

HUMANITY AND HEALTH

REIMAGINING EQUITY FOR ALL: Strategy 2023 - 2028



IGHN Team At Our Flagship Global Health Conference | October 2022





Dear Global Health Community,

It is with great excitement that we, the Board of Directors, present to you our latest strategy document. This document represents a collective effort to address the most pressing health challenges of our time and to ensure that everyone, everywhere has access to quality health care.

It is more important than ever that we work together to tackle global health issues. Our strategy document outlines a comprehensive approach to addressing these challenges, through building capacity in global health and supporting high-quality networking and partnerships between governments, the private sector, and civil society.

We believe that by working together and leveraging our collective expertise, resources, and networks, we can make a meaningful impact on global health. We hope that this document will serve as a call to action for all stakeholders, and inspire everyone to play their part in making the world a healthier place.

Thank you for your continued commitment to global health. We look forward to working together to achieve our shared goals to maximise Ireland's contribution to a world in which all people of all ages have the opportunity to achieve and sustain good health and wellbeing.

Sincerely,

Dr Khalifa Elmusharaf, MBBS, PgCert, PgDip, FRSPH, FFPH, MRSTMH IPMA@C, PhD

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS,
The Irish Global Health Network

Acknowledgements

The Irish Global Health Network would like to sincerely thank all of our members and partners for continuing to bring their support, enthusiasm and experience to the work of the Network.

The Irish Global Health Network

The centrality of Global Health in all our lives has rarely been more palpable than in recent years. The profound effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic highlighted existing inadequacies in health services, exacerbated shortages of human resources for health, rolled back gains toward reaching SDG targets, and widened the chasm of inequalities.

It is increasingly clear that health is indeed global and building global resilience in the face of multiple threats is essential. Pandemic preparedness will continue to be a priority globally, with investment necessary in evidence-based practices to strengthen health systems and protect populations from disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and other health emergencies. 'Infodemics' have emerged as part of our global vernacular reminding us of the crucial need to mitigate the effects of false information through tailored public information campaigns and intersectoral collaboration. Conflict and political upheaval leading to crises of refugees and internally displaced populations continues to impact the lives of millions of people. The need to strengthen mental health and psychosocial services globally is at a critical juncture reflected in **WHO's** call to action on mental health transformation. Climate Disasters continue to be a threat, increasing deaths, illnesses due to extreme weather events, causing food system disruptions and population displacement. Inclusion, gender and stigma remain top barriers to achieving health for all and therein lie solutions to tackling the most complex of global health issues. How we respond, collectively, as a global community to these threats make the difference in improving the lives of those who carry the biggest health burden.

“The most vulnerable populations in the world have now become even more vulnerable. Those we left behind before are now even further behind. Covid has laid bare and exploited fundamental inequities in access to public healthcare and the reality that healthcare can be used to empower or curtail the human, civil and political rights.”
Mike Ryan, Executive Director, WHO Health Emergencies Programme, acceptance speech at the Trócaire Romero award 2021.

MIKE RYAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, WHO Health Emergencies Programme, acceptance speech at the Trocaire Romero award 2021.

The Irish Global Health Network (IGHN) is an independent network of people from different backgrounds, sectors and disciplines who are concerned with health inequalities and issues that impact on the health and development of populations at a global level, with a particular commitment to those living in middle and low-income countries.

First established in 2004, **IGHN** has within its membership, health and development professionals and others with an interest in and a commitment to influencing education, advocacy, policy and learning. Members come from the NGO sector, health sector and academic both in Ireland and in the Global South.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2018-2022

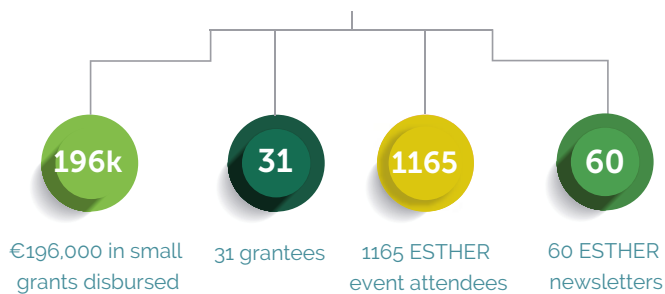
Goal 1:

