



HARVARD  
Global Health Institute

# 2024 Global Health Symposium

April 18th, 2024  
Cambridge, MA, USA

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

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## A WORD FROM THE FACULTY DIRECTOR

The Harvard Global Health Institute held its 2nd Annual Global Health Symposium on April 18th, 2024 in Cambridge, MA and virtually. The event theme was Partnerships in Action, and it was integral to the sessions of the day.

Dr. David Walton served as the event's opening keynote, and he spoke on accompaniment – partnership at the deepest level. He provided insight on how the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative strives to accompany national malaria programs in 30 countries at every step of the malaria control and prevention process.

Throughout the day, experts discussed how partnership is at the core of the work they do around the world. Dr. Vanessa Kerry highlighted the need for partnership at the community level in generating solutions that address climate's impact on health, while Drs. Moyo, Ahonkhai and Pham stressed the significance of equitable partnership centered around knowledge exchange and increasing access to resources, specifically for clinicians engaging in research.

As for AI, one of the newer global health tools and a hot topic, partnership and the co-creation of solutions across contexts was stated as essential in ensuring AI tools are being generated with context-specific knowledge and are actually implementable.

It goes without saying that partnership is at the core of global health work – and the Harvard Global Health Institute values each and every partnership we engage in, with the ultimate goal of delivering excellence and equity in global health.

True to our theme this year, the Symposium would not be successful without our partners. My sincere gratitude to the Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School and the Harvard Data Science Initiative for co-hosting two of our panels; our speakers for sharing their expertise, and all those who joined us in-person and online for their time and support. Thank you.

### **LOUISE C. IVERS, MD, MPH, DTM&H**

Faculty Director, Harvard Global Health Institute;  
Executive Director, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH) Center for Global Health;  
David Bangsberg Endowed Chair, Global Health Equity, MGH;  
Professor of Medicine and Professor of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School







## Keynote

# A JOURNEY OF ACCOMPANIMENT: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES IN MALARIA CONTROL AND PREVENTION

David Walton, MD, MPH

U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator, U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI)

Under the theme of accompaniment, Dr. David Walton, U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator of the U.S. President's Malaria Initiative (PMI), began his address by offering a perspective on the history that shaped the current state of the malaria response.

Drawing upon his time as a medical student at Harvard working in Haiti, Dr. Walton shared how his lived experiences shaped his view of accompaniment today, and how he brought that knowledge to his role at PMI.

He acknowledged the many challenges in the fight against malaria, while working directly with national malaria programs in the 30 partner countries. Those challenges include a plateau in the once-rapid decrease of malaria cases annually - largely due to drug and insecticide resistance – limitations on how funding can be spent and disagreements on different policy approaches when faced with challenges.

The introduction of not one, but two new malaria vaccines, could be a game changer – and yet a challenge remains in ensuring equitable distribution and addressing cost.

In closing, Dr. Walton reminded attendees of their critical role as global health leaders, experts, and practitioners, to accompany those we serve as we strive for health equity.

“ *At its core, accompaniment is about being present and in true partnership, with an individual or an entity.* ”



[Click here to watch the recording](#)

## Plenary

# REIMAGINING FINANCING AND GOVERNANCE IN GLOBAL HEALTH

In partnership with the Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School



Jayati Ghosh,  
PhD, MPhil, MA



David McCoy,  
DrPH, MPhil, MCH



Gregg Gonsalves,  
PhD



Alicia Ely Yamin,  
JD, PhD, MPH

“ *What we have across the world is a broken tax system at the global level, at the international level, but also at the level of countries. We have a glimmer of hope at the moment, thanks to the African governments who are pushing ahead with an international tax convention... And if there's one thing I would ask the global health community to do... it is to put their weight behind this effort to fix this broken tax system.* ”

– David McCoy

Panelists proposed that the current global financial architecture is riddled with issues hindering governments' capacity to sufficiently fund healthcare. Structural barriers including the burden of debt, the volatility of capital flows, widespread tax evasion, and the restrictive nature of intellectual property rights, pose significant obstacles to achieving equitable and sustainable health outcomes worldwide.

To effectively tackle these challenges, the panelists called for a paradigm shift in the approach to global health, moving beyond technical fixes and focusing on addressing the root causes, including inadequate health financing. The global health community, both philanthropy and charity, needs to look critically at how it may be inadvertently causing harm by neglecting social, political and economic determinants, and over-technologizing solutions.

