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Delivering Creative Education for Health Promoters in Africa—Towards Critical Mass by " Going Global and Staying Local"

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ABSTRACT
Postgraduate opportunities for health promotion and other courses allied to health are limited in sub-Saharan Africa (apart from South Africa). There are major constraints on the development of health promotion in sub-Saharan Africa, and the lack of training capacity is one of them. Although potential students can access courses in parts of the global North where health promotion is strong — Europe, North America, Australia — this option is expensive. It also takes workers away from their posts for considerable periods and can be gender-biased. This paper describes a creative educational approach where postgraduate study is taken to Africa, from the UK, in the attempt to create communities of learning and to develop a critical mass of health promotion workers, such that they can make real change to the infrastructure for health promotion and thus to the health of the populations of their countries. In studying at home however, there is a debate to be had about whether this fulfills one goal of higher study, which is to develop cross-cultural awareness and the mindset of the " global citizen" . The paper thusquestions whether it is " better" to stay local or go global. The postgraduate course we teach in Zambia and The Gambia does seem to provide this global awareness as well as enabling health promotion workers to develop their practice, and moreover it has the capacity to develop the critical mass of workers needed to create the momentum for change.

KEYWORDS
Africa; Health Promotion; Global Citizenship; Public Health Training

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