
Science of Scaling-Up Public Health High Impact Practices: University of Malaya Training Session

July 9, 2024
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



EXPANDNET



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Background

In mid-June 2024, Dr. Haris Ahmed, a key member of the ExpandNet Secretariat and CEO of The Scaling-up Accelerators (TSA), reached out to Professor Victor Hoe from the University of Malaya to discuss the possibility of conducting a session on the science of scaling up. Dr. Haris expressed his long-standing commitment to advancing public health interventions and scaling them effectively through frameworks developed in collaboration with WHO and ExpandNet. He also mentioned his engagements with MSPH students in Pakistan and his current involvement in an Asia-Pacific workshop in Manila.

Following this, an invitation was extended to Dr. Haris by Professor Victor Hoe to conduct a session at the University of Malaya on Tuesday, July 9, 2024. The session aimed to provide MPH and DrPH students with a comprehensive understanding of scaling up public health interventions using the WHO/ExpandNet framework.

Correspondence with the University of Malaya

On June 17, 2024, Professor Victor responded positively to Dr. Haris's email, expressing enthusiasm about meeting him and involving him in a session with the university's MPH and DrPH students. Although Professor Victor was scheduled to attend the 8th Asia-Pacific Conference on Public Health in Kuching, he connected Dr. Haris with Dr. Rama Krishna to coordinate the session.

By June 25, 2024, Dr. Haris had finalized the details with Dr. Rama, sharing his session plan, bio, and other necessary information. Despite a brief delay, Dr. Haris arrived in Kuala Lumpur on July 8, 2024, ready for the session the following day.

Session Overview

- **Date:** Tuesday, July 9, 2024
- **Time:** 10:00 AM to 12:00 Noon
- **Venue:** University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Objective:

The session aimed to orient MPH and DrPH students on the science of scaling up using the WHO/ExpandNet Framework. Participants were given the opportunity to reflect on their research work and assess its alignment with the framework.

Key Approaches:

The orientation session provided participants with a basic understanding of ExpandNet tools and how to apply them to their family planning initiatives. The approach was practical, interactive, and reflective, ensuring immediate relevance to the participants' work.

Session Structure:

1. **Comprehensive Introduction:**
 - Overview of the importance of scaling up.
 - History and evolution of ExpandNet.



- Definitions and key principles underpinning the framework.

2. Phased Learning:

- **Phase I:** Designing projects with scalability as a core focus.
- **Phase II:** Developing a robust scaling-up strategy using the nine-step approach.
- **Phase III:** Strategic management of the scaling-up process.

3. Interactive Discussions:

Facilitated discussions after each phase to ensure participants could relate the concepts to their own research work.



Poster and Agenda:

The session was advertised through a poster by the University of Malaya, which included Dr. Haris's bio and the session agenda.

Summary of Attendance



The session was attended by 31 students, consisting of 16 males and 14 females from both the MPH and DrPH programs, along with two faculty members. The participants were engaged throughout the session, actively participating in discussions and Q&A.

Questions and Answers

During the interactive session, students raised several pertinent questions, covering a range of topics related to the practical application of scaling-up strategies. One of the key inquiries was about the importance of incorporating scaling-up strategies in public health programs. Dr. Haris emphasized that scaling up is essential to maximize the impact of successful interventions, ensuring that they benefit a broader population. Another question focused on how to ensure that scaling-up efforts are sustainable. Dr. Haris responded by explaining that sustainability can be achieved by embedding scaling-up strategies into national health programs and securing the commitment of local stakeholders. Additionally, students were curious about the challenges expected when implementing scaling-up initiatives in resource-limited settings. Dr. Haris highlighted that challenges often include limited resources, lack of trained personnel, and potential resistance to change. However, he noted that these obstacles can be overcome through strategic planning, community engagement, and securing government buy-in. These were just some of the questions that sparked a deeper understanding and discussion among the participants.



Evaluation

A virtual evaluation was conducted, and all participants provided feedback. The training session received positive feedback from participants, with several key takeaways and suggestions for future improvement. One participant shared, "Overall good," reflecting a general satisfaction with the workshop. Another

participant appreciated the relevance of the content, noting, "The concept of scaling up is new for me. Thank you for introducing me to this concept. I believe it gives a good idea on how to make my research relevant to the public."



There were also suggestions for making the workshop even more applicable to the local context. For instance, a participant mentioned, "Practical advice for Malaysian setting," highlighting the need for context-specific guidance. Another participant suggested enhancing the learning experience by providing more resources, stating, "One area of improvement is maybe the facilitator can give reading information on how they developed their framework. This is to make it easier to understand."

