

[Subscribe](#)[Past Issues](#)[Translate ▼](#)[View this email in your browser](#)

As we are all aware, this is a difficult time for global health and global health equity.

Because Rutgers University's work in global health equity is worth highlighting, I wanted to report on some of our activities over the past few months at Rutgers Global Health Institute. In doing so, I hope these updates offer a glimmer of hope and show that it is possible to directly improve health equity across communities in need.

---

### **In the US**

Let me start here at home, where we continue to organize around a program called **Resilient New Jersey**. This program started as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic for small minority-run businesses in Newark, New Brunswick, Perth Amboy, and Trenton. We have continued the effort in Trenton thanks to our partnership with Professor Kevin Lyons and the Rutgers Business School. Our approach addresses community health through the lens of micro-businesses. These micro-businesses are what help keep communities, especially minority communities, economically, socially, and physically healthy. Rutgers Global Health Institute's Impact Council members Betsy McNeilly and Patti Doykos felt strongly that the Trenton community has been underserved, therefore we are glad that we could continue our health equity program in our state's capital.



Professor Kevin Lyons (center right) with Resilient New Jersey Trenton partners.

---

### In Africa

Across the Atlantic, the Botswana Rutgers Partnership for Health continues to focus on working with the Government of Botswana to better address the health inequity that exists in cancer prevention, care, and treatment in that region of the world.

With help from RGHI Core Faculty Member Barbara Demarco, the Rutgers School of Health Professions, and those within the NJ ACTS program, we established a Rutgers digital badge course for our Botswana-based oncology training Botswana program called the **Cancer *Kitso* Training Program**. *Kitso* is the Setswana word for “knowledge.” The leadership members of the Botswana Rutgers Partnership for Health started the ***Kitso* AIDS Training Program** in Botswana over 25 years ago. This new oncology workforce training program, originally supported by Bristol Myers Squibb, is built like the country's original ***Kitso* AIDS Training Program**. That program has become the national training program for HIV/AIDS for the Government of Botswana. We want to replicate that type of national training program, but this time for cancer prevention, care, and treatment. We also want to do this needed oncology workforce training in other countries in the region, such as nearby Lesotho.



Our **Cancer Kitso Training Program** team recently in Lesotho with Lesotho trainers.



A meeting last week with the Vice President and Minister of Finance of Botswana, His Excellency Ndaba Gaolathe, and our founding Senior Advisor to the Botswana Rutgers Partnership for Health, Dr. Tendani



## Around the World

Elsewhere around the world, our principal faculty members, who joined RGHI in the past two years, continue their work in areas of the world in need and in research areas that truly embody health equity “in action.”

*Check out updates from our Rutgers Global Health Institute principal faculty members:*

Ubydul Haque is studying the impact of full-scale war on the health care system of Ukraine and vaccine hesitancy in rural Alaska. His research is also exploring how poor communities in Malaysia can better monitor their own risk for dengue infections using drone technology. Dr. Haque is truly multidisciplinary and remarkably busy. I don't know when the guy gets a chance to sleep!

Gwen Lee is spearheading efforts on child health, nutrition, and development in Ecuador's poor, rural populations and in a new joint project with faculty member Shauna Downs in the slums of Nairobi.

Tara Friebe is currently working on two research projects to help determine how to better adapt and implement breast cancer screening in African settings. She is working with collaborators in both northern Tanzania and Botswana, as well as with Rutgers Global Health Institute core faculty member Kelly Kohler who is based at the Rutgers Cancer Institute.

Bobby Brooke Herrera, whose laboratory is based across the street from our offices at the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School/Child Health Institute, continues to make strong headway in immunologic diagnostics for the rapid determination of several epidemic viruses, such as COVID, dengue, and Zika viruses.

Umer Hassan at the School of Engineering, is at the forefront of using biosensing technologies for infectious disease diagnostics and therapeutics applications in global healthcare settings. He uses nanomaterials to create tubules that can have a diagnostic immunologic reaction when blood or serum is acquired by pinprick at the bedside, making possible the rapid diagnosis of sepsis or other conditions. Such “point of care” tests are becoming important for use in poor settings that are without extensive laboratory infrastructure.

## Looking Ahead

Our next *Global Health Equity Connection* will highlight our newly “rebooted” strategic plan and various other global health or global affairs centers across Rutgers. We will also report on the recent **Rutgers Champion in Global Health Award** recipients. Our award was given to three champions of health equity at our recent membership meeting.

With hope and solidarity,

**Subscribe**

**Past Issues**

**Translate ▼**



---

*Copyright © 2025 Rutgers Global Health Institute, All rights reserved.*

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your references](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).