



COPENHAGEN SCHOOL OF GLOBAL HEALTH

Purpose: To establish new research and teaching initiatives, and improve existing programmes, addressing health problems facing underprivileged people globally.



Preface

The Faculty of Health Sciences at the University of Copenhagen has for many years focused on developing strong research and educational activities within the field of Global Health.

It is our vision to establish the Faculty and the University of Copenhagen as an internationally leading institution in global health research and training.

At the Faculty, we have high profile research groups within malaria, HIV, social inequalities in health and the growing problem of the interaction between infectious disease and lifestyle-induced diseases. We wish to strengthen these areas and expand their activities. In 2006, we therefore established a new Department of International Health, Microbiology and Immunology at the Faculty. We have also developed close collaborations with the Faculty of Social Sciences and the University Hospital (Rigshospitalet) within the Centre for International Health and Development (CISU). These are supported by joint activities with several other Faculties and institutions, both in Denmark and abroad.

We now propose to establish a Copenhagen School of Global Health to improve and coordinate research and training and provide these activities with a constantly updated global perspective. We believe that this initiative will put us at the forefront of Health and Development research. The Copenhagen School of Global Health, with its local and global partners intends to provide a new framework for interdisciplinary, cross-faculty research, teaching and training and develop much-needed interventions against our pressing global health problems.

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Copenhagen School of Global Health - a vision

Global inequities in human health are excessive, unfair, and are a significant barrier to development. This can be illustrated by the fact that a newborn child in Sierra Leone can expect to live about 29 healthy life years, while in Japan he or she can look forward to about 75 healthy life years. With the formation of a School of Global Health at the University of Copenhagen (CSGH) we propose to initiate new, and improve existing, research and teaching programmes related to health problems faced by underprivileged people, with the ultimate goal of achieving major improvements in health within poor societies.

The overall purpose of CSGH is to coordinate and improve health research and training at the University of Copenhagen, in collaboration with local and global partners, and to promote health and development by research- and evidence-based interventions against major health problems affecting low- and middle-income societies. CSGH will provide the framework for collaborative, interdisciplinary, cross-faculty research and educational activities locally, with a constantly updated global perspective.

The purpose and goals of the CSGH will be achieved through:

- Facilitating coordination and collaboration between Danish universities, university hospitals, private sector, the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and non-governmental organizations focusing on knowledge sharing and applied research to reduce the disease burden in low- and middle income countries
- Contributing to long-term institutional capacity strengthening of partner universities in Africa to undertake research, education, administration
- Continuing to engage in partnerships with ministries of health and other relevant line ministries in low- and middle income countries focusing on training and further education of the professional work force and the establishment of evaluation and monitoring systems
- Collaborating with other networks and institutions to gather evidence, promote and raise public debate about health and living conditions in a global perspective including the influence of globalization of health care services and health care in Denmark
- Contributing to strengthening the Danish resource base including attracting leading researchers and increase the level of international funding to global health research



Rationale and background

The University of Copenhagen, and the Faculty of Health Sciences in particular, has in recent years made strategic investments to promote research and teaching activities in international and global health. The establishment of CSGH will consolidate these investments and form an organisational base allowing existing and new activities at different University of Copenhagen faculties to be linked, harnessed and presented to the outside world under one brand. It should be emphasised that CSGH will be an umbrella organisation for the coordination of these activities, rather than an executing department. The responsibility for research and teaching activities will remain within the current departments and faculties. The Faculty of Health Sciences believes that the formation of CSGH is a matter of urgency and invites all interested parties to join this initiative.

CSGH will concentrate on the major health problems of resource-poor societies, the factors causing these problems and approaches to solving them.

Our ambition is to create a portfolio of coordinated research and educational initiatives based on the existing strengths of the University of Copenhagen, which will be highly visible to the Danish public, to potential students and funding agencies, and to international/global health stakeholders in general. Such an initiative requires a planned, well-integrated and consistent approach.

Initially, all relevant activities within the Faculty of Health Sciences will be under the CSGH umbrella. It is the aim that all other Faculties at the University of Copenhagen will join right from the beginning to permit all activities related to Global Health at University of Copenhagen to be represented in CSGH - that is the Faculty of Social Sciences, the Faculty of Life Sciences, the Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences, the Faculty of Science, the Faculty of Humanities, the Faculty of Law and the Faculty of Theology.



Research at CSGH

The research at the Copenhagen School of Global Health will focus on the double burden of disease and social inequalities in health. These include the chronic and non-communicable diseases that increasingly affect underprivileged societies, the infectious diseases that disproportionately affect them, detrimental disease interactions, problems such as weak health systems, inadequate food safety and nutritional deficiencies, as well as irrational drug use and cultural, societal, gender-based and environmental barriers to health. The emphasis will be on integrating basic laboratory and theoretical research with clinical research and field-based public health studies among affected populations throughout the world. The University of Copenhagen already has large and high-profile groups within malaria and HIV research. These groups, which have attracted very considerable international research funding, focus on drug treatment strategies (HIV and malaria) and development of vaccines (malaria). Medical anthropology is also a long standing strength of the University. Research activities within malaria, HIV and medical anthropology, will be maintained and expanded within CSGH.

