THE TAKEMI PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH
The Takemi Program in International Health seeks to improve health and health systems around the world by welcoming mid-career health professionals and scholars to the Department of Global Health and Population at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health to conduct path-breaking research and develop their leadership skills. Takemi Fellows examine problems of mobilizing, allocating, and managing scarce resources to improve health, and of designing effective strategies for disease control and prevention and health promotion, with a focus on low- and middle-income countries.

Our global network of Fellows provides the collaborative basis for advancing better policies through national and international institutions to support the Takemi Program’s vision for a healthier world.

“In the Program we amplify and focus the energies of our Fellows to sustain a cascade of positive changes. While at Harvard, Takemi Fellows build their capacities through collaborations with our faculty, participation in Program activities, and access to the University’s many resources. When Fellows return to their countries or institutions, they bring new ideas and enhanced skills to research, policy, and implementation challenges. They also carry with them the vast strength of our worldwide alumni network. These advantages support their transition to senior leadership roles and international prominence. It is through this process that the Takemi Program advances global health.”

Jesse B. Bump, PhD, MPH
Executive Director of the Takemi Program
Lecturer on Global Health Policy
Takemi Fellow 2009–2011
The Fellowship Year

Each year the program recruits a small group of mid-career researchers and professionals to spend an academic year at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. The Takemi Program provides fellows with the space, time, and flexibility to enhance their capacity for research and leadership.

To do this, fellows are linked to two key resources: the weekly Takemi Seminar Series, and expert faculty. In addition, fellows have the opportunity for collaboration throughout the Harvard community, and may elect to deepen their knowledge of theory or practice through relevant coursework. Fellows draw on these resources to produce at least one paper of publishable quality.

May Hermanus
Takemi Fellow 1998–1999, South Africa
Former Executive Director of the Natural Resources and Environmental Unit; Adjunct Professor at the University of Witwatersrand

“A what was most valuable to me was the opportunity to design a personalized program for the fellowship year, and research a topic that would set the stage for the next chapter of my working life. I recall a sensation of being let loose in a gourmet store. So spoilt for choice.”

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Udaya Mishra
Takemi Fellow 2003–2004, India
Professor, Center for Development Studies

“The distinct feature of the program is the opportunity to acquaint oneself with any subject/expertise offered within the University. The exposure and interaction in the scholarly environment of the University is perhaps the most rewarding part of being in this Program.”

Udaya Mishra
Takemi Fellow 2003–2004, India
Professor, Center for Development Studies

My one-year stint as a Takemi Fellow gave me an exposure to these concepts of political economy that helped me in my work. The exposure to knowledge and people, the interactions, the freedom to explore, the great environment. I wouldn’t have done the many things I did and accomplished if it was not for this program. As a starter immediately upon my return I was tasked with working on and writing the Report for the National Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. I believe it was one of the best in the world. Credit goes to the program.

After completing the program she held several positions before serving as Under Secretary, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for the Government of India. During her tenure she scaled up the HIV/AIDS program, intensified the polio eradication program that ultimately led to the eradication of polio shortly after, and formulated the National Program for Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs).

Sujatha Rao
Takemi Fellow 2001–2002, India

“The Takemi Program built my confidence in global health and planted new seeds that have grown as my career has evolved. This is one of best programs for mid-career professional development.”

Masamine Jimba
Takemi Fellow 2001–2002, Japan
Professor, Department of Community and Global Health Graduate School of Medicine, The University of Tokyo

“Health is a multidimensional sector, highly complex and political due to the substantial scope. This makes formulation and implementation of public policy challenging. It necessitates a solid understanding of the context and the interplay of different interests and a wide appreciation of economics, politics and management theories. My one-year stint as a Takemi Fellow gave me an exposure to these concepts of political economy that helped me in my work.”

Sujatha Rao
Takemi Fellow 2001–2002, India

“Alumni Focus:
Pioneering Effective Health Policy

Sujatha Rao was a Takemi Fellow from 2001–02. Prior to participating in the program, she had worked for a decade in the health sector as a mid-level policymaker. She came to the Takemi program to expand her understanding of the theoretical framework that underlines health policy. For her, the program was a game changer.

