

**Background:**

Germany has started to take on greater responsibility in global health policy. Furthermore, new threats, such as climate change, have increased sensitivity. However, health professionals are not well prepared to respond to the new tasks and the changing needs of the population. Global health is still largely missing from the education and training programmes of the vast majority of professional groups in Germany. This paper aims to illustrate how students can become advocates of global health education and enhance institutional change, when health policy fails to act effectively.

**Methods:**

An elective programme introduced in September 2019 in the undergraduate medical curriculum at Hannover Medical School, Germany, serves as a case study to explore the tools and substance of the programme, as well as the stakeholders involved.

**Results:**

The new global health programme utilises a window of opportunity in the curriculum, which includes a small number of mandatory seminars which students can choose from. It builds on five major pillars: collaboration between students and the programme coordinator and participatory curriculum development; the SDGs as framework and guidance of the curriculum; a multiprofessional and transsectoral teaching team; collaboration with NGOs; strong networks through collaboration with the national German medical students' association. Sustainability remains a major challenge, yet there is now institutional and financial support at Hannover Medical School and the new German National Competence Based Catalogue of Learning Objectives for Undergraduate Medical Education also includes global health issues.

**Conclusions:**

Students as advocates for global health can make a difference and enhance institutional change through transsectoral, participatory teaching programmes.

## Students as advocates of global health goals: the case of medical education in Germany

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