Build Capacity in **Global Health**



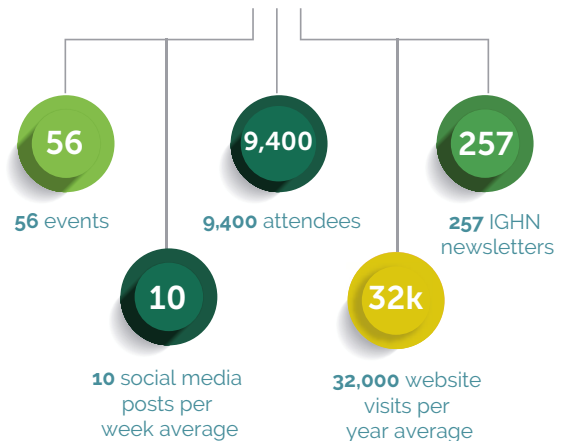
Goal 3:

Support Engagement in **Global Health** through Facilitation of High Quality Partnerships



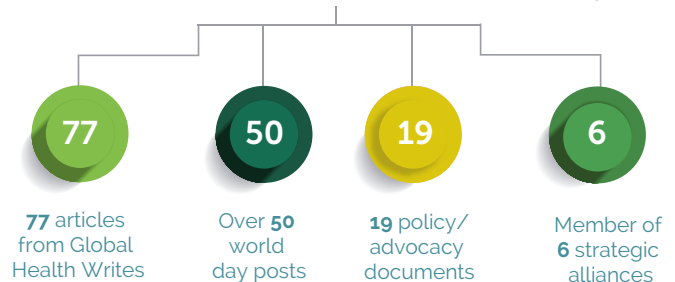
Goal 2:

Provide a Platform for Increased **Knowledge, Dialogue and Networking**



Goal 4:

Influence **Global Health** Policy, both in Ireland and Internationally





IGHN VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

OUR VISION

Maximising Ireland's contribution to a world in which all people of all ages have the opportunity to achieve and sustain good health and well-being.

OUR MISSION

Our mission as a network is to facilitate learning, connecting, influencing and engaging for individuals and institutions within the global health community in Ireland and worldwide.

OUR VALUES AND WAYS OF WORKING

We are a network, where membership is open to all and everyone is treated with respect. We strive constantly to improve our work based on learning from our actions, partners, stakeholders and members who are central to our ability to continue to deliver quality activities valued by our members and funders. We work both proactively and responsively. We are proactive in identifying key issues and cross-cutting themes that are important for the global health community in Ireland. We are responsive to emerging issues and member or partner interests. We ensure meaningful participation of young professionals in all activities we conduct. Within our organisation, we seek to be open and transparent about our decision-making processes and accountable to our funders and membership.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE

IGHN is committed to embedding equality, diversity, inclusion and justice (*EDIJ*) across our activities to ensure that the space we work in, interact, and create sustainable global health solutions is defined by dignity and respect using a systematic and intentional approach.