The exposure to knowledge and people, the interactions, the freedom to explore, the great environment. I wouldn’t have done the many things I did and accomplished if it was not for this program. As a starter immediately upon my return I was tasked with working on and writing the Report for the National Commission on Macroeconomics and Health. I believe it was one of the best in the world. Credit goes to the program.”

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The Fellowship Year

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Seminars & Research

Through the seminar series, Fellows are exposed to a wide range of topics and perspectives within the field of global health. The program invites faculty members from the Harvard Chan School, other Harvard Faculties and outside specialists to present to the Fellows each week. The program helps Fellows bridge the gap between research and practice. They work with their data to transform it into evidence that directly impacts their home contexts. Through faculty mentors and program leadership, Fellows improve their theoretical and subject matter expertise to better tackle their data and the challenges they face in their profession.

“What I found most valuable was the opportunity to participate in Harvard’s quality seminars and to learn from presentations by high profile scholars from diverse disciplines in health. This gave me fantastic exposure, the opportunity to learn so much within the year, enrich my repertoire and ultimately boost my confidence as a researcher.”

Deborah Atobrah
Takemi Fellow 2015–2016, Ghana
Lecturer, Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana

“The program is situated in the wonderfully international, lively, Harvard Chan School. The ongoing work of our Takemi group, endless additional public discussions and debates at the School all reinforced a broad concept of Public Health. The entire experience was unique and valuable.”

Nafsiah Mboi
Takemi Fellow 1990–1991, Indonesia
Former Minister of Health, Indonesia

“The learnings from the seminar gave us a world view and the need to examine issues with great depth.”

Sakthivel Selvaraj
Takemi Fellow 2006–2007, India
Director, Health Economics, Financing and Policy, Public Health Foundation India

Our Network
As of August 2022

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Principles of the Takemi Program

- Research Emphasis
- Interdisciplinary Perspective
- Individual Freedom
- Individual Capacity Building
- Policy Orientation
- Mutual Respect
- Community Spirit

Community Building

2018–2019 Takemi Fellows social outing to the Boston Ballet production of the Nutcracker.


Dr. Akanni Akinyemi and Dr. Antonio Silva Lima Neto celebrating the end of the 2019 fellowship year.

Dr. Uche Amazigo and Dr. Lola Dare at the “Girls in the SDG Era” Symposium cosponsored by the Takemi Program and the Institute for African Studies at the University of Ghana in Accra in 2019.

Dr. Nkechi Onyeneho, Dr. Jesse Bump, Dr. Gina Oduro, and Dr. Deborah Atobrah after presenting at the “Girls in the SDG Era” Symposium.

Welcome reception for the 2019–2020 fellowship year.

2017–2018 Takemi Fellows with former Minister of Health of Afghanistan, Dr. Suraya Dalil.

Conversation on Congenital Syphilis in Latin America with Dr. Marcia Castro, Dr. Jesse Bump, former Minister of Health of Peru Patricia Garcia, and Dr. Antonio Silva Lima Neto in 2018.

Dr. Macho Omukama, Dr. Jesse Bump, Dr. Susan Ellis, and Dr. Antonio Silva Lima Neto after presenting at the “Girls in the SDG Era” Symposium.
My participation in the program hugely shaped my professional life. While at the Takemi Program, at the request of WHO/TDR, Geneva, a summary of my research was presented to the World Health Assembly.

"The Takemi program was about bringing health services to the poor in all countries. Interactive sessions with Fellows at individual level or as a group with the Director were often on how best to extend health services to the poorest populations. The Community-Directed Treatment (CDT) strategy has been adapted to also address treatment for other infectious diseases. Prior to joining the Takemi program, Dr. Amazigo was a Senior Lecturer at the University of Nigeria where she taught medical parasitology and public health. After having witnessed the devastating effects of onchocerciasis she concentrated her research on this disease. She came to the program in 1991.

"I prepared a report of my pioneering work on the consequences of onchocercal skin disease on adolescent girls and women in Nigeria. A few years later, I was invited to join the World Health Organization African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control (WHO/APOC)."

