

# Innovate Invest Empower Protect

A Symposium for Shaping the Future  
of the Health Workforce

Monday, May 27, 2024 | 08:00 – 12:00  
Warwick Hotel, Geneva | In-person

A nurse at a hospital in Namibia. Photo by Trevor Snapp for IntraHealth International

## PROGRAM

Welcome and opening remarks  
8:15- 8:20

- **Crystal Lander**, Executive Vice President, Pathfinder International
- **Tina Flores**, Director, Frontline Health Workers Coalition

Keynote remarks  
8:20-9:00

- **Hon. Dr. Robert Lucien Jean-Claude Kargougou**, Minister of Health, Burkina Faso
- **Hon. Sylvia Masebo**, Minister of Health, Zambia (TBC)
- **Dr. Kenneth G. Ronquillo**, Undersecretary of Health, Philippines
- **Michele Sumilas**, Assistant to the Administrator, USAID

Panel 1: Best practices and locally-led solutions for creating an enabling environment for health workers: Compensation, training, integration, empowerment  
9:00-10:05

- **Crystal Lander**, Executive Vice President, Pathfinder International, *moderator*
- **Paul Marsden**, Senior Health Workforce Specialist, World Health Organization
- **Chikwe Mbweeda**, Country Director, CARE Zambia
- **Dr. Uche Ralph Opapa**, Chief Health Officer, Project HOPE
- **Vicky Reed**, Interim Executive Director, Partners in Health, Sierra Leone

Short film: "Healthier Together: A Path to a Better World"  
10:15 -10:25

- **Introduction:** Susannah Schaefer, President and CEO, Smile Train  
*This film was produced for Kids Operating Room & partner Smile Train by BBC StoryWorks Commercial Productions and presented by the WHO Foundation.*

Remarks 10:25-10:40

- **Catherine Kane**, Technical Officer, Health Workforce, WHO
- **Jules Souleymane Gaye**, Country Director, Burkina Faso, Living Goods

Panel 2—Making it happen: Supporting and protecting health workers through partnerships  
10:40-11:45

- **Jed Meline**, Director, Policy & Advocacy, Project HOPE, *moderator*
- **Irene Atuhairwe**, Seed Global Health Country Director, Uganda
- **Priya Basu**, Executive Head, The Pandemic Fund
- **Dr. Carlos Castillejos**, Global Head, Medical & Patient Assistance Solutions, Global Health Equity, Johnson & Johnson
- **Michelle Erwee**, Global Head of Access to Medicines, Takeda

Reflections  
11-45-11:50

- **Dr. Hanna B. Demeke**, Nurse Epidemiologist

Call to action  
11:50-11:55

- **Madhu Deshmukh**, Vice President Program Strategy and Innovations, CARE USA



## SPEAKER BIOS

### Moderator



**Crystal Lander**

**Chair, Frontline Health Workers Coalition**

Crystal Lander is the Executive Vice President of Pathfinder International, where she leads the organization's strategic engagement and high-level partnerships. As part of Pathfinder's global leadership council, Crystal plays a critical role in shaping organization's strategic and programmatic activities around the world. She drives the broader global health and development agenda through leadership positions, including as Chair of the Frontline Health Workers Coalition and board member for the Coalition for Racial & Ethnic Equity in Development (CREED). Prior to this role, Crystal established the advocacy team at Living Goods, where she led the organization's work in global health policy. She and her team facilitated lasting and systemic impact that will enable every family to access quality health care in the community in which they live. During her time at Living Goods Crystal cofounded the global advocacy campaign, Communities at the Heart of UHC with more than 100 members. Crystal also developed the advocacy unit at Management Sciences for Health (MSH), where she successfully managed the organization's engagement on global health policy in the United States and in more than 30 countries.

### Welcome



**Tina Flores**

**Director, Frontline Health Workers Coalition, IntraHealth International**

As Director of the Coalition, Tina leads its strategic vision, engagement, initiatives and growth. She is a veteran of the global health and advocacy fields, with years of experience building and driving coalitions to advance critical issues, including noncommunicable diseases, global health security, universal health coverage, and social determinants of health. Most notably, she established and led the secretariat for the Private Sector Roundtable for Global Health Security, a cross-industry coalition that mobilizes companies to collaborate with multinational organizations and governments around disease preparedness and response. An expert in policy, strategy development, and external engagement, she has been a trusted advisor to C-suite and senior executives in multinational healthcare companies, NGOs, multilateral institutions, government, and academia. Tina worked as an independent consultant with schools of public health and health companies to design strategies and craft multi-million dollar initiatives to accelerate progress in health. Previously, Tina was vice president, external engagement at Rabin Martin. Tina began her career as an intern at the Global Health Council, working her way to director, strategic communications.



