frame for the amount of material presented was not proportional...more time should be allocated so that this vital information can be internalized.”



**The workshop was effective in increasing the confidence of attendees to discuss child survival, immunization, and MDGs with a variety of audiences.** Due to the wide range of advocacy experience represented, it was not surprising that before the workshop 14 participants marked they felt less assured and unconfident about addressing the topics either with colleagues, with ministers of health, at a meeting of 50 parents, with a television journalist, by writing a newspaper article, at a meeting of hospital staff, or at a scientific conference. Pre-workshop survey data indicated that these participants felt most hesitant about talking with the minister of health, addressing TV journalists, and writing a newspaper article. **After the workshop, only two participants felt they would feel less comfortable speaking with either the minister of health or a television journalist.**

**Participants felt strongly that translation for French speakers was needed.** In addition, participants also suggested the following for future IPA Champions workshops:

- Pre-course materials and groupings
- Brief participant presentations (especially in exemplary countries)
- More advocacy practice/exercise

**Moreover, some participants felt that a concrete set of goals should have been laid out.** One participant suggested a post-workshop roll-out plan which would include (1) how IPA champions will keep in touch and communicate with each other (how often/by email/or in person, etc.), (2) What are the workshop’s short-, mid-, and long-term goals?, and (3) What should champions have achieved in a certain amount of time (perhaps 3 years) to call the endeavor a success?

Additionally, workshop participants felt it was important for the organizers of the workshop to periodically keep in contact through email, sharing information, or possibly publishing IPA newsletter. Attendees were eager to attend future follow-up meetings and workshops. Thus, the event in South Africa successfully reached out to the champions and allowed them to consider new ideas and ways to reach out to their communities, in turn.