Drawing on lessons from HIV activism, panelists emphasized the crucial role of social activism and political engagement in challenging the power structures. They stressed the importance of strengthening public financing mechanisms, arguing that a more equitable and robust tax system is essential for generating the necessary resources to fund public health initiatives and address health inequities.



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# THE CLIMATE CRISIS IS A HEALTH CRISIS: A CONVERSATION WITH VANESSA KERRY, MD, MS

Interviewed by Nico Dominguez Carrero, Harvard University Undergraduate Student

“*Investing in health, to me, is a way for us to manage multiple problems...Our globe continues to invest in health through the lenses of problems...But if we took the approach that we were going to invest in strong resilient health systems founded on a health workforce that can meet all those burdens of disease, we actually solve multiple problems.*”



In this engaging conversation, Dr. Vanessa Kerry, WHO Special Envoy for Climate Change and Health, and Nico Dominguez Carrero, an undergraduate student at Harvard, discussed how climate change and health are related, and what could the young generation do about it.

Dr. Kerry stated in her remarks that “climate change impacts every single aspect of our health.” Mental health and anxiety, non-communicable diseases, vector-borne diseases, communicable diseases, and many others, are impacted both directly and indirectly by climate change. Vulnerable populations, notably individuals living in conflict zones, face difficulty accessing the most basic of care due to poor infrastructure and funding gaps – gaps that exist because investment is discouraged in high-risk locations. This worsening of existing health problems and creation of new threats is exactly why the global community needs to take action immediately.

How do we move forward? Dr. Kerry argues that a global consensus is needed around the threat, coupled with a shift from funding problem-specific initiatives to investing in building resilient health systems – with the healthcare workforce being the critical component to a resilient health system.

Carrero pointed out that the intersection of global health and climate change had become increasingly important on the global agenda. Addressing climate change and its impact on health requires a multifaceted approach that considers risk, leadership challenges, and community needs, while ensuring partnership at the community level is a top priority.



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## Plenary

# LEARNING WHILE DOING: NAVIGATING THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN SCIENCE AND SERVICE DELIVERY

“ It’s important to remember that the goal is being able to provide access to comprehensive care, not a research outcome. ”

– Aima Ahonkhai



Sikhulile Moyo,  
PhD, MS, MPH



Aima Ahonkhai,  
MD, MPH



Phuong N. Pham,  
PhD, MPH



Jean Gregory  
Jerome, MD, MPH

The moderator, Dr. Gregory Jerome, set the stage by questioning factors contributing to low research output in some low-income regions of the globe, despite high interest and engagement by clinicians providing health services. Panelists argued that barriers clinicians face like lack of protected time and funding, strained workforces, misaligned incentives, and gaps in research infrastructure and support had to be addressed to allow clinicians to conduct more research.

Some of the proposed solutions include bidirectional partnerships, structured mentorship, government recognition and research funding, and grants for capacity building and infrastructure. The panelists agreed that building strong partnerships, increasing communication between partners across countries and contexts, and elevating the voices of partners and researchers are of utmost importance through each stage of the research process.



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## Plenary

# ADVANCING AI FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

In partnership with the Harvard Data Science Initiative

“AI is not something which is some natural phenomenon. It’s something that we are going to shape by ourselves. And so how can we get the newer generation to shape this AI in a more beneficial direction for society? This whole field needs to be developed and this will obviously be a collaborative effort in terms of being able to develop this curriculum. Hopefully we will come to a point where we develop core techniques and ultimately have a textbook that is more dedicated to this education of AI for society.”

- Milind Tambe



Milind Tambe,  
PhD, MS



Adeline Boatın,  
MD, MPH



Austin Demby,  
PhD, MPH



Judy Gichoya,  
MD, MS

AI shows enormous potential for social good, yet challenges remain that must be considered in the practical deployment of AI systems, especially in resource-limited contexts. Setting the stage for what was a riveting conversation around AI development, data governance structures, Dr. Judy Gichoya, Associate Professor in the Department of Radiology at Emory University said, “you’ll hear ‘there are not enough doctors, AI can help’. Now in the U.S. the message is ‘doctors are tired, AI will help,’ but if you think about the practicality of deploying AI systems, it’s very, very difficult.”

Panelists discussed the importance of training AI developers and researchers, not just in methodology and algorithm generation, but in ethical and responsible AI system implementation. The “co-creation of solutions”, as Dr. Austin Demby noted, with partners in the Global South, is essential in creating tools that are context specific and impactful. Dr. Judy Gichoya stressed the need to create context-specific tools, and emphasized the equal importance of data governance that empowers both the researchers and in-country implementers.