In addition to the positive feedback, there was a request for more interactive elements in the workshop. A participant mentioned, "More Tabletop exercise/example," indicating an interest in practical exercises that could further reinforce the learning objectives.

Overall, the feedback underscores the success of the workshop in introducing new concepts and engaging participants, while also providing valuable insights for future improvements.

Key takeaways included:

- **Systematic Approach to Scaling Up:** Participants learned the importance of planning for scale-up from the outset of any intervention.
- **Practical Application:** The training emphasized the importance of integrating scaling-up strategies into national programs to ensure sustainability.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** The session highlighted the need for ownership by government and local stakeholders to ensure successful scaling up.

Conclusion

The training session provided valuable insights into the science of scaling up public health interventions. Participants left with a comprehensive understanding of the ExpandNet framework and its practical applications. The session concluded with



the distribution of ExpandNet resource materials and an introduction to the Scaling-up Learning Center (SLC). Faculty members expressed their appreciation to Dr. Haris for bringing these learnings to UM. Dr. Rama presented a token of appreciation, while Dr. Haris thanked Professor Victor for the opportunity and Dr. Rama for the excellent organization of the session.

Follow-up

On August 4, 2024, Dr. Haris reached out to Professor Victor, expressing gratitude for the opportunity and sharing the evaluation results. He highlighted the potential for future collaborations and offered to conduct

further sessions or workshops. Dr. Haris also expressed his willingness to travel to Kuala Lumpur to facilitate capacity-building in person if needed. In response, on August 5, 2024, Professor Victor congratulated Dr. Haris on his new venture, TSA, and expressed interest in further collaboration opportunities.

The University wrote up an article on this training workshop and posted it on their website, [Science of Scaling-Up Public Health High Impact Practices – Systematic Approach | Department of Social and Preventive Medicine \(um.edu.my\)](https://www.um.edu.my/scaling-up-public-health-high-impact-practices-systematic-approach)

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First name

Science of Scaling-Up Public Health High Impact Practices – Systematic Approach

Published 10 July 2024

On the 9th of July 2024, the Department of Social and Preventive Medicine hosted a talk by Dr Haris Ahmed titled Science of Scaling-Up Public Health High Impact Practices – Systematic Approach.



Science of Scaling-Up Public Health High Impact Practices - Systematic Approach

The orientation session is designed to provide participants with a basic understanding of the ExpandNet tools and how to apply them to their family planning initiatives. The approach will be practical, interactive, and reflective, ensuring that participants can immediately see the relevance of the tools to their research work.

Date Tuesday, 9 July 2024

Time 10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Venue Regional Training Centre for Western Pacific Region, Department of Social and Preventive Medicine, Level 8, Block J, Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaysia



Dr Haris Ahmed, with over 20 years of experience in public health management, specialises in Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health, and reproductive health and family planning. He holds a medical degree, a Master of Public Health from Universiti Malaysia, and a fellowship from the Royal Society for Public Health. Dr Ahmed has held notable leadership roles including Chief of Party for the Sukin Initiative, Team Lead – South with Daladum, and Director of programs at Pathfinder International. He has successfully led projects that significantly improved health outcomes and has a strong background in communicable diseases, emergency preparedness, and health education. Dr Ahmed is the founder and CEO of The Scaling-up Agency, and a founding member and board director of the White Ribbon Alliance. Pakistan, he also serves on the secretariat for ExpandNet, a network based in California, USA.

ORGANISED BY:



The objective of this session is to orient MPH and DrPH students on the science of scaling up using the WHO/ExpandNet Framework. Participants will have the opportunity to reflect on their own research work and assess alignment with the framework.

Activity	Details
Introduction and Objectives	Welcome remarks, introduction of participants, and sharing the objectives of the session.
Introduction to Scaling Up and ExpandNet Framework	Overview of the importance of scaling up, history of ExpandNet, definition, and underlying principles.
Phase I: Beginning with Sustainable Scale-Up in Mind	Introduction to WHO/ExpandNet guidance for planning and implementing pilot projects with 12 recommendations.
Discussion	Facilitated discussion guided by questions about Phase I.
Phase II: WHO/ExpandNet Scaling-Up Framework	Overview of the elements of the framework, strategic choice areas, and the nine-step approach for developing a strategy.
Discussion	Plenary discussion of reflections on the scaling-up framework and guidance presented.
Introduction to SLC	The participants will be introduced to Scaling-up Learning Center.
Closing Remarks and Evaluation	Summary of the session, closing remarks, and completion of the online evaluation and certificate distribution.

By the end of the session, participants will have a basic understanding of the ExpandNet tools and a clear plan for integrating these tools into their research work.

Attachments:



Session Plan
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