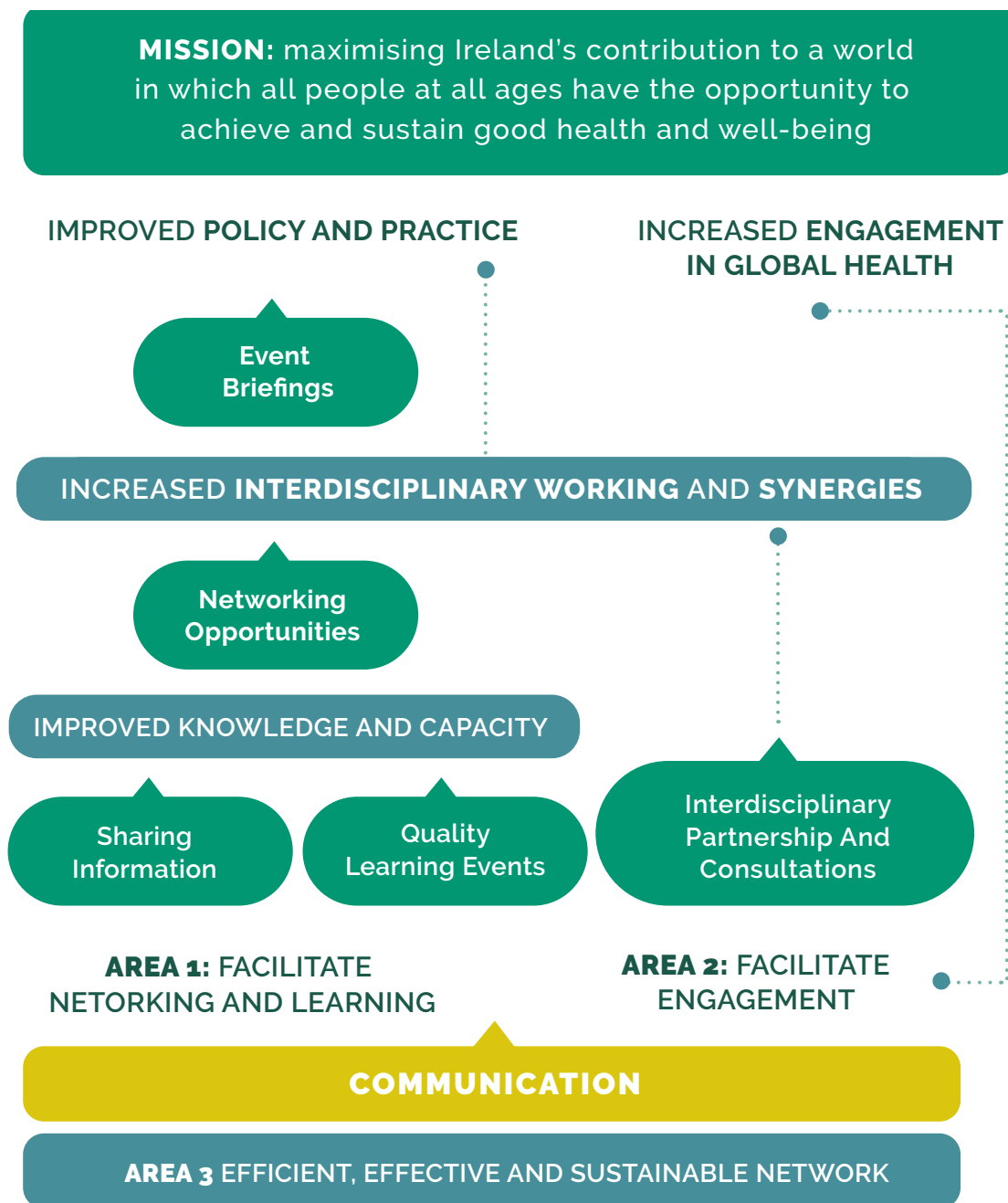
Panel discussion at our flagship global health conference, October 2022 (Image © IGHN 2023)

What We Do

We seek to create efficiencies and synergies, promote effectiveness and reduce duplication in the work of the global health community in Ireland through facilitating the flow of information between disciplines, between sectors and between funders and recipients. By engaging more young people, health sector professionals, development professionals and academics in global health we are sustaining and, where possible, growing the Irish contribution to global health.

OUR THEORY OF CHANGE

Our theory of change encompasses all the work we do. Its foundation lies in building and sustaining an effective and efficient network, paired with high-quality communications. From there, each of our strategic focal areas and actions build upon each other to allow us to reach our mission.