## Keynote Speakers



**Hon. Dr. Robert Lucien Jean-Claude Kargougou**  
**Minister of Health, Burkina Faso**

Hon. Dr. Robert Lucien Jean-Claude Kargougou is a public health physician, specializing in health systems policy management. Minister Kargougou has expertise in health services organization and planning, particularly in supporting the health system of Burkina Faso. Minister Kargougou has held the positions of Chief Physician of the Medical Center (Surgical Unit), Chief Physician of the Solenzo Health District, Regional Director of Health for the East and Center-West, and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Regional Hospital Centers of Fada N'Gourma and Koudougou. In this capacity, he pioneered the implementation of surgical activities in the Solenzo Health District. After serving at the UNICEF country office, Ouagadougou, he took up the position of Secretary General of the Ministry of Health, and then Technical Advisor to the Minister of Health. In this capacity, he contributed to the coordination of the implementation of major health system reforms, including free healthcare for women and young children, the recruitment of more than 17,000 community-based health workers, pharmaceutical reform, hospital civil service, and the formulation of the 2nd tranche National Health Development Plan. He also coordinated the joint Ministry of Health and Finance teams within the framework of the Harvard Ministerial Leadership Program.



**Hon. Sylvia Masebo**  
**Minister of Health, Zambia**

Hon. Sylvia Masebo is the Minister of Health, Zambia. She is a Zambian entrepreneur, politician and National Assembly of Zambia representative for Chongwe constituency with the United Party for National Development (UPND). Hon. Masebo holds a degree in Banking and Finance and has been the National Assembly of Zambia representative for Chongwe constituency since 2001; first standing on the ticket of Zambian Republican Party (ZRP) and then later, MMD Movement for Multi-Party Democracy in 2003. She also served as Minister of Health from August 2005-October 2006 after succeeding Brian Chituwo.





**Dr. Kenneth G. Ronquillo**  
**Undersecretary of Health, Republic of the Philippines**

Undersecretary Dr. Kenneth G. Ronquillo has been with the Department of Health for more than 30 years. Prior roles include serving as Assistant Secretary for Health Policy and Systems Development, lead Secretariat to the DOH's Performance Governance System Core Team and convener of the Philippine HRH Network that spearhead the crafting of the Philippine Human Resources for Health Master Plan 2020-2040, with the assistance of USAID's HRH 2030 Program and the World Health Organization. He also was Head Secretariat of the Inter-Agency Task Force on Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID), the Philippines' primary policy-making arm for the prevention and control of the local spread of emerging infectious diseases, specifically COVID-19. His career in the department had its roots in clinical practice before shifting towards health policy and human resources for health. This commitment to HRH led him to take on the mantle of "Father to the Doctors to the Barrios."



**Michele Sumilas**  
**Assistant to the Administrator, USAID**

Michele Sumilas is currently the Assistant to the Administrator of the Bureau for Planning, Learning and Resource Management (PLR). PLR strengthens the Agency's policy voice and leadership in the interagency by better aligning budgetary considerations, planning processes, implementation discipline, and monitoring and evaluation with our development and humanitarian priorities.

Most recently, she served as the Assistant to the Administrator of the Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning. She previously served as Executive Director of Bread for the World, an anti-hunger Christian advocacy organization. Her government experience includes serving as USAID Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff during the Obama administration, and on the House Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations. Prior to serving in government, Sumilas worked at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Global Health Council.



## Panel 1 Speakers



**Paul Marsden**

**Senior Health Workforce Specialist, World Health Organization**

Paul is a Senior Health Workforce Specialist at WHO, with over 30 years of international experience in health workforce and health systems policy, planning and management. He has extensive field experience as a long-term technical advisor to various governments (South Africa, Namibia, Malawi, Uganda, Nigeria) and clients (EU, UK FCDO, USAID, Global Fund) - providing technical and strategic leadership in more than 25 countries to date. Paul currently leads the joint WHO-ILO-OECD Working for Health team, and recently supported the development of the Africa Health Workforce Investment Charter, and the first ever Africa Health Workforce Investment Forum in Namibia in May 2024.