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"I must say, the Takemi Program encouraged me in this direction and when I joined APOC in 1996 I was able to defend communities' willingness and capability/competency at all APOC meetings."

"The Takemi Program was about bringing health services to the poor in all countries. Interactive sessions with Fellows at individual level or as a group with the Director were often on how best to extend health services to the poorest populations. The Community-Directed Treatment (CDT) strategy has been widely adopted for the control and elimination of onchocerciasis (river blindness), the elimination of lymphatic filariasis (LF) and other Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD). This is what I consider my legacy. That hundreds of thousands of community members—the drug distributors—are the ‘foot soldiers’ in the fight against the neglected tropical diseases in Africa: that communities have been accepted by health care providers as indispensable partners is an outcome of our collective effort. I contributed to this achievement. At the University of Nigeria, I began working with and for poor women in rural Nigeria; I cultivated trust and then I believed we could learn more about how to improve the lives of the poorest populations if health professionals would listen to them and allow the poor to be part of the solution to their problems.

A number of colleagues, especially those in the TDR Onchocerciasis Operational Taskforce joined and together (with empirical data) we convinced APOC partners on the value partnering with the rural poor, oncho-endemic communities. I remained steadfast in this fight until the adoption of CDT by APOC partnership and until my retirement."

In 2012, Takemi Fellow Dr. Uche Amazigo received the Prince Mahidol Award in Public Health for her research on Onchocerciasis and on community-directed treatment. As Chief of Sustainable Drug Distribution Unit (2001-2005) and later Director of the African Programme for Onchocerciasis Control (2005-2011), she was instrumental in scaling up community-directed treatment. It is estimated that this strategy resulted in the treatment of over 112 million people for onchocerciasis in 38,000 communities in 19 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, creating a network of over 1 million Community Drug Distributors (CDDs).

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The many seminars in which I participated stimulated my thoughts on many public health issues and gave me the stimulus and made me think about how to use the results to transform the health system of my country.

Dr. Friday Okonofua is a Professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics and currently the Vice Chancellor of the University of Medical Sciences in Ondo City, Nigeria. He is also the founder of the Women Health and Action Research Centre (WHARC), a leading not-for-profit focused on reproductive health. When he took part in the Takemi Program in 1991, he was an Associate Professor in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. He initially had the opportunity to take my work in public health to the global stage by participating in the program. We were able to interact with key players in global health from around the world.

For Dr. Okonofua, the Takemi Program helped him “to chart a new pattern for essential research and programming in the field of reproductive health. This has assisted me in making significant contributions to the field not only within the context of my country, Nigeria, but also in the African continent in general.”

Dr. Okonofua received funding from the Ford Foundation shortly after completing the Program. This funding led to the establishment of the Women’s Health and Action Research Centre and the African Journal of Reproductive Health, two institutions that have made and are still making impactful and significant contributions to the field of reproductive health.

The mentorship aspect of the program whereby the program managers continue to support the program participants in working on health issues in their various countries and regions is unsurpassable by any of its kind that I know.

Friday Okonofua
Takemi Fellow 1991–1992, Nigeria

### Alumni Focus: Sustainable Impact in Reproductive Health

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Fellows have directly contributed to saving lives through research and action

"The Takemi Program has boosted my academic work and my professional experience. After returning to Brazil, I was appointed as secretary of health in the municipality of Pelotas."
Luís Facchin
Takemi Fellow 1996–1997, Brazil

"The Takemi Program made me very curious. I learned that working in a silo was never going to solve any problems. It broadened my thinking beyond just the well-being of people as a clinical issue. The Program made it so that silo thinking was impossible. I have integrated this framework into my professional life with Chestread Int."
Lola Dare
Takemi Fellow 1999–2000, Nigeria

"The program was very instrumental in enabling me to find my footing in the public health arena. Upon completing the Program, I went on to establish myself in the field. The professional experiences and opportunities I have today, I owe to my participation in the Takemi Program. It has been a tremendous experience. I would not be where I am today if I didn’t participate in the Takemi Program."
Adelusa Adedimeji
Takemi Fellow 2004–2005, Nigeria