Strategic Focal Areas

AREA 1: Facilitate Networking and Learning	AREA 1: Facilitate Networking and Learning
AREA 3: Efficient, Effective And Sustainable Network	

WE HAVE TWO EXTERNAL STRATEGIC FOCAL AREAS AND ONE INTERNAL FOCAL AREA RELATING TO THE STRENGTH OF THE ORGANISATION ITSELF. **THESE ARE:**

AREA 1:	Facilitate networking and learning through high quality events and sharing information
AREA 2:	Facilitate engagement in global health through partnerships and linking individuals and organisations
AREA 3:	Ensure an effective, efficient and sustainable network

AREA 1: FACILITATE NETWORKING AND LEARNING THROUGH HIGH-QUALITY EVENTS AND SHARING INFORMATION

A key strength of our network is the ability to connect individuals and institutions across disciplines to innovate, coordinate, and learn from each other. We do this through providing high quality learning opportunities and through the organisation of events and conferences. We are also a unique conduit for information within the global health community in Ireland, accessed by our members, Irish Aid and the wider global health community. Our high-quality learning events are built around a cross-cutting theme each year allowing us to build traction among practitioners, researchers and policy makers and ensure that Irish work in global health continues to be at the cutting edge.

While our members come from a variety of disciplines and backgrounds there are many issues in global health that underpin the ability to deliver quality health services within limited resources. These are global issues faced by all countries. In exploring the best way to address these issues we can benefit not only health outcomes in low and middle-income countries but also here in Ireland. Cross-cutting issues address areas that apply across multiple technical areas in health sector programming.

Examples of these cross-cutting global-local issues include:

To do justice to these often-complex issues, we work under a broad theme which will be explored through a linked series of events, policy and practice briefings, podcasts, information sharing and where applicable media awareness.

- Pandemics, such as COVID-19
- Addressing gender equity
- Strengthening health systems
- Strengthening the health workforce
- Achieving universal health coverage
- Working towards decolonization of the global health space
- Achieving equitable access to medicines and vaccines
- Improving the interface between primary health care and community health
- Embedding quality improvement in health service delivery
- Improving mental health and well-being
- Managing non-communicable diseases
- Promoting human rights
- Youth-friendly services
- Addressing stigma and inclusion
- Strengthening management and leadership
- Reaching underserved populations
- Ensuring inclusion of people with disabilities
- Working to end gender-based violence

We will also seek to create new partnerships and work alongside both international and national interest groups connected to the theme. All these activities will build on each other in one thematic area to create traction and synergy that has the potential to positively influence policy and practice in Ireland.

The IGHN is proud to be the host of the Irish Aid Annual Professor Father Michael Kelly Lecture on HIV and AIDS. This lecture brings media attention and ensures that HIV/AIDS remains on the national and global health agenda. We will continue to organise and host the lecture.

We will focus on creating new innovative methods to link people together based on their interests or potential synergies. In particular, we will focus on innovative methods to bring people together at our events and will evaluate how technology might help us signpost and connect people with similar or complementary interests.

We intend to host regular global health themed events and conferences in Ireland subject to identifying sufficient resources required for organising and supporting them. Our events are organised in partnership with NGOs, the Health Service Executive and academic institutions.

As a network with members across Ireland and further afield, many of our members access our e-communications through the newsletter, website, or social media platforms including Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube.

- The newsletter forms a vital conduit of news and opportunities within the global health community in Ireland. It also allows us to circulate information on emerging and key issues in global health.
- Our YouTube channel allows us to reach a larger audience for some of our key speakers and lectures.
- Our website and social media pages keep our membership up to date on upcoming events and allows us to archive key information and resources.
- Our social media platforms allow us to engage with the global health community both here in Ireland and globally.

We seek to highlight the work of our members, engage in key debates and raise awareness around emerging and key issues in global health.

EXAMPLES OF KEY ACTIVITIES			
IGHN Bi-annual abstract-driven Conference	Podcast series on key global health issues	Irish Aid Professor Father Michael Kelly lecture on HIV and AIDS	Learning events on key emerging issues in global health
Innovative networking opportunities at events and online	Newsletters circulated at least twice a month to the membership	Appropriate use of the website and social media channels to circulate and archive information	Engage with the global health community in Ireland and globally through social media



Some of the wonderful speakers at the Annual Professor Father Michael Kelly Lecture on HIV and AIDS, December 2022 (Image © IGHN 2023)

AREA 2: FACILITATE ENGAGEMENT IN GLOBAL HEALTH THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS AND LINKING INDIVIDUALS AND ORGANISATIONS