**Chikwe Mbweeda**

**Country Director, CARE Zambia**

In her current role as the Country Director for CARE International in Zambia, Chikwe has overseen organizational change management processes and most recently, ensuring organizational business continuity in the wake of COVID19 pandemic; creating an agile and adaptive organization to face and operate in the new normal. She previously worked for other development organizations that include Children International, Oxfam International and Plan International. Prior to the development sector experience, worked in the private corporate sector overseeing overall business portfolio development and growth. Chikwe's professional career spans close to 20 years in senior strategic management and leadership having worked for international NGOs and the private corporate sector within the Southern and Eastern Africa region. She has development and humanitarian strategic program development and project management experience designing, implementing, and managing large, complex development and poverty eradication programs. She has expertise in community-based development programming, private-public partnerships, and business development working with major multilateral and bilateral donor funded projects on health and nutrition, adolescent reproductive health, education, water and sanitation, agriculture-based livelihoods, and climate change adaptation, women and youth economic empowerment.





**Dr. Uche Ralph Opara**  
**Chief Health Officer, Project HOPE**

Dr. Uche Ralph-Opara is a medical doctor and global health expert with two decades of extensive experience in leading, designing and implementing health and development projects across Africa. Her expertise spans across a diverse range of fields including infectious diseases (HIV/AIDS, TB), reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health, orphans and vulnerable children (OVC), health systems strengthening and nutrition programs. Joining Project HOPE in January 2021 as the Country Director for Nigeria and Senior Advisor for Systems Strengthening on a USAID-funded OVC project, Uche was pivotal in expanding the organization's initiatives in Nigeria. Her efforts led to the successful implementation of additional donor-funded projects addressing HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, and non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Previously, Uche served as Project HOPE's Deputy Regional Director for Africa, where she played a key role in leading technical and program development initiatives in West Africa, specifically in Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria. Currently, she holds the position of Chief Health Officer, bringing her wealth of experience and vision to guide and shape the organization's health-focused endeavors.



**Vicky Reed**  
**Interim Executive Director, Partners in Health Sierra Leone**

Vicky Reed is the Interim Executive Director at Partners in Health Sierra Leone (PIH-SL), where she is responsible for setting the strategic direction for the organization's operations in Sierra Leone. Prior to her current role, she served as PIH-SL's Director of Nursing. Reed has been a Registered Nurse for over 10 years, with specialties in Medical-Surgical nursing, Emergency nursing, Neuro-Critical care and Nursing leadership. Since returning to Sierra Leone in 2019, her passion is in building and strengthening the capacity of health care workers, particularly nurses, as well as health systems in low-resource settings, through the delivery of high-quality clinical education and training, and efficient and effective systems. In her role, she works closely with the Government of Sierra Leone and other partners to meet the country and organization's strategic goals. Ms. Reed obtained her Bachelor of Science in Nursing from Clayton State University and her Master of Science in Nursing Leadership and Administration from South University in Georgia. She is a Fellow of Partner in Health's Global Nurse Executive Fellowship Program.



## Moderator



### Jed Meline

**Director, Policy and Advocacy Project HOPE**  
**Co-Chair, Frontline Health Workers Coalition Policy Working Group**

Jed Meline oversees Project HOPE's engagement on health and humanitarian assistance policy, both nationally and globally, with a focus on greater support for health care workers, people in crisis, and US leadership on global health. Before joining Project HOPE, Meline was a career US Agency for International Development (USAID) Foreign Service Officer, with almost 25 years of service in Washington, D.C., and overseas. Most recently, he served as Deputy U.S. Global Malaria Coordinator at the US President's Malaria Initiative, based in USAID's Bureau for Global Health. His diverse assignments also include service as the director of health and humanitarian assistance at the White House National Security Council, a Brookings Fellowship with the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, and a tour as staff on the House Foreign Affairs Committee. Other positions Meline has held include acting deputy assistant administrator in the Bureau for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and Senior Advisor to the Undersecretary of State for Democracy and Global Affairs.