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## Keynote

# IMPORTANCE OF PARTNERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE WHEN BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

ROCIO SÁENZ, MD

“ *There is not only the dependence for vaccine production – it's for the knowledge. It's very important as a global people to really understand that the knowledge has a gap between the North to the South and that the decisions [made] globally... has impact at the local communities.* ”

Dr. Rocío Sáenz, the former Minister of Health of Costa Rica, is well positioned to paint the picture of a country coming off the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic with a laser focus on building a more resilient healthcare system. Dr. Saenz described a unified system, one that prioritizes a comprehensive approach to health, encompassing well-being, freedom, and opportunity beyond just the absence of disease. In her address Dr. Sáenz provided an overview of the Costa Rican healthcare system, the culture around vaccines in her country, and lessons learned through the challenges she faced as Minister of Health, and now as the Executive Director of the Network of the Americas for Health Equity.

Dr. Sáenz stressed the importance of research and continuous evaluation of health programs to optimize program effectiveness and address pertinent issues like vaccine hesitancy. She argued that budgeting and planning need to remain flexible and adaptable to handle unforeseen health events - like future pandemics - and global risks including social conflict and climate change. Additionally, she highlighted the need to generate effective communication strategies to counter misinformation.

Dr. Sáenz acknowledged that the unprecedented speed of the COVID-19 vaccine development and distribution necessitated a continued focus on safety monitoring and building trust – a process the Costa Rican health system is acutely focused on refining now, ahead of the next public health emergency.



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## Appendix: 2024 Symposium Agenda

9:00AM – 9:10AM.	<p><a href="#">Welcome Remarks</a></p> <p>Louise Ivers, MD, MPH, Director, Harvard Global Health Institute; Director, Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Global Health; David Bangsberg MD, MPH Endowed Chair in Global Health Equity, Mass General Hospital; Professor of global health and social medicine, and Professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School</p>
9:10AM – 9:20AM	<p><a href="#">Opening Remarks</a></p> <p>Mark Elliott, PhD, Vice Provost for International Affairs, Harvard University; Mark Schwartz Professor of Chinese and Inner Asian History in the Department of East Asian Languages and Civilizations and in the Department of History in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences</p>
9:25AM – 10:10AM	<p><a href="#">Keynote Address: A Journey of Accompaniment: Progress and Challenges in Malaria Control and Elimination</a></p> <p>David Walton, MD, MPH, U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator, U.S. President’s Malaria Initiative (PMI) Introduced by Dyann Wirth, PhD, Richard Pearson Strong Professor Immunology and Infectious Diseases, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health</p>
10:15AM – 11:10AM	<p><a href="#">Reimagining Financing and Governance for Global Health</a></p> <p>Hosted in partnership with the Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology, and Bioethics at Harvard Law School Introduced by I. Glenn Cohen, JD, James A. Attwood and Leslie Williams Professor of Law; Deputy Dean; Faculty Director, Petrie-Flom Center for Health Law Policy, Biotechnology &amp; Bioethics</p> <p><b>SPEAKERS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Jayati Ghosh, PhD, MPhil, MA, Professor of Economics, University of Massachusetts Amherst</li><li>• David McCoy, DrPH, MPhil, MCH, Evidence to Policy Research Lead, United Nations University’s International Institute for Global Health</li><li>• Gregg Gonsalves, PhD, Associate Professor, Yale School of Public Health, Co-Director, Global Health Justice Partnership</li><li>• Moderated by Alicia Ely Yamin, JD, PhD, MPH, Lecturer on Law, Senior Fellow, Petrie-Flom Center at Harvard Law School; Senior Advisor on Human Rights and Health Policy, Partners In Health; Adjunct Senior Lecturer on Health Policy and Management, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health</li></ul> <p><b>PANEL DESCRIPTION</b></p> <p>This session will examine how cross-sector partnerships are reshaping traditional approaches to financing and governance in global health. The esteemed panel of experts will consider how collaborative efforts among governments, NGOs, academia, and the private sector can drive effective financing mechanisms and transparent governance frameworks that advance health equity worldwide. From exploring innovative financing mechanisms to discussing strategies for enhancing accountability and stakeholder engagement, attendees will learn how strategic alliances between diverse stakeholders can mobilize resources more efficiently and foster accountable, transparent governance structures. Join us as we delve into the transformative potential of reimagined financing and governance models for global health.</p>
11:10AM – 11:25AM	Break
11:30AM – 12:05PM	<p><a href="#">The Climate Crisis is a Health Crisis</a></p> <p>A conversation with Vanessa Kerry, MD, MS, Director-General Special Envoy for Climate Change and Health, WHO; Founder and CEO, SEED Global Health, Associate Professor of Medicine, Harvard Medical School</p> <p>Introduced by James Stock, PhD, MS, Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability; Director, Salata Institute for Climate Change and Sustainability; Harold Hitchings Burbank Professor of Political Economy</p> <p>Interviewed by Nico Dominguez Carrero, Harvard University Undergraduate Student</p>