As a network, our primary role is to link organisations and individuals to enhance learning and collaboration. We seek to promote engagement in global health across disciplines. We will continue to collaborate with our core partners across the health and development sectors who are central to our ability to deliver value to our members. Our partners contribute ideas, expertise, members for working groups, speakers, in kind contributions such as venue space and financially through the Friends of the Network scheme. We facilitate access to the global health community for our partners and indeed any organisation with information or events of importance to the community. All our events are delivered in partnership with other organisations. Research has shown that successful networks are built on communication and the synergies that come from formal and informal interaction between members. We invest in high quality communications using a wide range of current technologies to effectively communicate and connect with our members. A particular focus of this strategic plan is the use of new and innovative techniques to link and connect our members at face-to-face and online events, through social media, or through signposting.

IGHN and the Health Service Executive (HSE) have a strong relationship, particularly around supporting institutional health partnerships between health institutions in Ireland and those in the Global South. We have hosted the ESTHER Ireland secretariat since 2014 and continue to provide technical support, network and learning opportunities to health partnerships as well as administer a grant fund aimed at facilitating the development and strengthening of partnerships. Until 2023, we have supported established health partnerships and initiatives through 63 grants with total funds of 482,050 euros. These health partnerships work in several countries across Africa and Asia and utilise ESTHER funds to focus on a variety of issues such as Mental Health, Non-Communicable Diseases, Maternal and Child Health, and Capacity Building and Training for healthcare professionals.



Selection of photos of various **ESTHER Ireland Partnerships**
(Image © IGHN 2023)

A key priority for us is to ensure meaningful participation of future global health professionals and champions through student engagement. We provide support to the **Student Outreach Team (SOT)** who have representatives across Irish Universities. In 2023, there were **SOT** representatives in eight universities. The groups in each university are overseen by the **SOT Coordinators**, and provide students with the opportunity to learn new skills in organisation, event planning, writing and communication as well as raising their awareness of key global health issues and careers.



SOT Coordinators Eunice Phillip and Amy Ennis
(Image © IGHN 2023)



When there are new policy consultations which touch on global health, we will coordinate responses from our membership, pulling together their considerable expertise and insights to benefit Ireland's policy making. We will also actively lobby for development spending by the Irish government.

KEY ACTIVITIES			
Sustain an engaged membership	Maintain and grow our partnerships	Host and manage the HSE Institutional Health Partnership Programme, ESTHER Ireland	Support the Student Outreach Team in all major third-level institutions
Host an All-Ireland Student Debate on Global Health	Facilitate interdisciplinary working in global health in Ireland	Coordinate and/or participate in inter-sectoral health-related responses to policy consultations and lobby for development support and resourcing	



Networking session
at the 7th ESTHER Ireland
Partnerships Forum,
September 2022
(Image © IGHN 2023)

AREA 3: ENSURING AN EFFICIENT, EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE NETWORK

We are a network with a very small central staff and limited resources; as such we have to use what we have wisely to create the greatest value for our members and funders. It is important that we work as effectively and efficiently as possible working within our limited resources whilst ensuring that we retain and look after our staff, interns and those that volunteer their time for the network. We will seek to build our network so that it is sustainable and strong enough to weather changes in governance, personnel and funding into the future. We will also implement changes to reduce our environmental impact and facilitate environmental sustainability. **Specifically we will:**

- **Maintain an active, diverse, engaged and representative Board**
- **Identify and evaluate opportunities for cost/resource sharing (such as office space)**
- **Explore opportunities to increase and broaden our income streams**
- **Explore opportunities for global and national partnerships**
- **Explore staffing models to increase human resources**
- **Maintain strong financial reporting**
- **Maintain strong monitoring and evaluation**
- **Keep abreast with new opportunities in ICT**
- **Sustain an engaged and active membership**
- **Develop and implement an organizational environmental sustainability policy**

Governance and Management

Our Board is diverse and interdisciplinary with representation from academia, development NGOs, health professionals and global health students. They provide oversight of the work of the Network. Board members are highly active in the work of the Network.