Many developing countries are witnessing a transition in health where diseases relating to lifestyle and living conditions, interacting to produce the metabolic syndrome, are becoming an increasing problem and a great challenge for health systems. Rapid and unplanned urbanisation, with some agricultural activities remaining within the expanding conurbations, also poses major challenges for environmental control, health engineering and sanitation.

The control of both non-communicable and communicable diseases in societies in transition will be a research priority within CSGH and considerable external funds have already been secured for these activities.

It is also considered extremely important that a first-rank School of Global Health should cover broader areas of research than the ones described above including health among immigrants and refugees in Denmark.

Several other institutions in the region also carry out research which is highly relevant to CSGH. CSGH will seek not to duplicate these activities but aim to achieve synergy by entering mutually beneficial agreements with relevant partners.

To achieve these goals, CSGH research priorities should not be static, but regularly adjusted according to performance and on the basis of opportunity, demand and foresight.



Teaching and education at CSGH

The Copenhagen School of Global Health will aim to be the gateway for students and professionals worldwide to gain enhanced access to global health educational programmes and courses at the University of Copenhagen. A substantial number of courses and full degree programmes, directly relevant to global health, have already been developed at the University of Copenhagen. There is great potential in further expanding and coordinating present and future research and research-based training, as outlined below.

In the short term (1–2 years), the priority is to facilitate coordination of teaching initiatives and form accredited, interdisciplinary and modular study programmes.

Furthermore, our ambition is to launch a high-profile electronic portal presenting global health educational opportunities at the University of Copenhagen, including the many graduate programmes and courses that are already being offered across faculties.

All educational activities related to CSGH will be offered in English.

In the medium term (2–3 years), CSGH will be the platform for further development of international educational activities at master's and PhD level. New courses and programmes will be initiated to fill the gaps in the educational portfolio. A restructuring of existing programmes is planned to allow integration of global health issues into existing two-year pre-graduate master's programmes (kandidatuddannelser). Existing partnerships with selected institutions in Africa and Asia will be strengthened, and new partnerships sought out, to allow student exchange and the building of long-term research-based educational programmes. CSGH will also aim to develop collaborations with similar institutions in Denmark and capitalise on the expertise available in international health and development organisations located in Copenhagen. Such coordination of this effort will also facilitate the placement of interns from the University of Copenhagen at external institutions.

In the long term (3–5 years), we expect to develop a two-year master's degree in global health open to BSc graduates from a diverse range of relevant fields.



Communication and public relations

CSGH organisational structure: a network

The Copenhagen School of Global Health will promote and guide the development of joint strategies for research communication and dissemination involving counterparts in Denmark and our various international partners. This will heighten the profile of CSGH and the University of Copenhagen and improve the marketing of our courses and educational programmes. This effort will also require some capacity development among our researchers. We need to highlight the importance of communication and improve the targeting of research output towards contractors' and recipients' priorities and needs. An important asset in this regard is that the Department of International Health, Immunology and Microbiology currently hosts the Danish Research Network for International Health. The Network is funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Danida, and includes a membership circle of almost 300 Danish researchers, private consultants, health advisers and other health professionals. Other, internet-based, initiatives will be taken in order to consolidate and attractively package existing presentations of our activities. This should be seen as an essential step towards improving the marketing platform.

CSGH will also collaborate with Danish and international NGOs and consultancy companies to discuss their research priorities and to design tailor-made courses that meet their evolving needs in a rapidly changing world.

Copenhagen School of Global Health is anchored at the Department of International Health, immunology and Microbiology, at the Faculty of Health Sciences, with a school board to provide oversight and support. The School Board is headed by the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences. Seats on the School Board go to the deans of the participating faculties and the Head of the Department of International Health, Immunology and Microbiology, the School Director and three members nominated by the Head of the Board representing key stakeholders or researchers from outside the University of Copenhagen.

The School Board appoints the director, and approves CSGH's strategic direction, work plans and budgets. The board will support development of research and education at CSGH, and make sure that all activities are well coordinated – within CSGH as well as relative to similar activities outside the school.

A Secretariat will support the activities and administration of CSGH. The secretariat will promote uniform branding, international marketing, funding and accreditation of school activities. The secretariat will coordinate its activities with existing offices at the University of Copenhagen that service international student exchange programmes, international affairs, master's programmes, etc. Scientific personnel involved in the activities of CSGH will maintain their employment at their respective departments and faculties.