"The Takemi Program afforded me the time and flexibility to reflect on an early phase of my career, to reconcile the theory and practice of public health with my own experiences and unique insights as a public health practitioner and manager, and to crystallize my perspective on global health."
Nii Ayito Coleman
Takemi Fellow 1996–1997, Ghana

"It totally changed my professional life from being a faculty of a reputed institution to practitioner of livelihood improvements through solar technologies in India and other countries."
Rangarayakulu Bodavala
Takemi Fellow 1999–2000, India

"It qualified me as a researcher, as a result now I am a well-known researcher with 143 international papers and main investigator of several national and international projects."
Fahimeh Ramezani
Takemi Fellow 2004–2005, Iran

"The opening of doors to consult with the best in my field and debate with scholars from different parts of the world and presenting my research for valuable critical appraisal!"
El Faiith El Samani
Takemi Fellow 1985–1986; 2014–2015, Sudan

"My participation in the program broadened my world view. It equipped me for my present work in the United Nations."
Joseph Okeibunor
Takemi Fellow 2010–2011, Nigeria

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Takemi Fellow 2010–2011, Nigeria
Professor of Health Policy and Management, Providence College, USA
Research Tags: Global health, health systems, UHC, health workforce, public policy


Tuba Agartan
Takemi Fellow
2016–2018, Turkey

Senior Researcher, Disease Control Priorities-Ethiopia, University of Bergen, Norway
Research Tags: NCDs, Cancer, epidemicology


Solomon Tassa Memo Memrie
Takemi Fellow
2016–2017, Ethiopia

Assistant Professor, College of Public Health, China Medical University, Taiwan
Research Tags: Environmental health; occupational health; industrial development; high-tech industry; petrochemical industrial complexes; overwork; cardiovascular diseases


Takemi Fellow
2015–2016, Taiwan
Eligibility Requirements

- Have completed a graduate degree
- Have significant work and research experience, including publications in internationally recognized journals
- Have demonstrated potential leadership capacity in their home countries
- Strong promise and appropriate preparation (including facility in English)

Application Process

Applicants must complete the online application available at hsph.harvard.edu/takemi/application-materials

- Research Proposal
- Publications in English
- Resume
- Statement of Interest
- Three References
- Proof of Proficiency in English
- Application Process

“Takemi Fellows add to our intellectual life at the Harvard T.H. Chan School in so many ways. The Program is recognized at the School and around the world for its capacity to attract future leaders in public health and for its contributions to global health.

Indeed, every global health meeting these days has former Takemi Fellows in attendance.”

Michelle A. Williams, ScD, MS
Dean of the Faculty, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
“My father, Dr. Taro Takemi, believed that interdisciplinary study was necessary to analyze health problems correctly. It is marvelous to see how his vision has come to life through the Takemi Program. The alumni now form a strong global network committed to improving global health.”

Hon. Keizo Takemi
Member of the House of Councillors in Japan

“In 2020, the Takemi Program in International Health will complete 37 years of existence and partnership to advance global health policy and equity. This unique program has contributed in many ways to promote individual development, institution strengthening, and health policy analysis around the world. I have been privileged to work with the Program and its many partners since the Program’s inception to promote these goals in global health.”

Michael Reich, PhD, MA
Director of the Takemi Program
Taro Takemi Professor of International Health Policy, Emeritus
We thank all of the donors who have supported the Takemi Program.

“The JMA highly values our longstanding partnership with the Takemi Program at Harvard. The program has an important role in capacity building and scholarly research dedicated to the improvement of health in low- and middle-income countries.

Through the JMA’s support for the Takemi Program, we are pleased to promote mutual understanding and respect while advancing access to good quality medical care around the world, fostering Universal Health Coverage, and bringing further attention to other important global health challenges.”

Kichiro Matsumoto, MD
President of the Japan Medical Association (JMA)
THE TAKEMI PROGRAM IN INTERNATIONAL HEALTH

HarvardTakemiProgram HarvardTakemi hsp.h.harvard.edu/takemi/ takemi@hsp.h.harvard.edu