Our Secretariat, although small, encompasses people with a wide skill set and has built strong relationships with key organisations and individuals in the global health sector. These relationships allow us to create synergies that individuals or institutions cannot achieve alone.

Partnership and harnessing the expertise and passion of our members allows us to deliver more than we could working solely through our Secretariat. This includes significant contributions in kind whether through access to venue space or time to help organise or plan events.

We operate an ethical internship scheme offering entry-level global health experience, mentoring and the opportunity for interns to pursue their own special projects.

Our Annual Reports can be found [here](#).

Who is IGHN



Apart from its over **3,000** members, **IGHN** is run by a small Secretariat and supported by a **Board of Directors**.

Nadine Ferris France, *Executive Director*

"Stigma, particularly among those most marginalised, continues to be a huge barrier to equity and undermines the human right of every person to access health care."



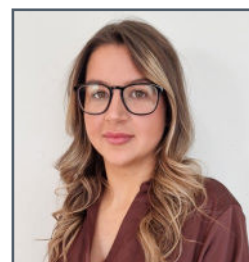
Nor Nasib, *Finance Officer*

"Strive to build a strong foundation and structure through social inclusion."



Maisie Jones, *Programme and Communications Officer*

"Positive and equitable health outcomes rely on trust in health information and advice. To achieve this trust, health education and communication must be clear, accurate, inclusive, and accessible to all."



Hala Ali, *ESTHER Ireland Coordinator*

"We need to think radically about our current global health issues and question our conventional, and maybe comfortable, approaches to tackle them."



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr Khalifa Elmusharaf,
Chairperson of the Board

"Shifting the power in global health to have a global balance is an impossible goal without fundamentally changing the structures within which we currently operate."



Dr Sadhbh Lee,
Board Member and Finance
Committee Member

"The role of the environmental crisis as a force multiplier for health and social inequalities is one of the most important global health issues we face."



Dr Unarose Hogan,
Vice Chair of the Board

"Where you happen to be born should not determine your right to access healthcare and education, to earn a living and to be safe. This is the primal injustice that must propel us forward, to seek a more equitable world."



Dr Rosie James,
Board Member

"I want to see more systems thinking in global health, where we take account of the complex interplay between political, economic, commercial, geographic, and social structures that are ultimately huge determinants of health."



Dr Enida Friel,
Board Member and Finance
Committee Member

"The many crises we face are a challenge to addressing inequalities in global health, but also an opportunity to do things differently, learning from our past experience, going into the future."



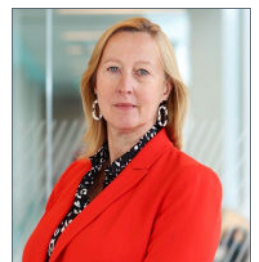
Eric O'Flynn,
Board Member

"Passionate about expanding access to quality surgical care worldwide."



Dr Debbi Stanisreet,
Board Member

"Clean energy for all is one of the greatest global health problems we face and is most pressing among the global poorest. It is also contributing significantly to carbonisation of the atmosphere and the risk of climate disaster."



Ben Adams, Board Member
and Finance Committee Member

"Everyone has mental health and mental health is everyone's business, regardless of race, cultural beliefs, context, religion, gender, sexual orientation and disability. Everyone has a human right to equal opportunities for mental health - a right that we must realise."



Eunice Phillip,
Board Member

"Health4All, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion remain buzzwords if their guiding principle is not rooted in Humanity."





Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework has been developed alongside this strategic framework to allow assessment of progress against the plan. Our monitoring and framework is underpinned by our Theory of Change. Targets and measures are monitored on an annual basis and are agreed alongside the annual workplan.



The **Irish Global Health Network** is an independent network of people concerned with the health and development of populations at a global level, with a particular commitment to populations in low-income countries.

Established in 2004, the **IGHN** welcomes individuals and groups interested in promoting global health-related education, research, policy and advocacy. We offer our members opportunities for learning and collaboration through events and conferences, and we work to create and strengthen both national and international links within the global health community. Become a member by visiting our website and signing up at www.globalhealth.ie.