Public Health Leaders Complete LIP-H Program in Ethiopia

AIHA's Leadership Incubation Program for Health Celebrates the Graduation of 57 Health Professionals from Prestigious Training Course



LIP-H graduates, FMOH officials, trainers, coaches, AIHA staff, and other guests attend the event April 22, 2025.

AIHA, the Federal Ministry of Health (FMOH), and the International Institute of Primary Health Care – Ethiopia (IPHC-E) recently celebrated the graduation of 57 health sector trainees who completed our 7th Cohort of the Leadership Incubation Program for Health (LIP-H) at an event in Addis Ababa on April 22, 2025.



Dr. Abas Hassen

Dr. Abas Hassen Yesuf, Lead Executive Officer (LEO) for Health System Innovation and Quality (HSIQ) at Ethiopia's FMOH, provided opening remarks.

Her Excellency Dr. Mekdes Daba, Ethiopia's Minister of Health, delivered a congratulatory message to the graduates and shared her excitement that 58 percent of the cohort – and 45 percent of all LIP-H graduates – are women. "This is a remarkable achievement and represents significant progress in increasing female participation in the leadership arena," Dr. Mekdes told the more than 150 people in attendance.

AIHA – in close collaboration with the FMOH and IPHC-E – designed the LIP-H to align directly with the FMOH's priorities, particularly its strategic objective to train a cadre of skilled public health leaders capable of ushering in positive changes



Minister of Health Dr. Mekdes Daba

within the country's health sector. The LIP-H program benefits not only its graduates, but also the entire Ethiopian health system. Empowering committed and highly skilled leaders strengthens the foundation for a more effective, results-driven healthcare system, ultimately leading to better health outcomes for all.

"We need not just young leaders, but visionary ones," Dr. Mekdes said, continuing, "Forward-looking individuals with courage and conviction, who are willing to listen, ask questions, and openly share ideas." Leaders should not be satisfied with what they have, she explained, they should learn from the past and constantly strive to grow, holding on to what is good.

"Leaders should use every opportunity to bring change and shape a better future. We must make things easier for others to build better opportunities for the next generation and this program was created to empower you because we envision a brighter future for the health sector. Those of you who have gone through this program, we want you to be leadership ambassadors," Dr. Mekdes stressed, telling the graduates to be ready to mentor others and make it part of their everyday life. "Lead by example and influence others positively."

The Minister added that she was impressed by the first LIP-H Networking Session she attended some four years ago and encouraged program alumni to take advantage of the opportunity to learn from upcoming sessions. Finally, she encouraged all alumni to be dedicated and courageous in everything they do, bringing passion, perseverance, and integrity to serve others and their country.

AIHA Country Director for Ethiopia Kidest Hailu told participants, "You came into this journey with a spark, a desire to make a difference in health, in leadership, and in lives. And I hope you leave with more than knowledge. You go with tools, purpose, and the power to inspire change."



AIHA Country Director Kidest Hailu

Leadership in health is not easy, Ms. Hailu continued. "It requires courage in uncertainty, compassion in challenge, and resilience in the face of systems that need healing. But if anyone is ready to step into that role, it is you. You have shown up, listened deeply, and learned not only from books, but also from each other's diverse voices, stories, and lived experiences. You have built a community and as you go forward, that community goes with you."

Some of the graduates presented their capstone projects, and two – **Duresa Endalew** and **Dr. Haregewoine Amare** – gave testimonials on their journey to leadership, which was very inspiring.

Capstone Projects Presented by Cohort 7 Graduates

- Reducing the Surgical Backlog of the University of Gondar Comprehensive Specialized Hospital
- Improving the Screening of Chronic Diabetes Mellitus (DM) Patients for Retinopathy at Eka Kotebe General Hospital
- Improving Early Childhood Developmental (ECD) delay at Alert Comprehensive Specialized Hospitals

Four former LIP-H graduates participated in a panel discussion, sharing insights into their leadership journeys and reflecting on how the LIP-H program contributed to their personal and professional growth. They spoke about pivotal turning points in their lives, sources of inspiration that fueled their perseverance, and their visions for the next five years. The panel also addressed key challenges facing emerging leaders in the health system and offered thoughtful responses on how to navigate and overcome them.



Panelists (left to right) Dr. Abel Tesfaye, General Manager of Yanet General Hospital; Ms. Woinshet Moges, Public Health Expert and Social Entrepreneur, CEO of Michu Manufacturing; Dr. Nebiyat Tesfaye, Founder of the Alliance for Birth Defects; Dr. Sinafikish Ayele, Director of the Research and Technology Transfer Directorate.

Finally, the graduates received certificates, and recognition was given to all those who contributed to the success of the LIP-H. The graduation ceremony was concluded with a gallery walk and poster presentation prepared by LIP-H graduates and coordinators. Below are some scenes from the event.