## Appendix: 2024 Symposium Agenda (cont'd)

12:10PM – 1:05PM

### [Learning While Doing: Navigating the Conflicts Between Research, Science and Service Delivery](#)

Introduced by Vikram Patel, PhD, MBBS, FMedSci, Paul Farmer Professor of Global Health, Chair of the Department of Global Health and Social Medicine, Harvard Medical School

#### SPEAKERS

- Sikhulile Moyo, PhD, MS, MPH, Director, Botswana-Harvard AIDS Institute Partnerships (BHP)
- Aima Ahonkhai, MD, MPH, Associate Physician in Medicine, Associate Director, Bio-behavioral and Community Science Core, Massachusetts General Hospital; Director, Community-Engaged Research Program, Harvard University Center for AIDS Research
- Phuong N. Pham, PhD, MPH, Associate Professor, Harvard Medical School and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health; Director of Education, Harvard Humanitarian Initiative; Co-founder, KoboToolbox
- Moderated by Jean Gregory Jerome, MD, MPH, Senior Advisor, Health Systems Strengthening, Partners In Health, Haiti

#### PANEL DESCRIPTION

This session will explore the relationship between health service delivery and research, particularly in the context of low-income countries. Our esteemed panelists will delve into the factors contributing to the discrepancy between high interest but low engagement in research among health professionals, with a particular focus on the barriers to clinicians' engagement in research. Panelist will draw from firsthand experiences and insights into navigating this tension on the ground, offering practical strategies for enhancing research productivity while maintaining a focus on effective service delivery. In this session, panelists will also highlight successful collaborations between health organizations and academic institutions, showcasing replicable models for driving research excellence in practice.

1:05PM – 2:05PM

Lunch

2:15PM – 3:10PM

### [Advancing AI for Global Health, hosted in partnership with the Harvard Data Science Initiative](#)

Introduced by Francesca Dominici, PhD. Director, Harvard Data Science Initiative; Clarence James Gamble Professor of Biostatistics, Population, and Data Science, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health

#### SPEAKERS

- Milind Tambe, PhD, MS, Principal Scientist, Director for "AI for Social Good", Google Research; Gordon McKay Professor of Computer Science and Director of Center for Research in Computation and Society, Harvard University
- Austin Demby, PhD, MPH, Minister of Health, Sierra Leone
- Judy Gichoya, MD, MS, Associate Professor, Department of Radiology and Imaging Sciences, Emory University School of Medicine;
- Moderated by Adeline Boatin, MD, MPH, Assistant Professor in Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Biology, Harvard Medical School

#### PANEL DESCRIPTION

This session will elevate diverse perspectives on the development, deployment, and impact of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies in addressing global health disparities. From groundbreaking research in AI-driven diagnostics and therapeutics to the practical integration of AI tools in resource-constrained settings, attendees will gain valuable insights into the transformative potential of AI for improving health outcomes worldwide. The esteemed panel of experts will demonstrate how strategic partnerships between academia, industry, government, and non-profit sectors are driving the adoption of AI solutions to address pressing global health challenges. Join us as we explore the collaborative efforts shaping the future of AI for global health and unlocking its potential to improve healthcare delivery and outcomes on a global scale.

3:15PM – 4:00PM

### [Keynote Address: Importance of Partnership and Governance when Building a Sustainable Immunization Program](#)

Rocio Saenz, MD, Executive Director of the Network of the Americas for Health Equity

Introduced by Louise Ivers MD, MPH, Director, Harvard Global Health Institute; Director, Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Global Health; David Bangsberg MD, MPH Endowed Chair in Global Health Equity, Mass General Hospital; Professor of global health and social medicine, and Professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School

4:00PM – 4:15PM


### [Closing Remarks](#)

Louise Ivers, MD, MPH, Director, Harvard Global Health Institute; Director, Massachusetts General Hospital Center for Global Health; David Bangsberg MD, MPH Endowed Chair in Global Health Equity, Mass General Hospital; Professor of global health and social medicine, and Professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School

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