## Short film



### Susannah Schaefer

**Executive Vice Chair, President and CEO, Smile Train**

Susannah ("Susie") Schaefer is Executive Vice Chair, President, and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Smile Train, the world's largest cleft-focused organization. During her time as President and CEO, Susie has led an organizational rebrand, seeded funding for hundreds of thousands of new smiles, grown and improved Smile Train's digital medical records database and global cleft surgical training and education programs, and greatly expanded Smile Train's non-surgical comprehensive cleft care programs, including in areas of nutritional support, speech therapy, oral health, and psychosocial counseling. Susie came to Smile Train after almost 20 years in the private sector, bringing a vast network and past experiences to the team.



## Framing Remarks



**Catherine Kane**  
**Technical Officer, World Health Organization**

Catherine Kane is a technical officer on the WHO Health Workforce team, with a portfolio that includes community health, knowledge management and network engagement, and COVID-19 human resource for health management. She joined WHO as the Information Manager on the Global Malaria Program RAcE team, which supported community health workers to deliver integrated community case management of malaria, pneumonia and diarrhea in sub Saharan Africa. Prior to joining WHO, Catherine worked for the Red Cross Movement locally, nationally and internationally, including as a community health volunteer starting at age 16. She has held additional policy, humanitarian diplomacy and emergency management positions in national government and health advocacy organizations.



**Jules Souleymane Gaye**  
**Country Director, Burkina Faso, Living Goods**

Jules Souleymane Gaye is the country director for Living Goods Burkina Faso. Jules has more than 15 years' experience and previously was at NITIDAE Burkina Faso where he was Country Representative, growing significantly the operations in the country. He has expertise in designing, developing and leading community development projects and brings a wealth of experience in leadership, stakeholder management, program development and operations, as well as an understanding of critical bilateral donors such as EU, USAID, USDA and AFD. Jules holds a Master II Degree in Accounting and Financial Management from the International School of Engineering (Boston MA, USA).



## Panel 2 Speakers



**Irene Atuhairwe**  
**Country Director, Uganda, Seed Global Health**

Irene is the Country Director for Seed Global Health in Uganda, where she leads and provides oversight to the Country's portfolio ensuring program, administrative and operational integrity. She is also responsible for ensuring representation of Seed Global Health with key stakeholders in the Country including the Ministry of Health. Irene holds a Bachelor's degree in Nursing and a Master's degree in Public Health from Makerere University in Uganda. She has 17 years of experience in Health programing in HIV and AIDS Care and Treatment, Maternal Neonatal and Child Health, Human Resources for Health and Health Systems Strengthening. She is passionate about building strong Health systems strengthening in Low- and Middle-Income Countries and a strong advocate for underserved populations and communities.



**Priya Basu**  
**Executive Head, The Pandemic Fund**

Priya Basu is the inaugural Executive Head of the Pandemic Fund at the World Bank. During the pandemic she led the Multilateral Leaders Task Force on COVID-19 to address key bottlenecks in vaccine access and delivery, as well as the Bank's engagement on pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response with the G20 and G7 – coordinating across finance and health. She also led the development of the Pandemic Fund, working with a large group of donors and development partners, the WHO, and other stakeholders, mobilizing political and financial support to establish the fund in record time with initial seed capital of \$2 billion. In previous roles at the World Bank, Priya led the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, a multi-donor partnership focused on women's economic empowerment. Prior to that, she managed the World Bank's \$21 billion portfolio of multilateral financing mechanisms and trust funds to address global challenges, such as epidemics and pandemics, climate change, and refugee crises. She also previously served as the Bank's lead financial economist for India, where she led the Bank's engagement to promote resilient and inclusive financial systems and enabling reforms for private sector-led growth. Prior to the World Bank, Priya worked as an economist at the IMF in Washington DC, the Asian Development Bank in Manila and UNCTAD and ILO in Geneva. Before that, she worked in investment banking in London. In a career spanning three decades, Priya brings thought leadership on a variety of international development issues and a deep understanding of development cooperation.





**Dr. Carlos Castillejos**  
**Global Head, Medical & Patient Assistance Solutions, Global Health Equity,**  
**Johnson & Johnson**

As Global Head of Medical and Patient Assistance Solutions in Global Health Equity, Carlos, a licensed cardiologist, leads a team of medical, scientific, and business leaders focused on closing the gap between communities and the care they need. Their science-based approaches and programs are defining root causes of health inequities and evaluating the impact of J&J programs in closing such gaps in areas like Tuberculosis (TB), Mental Health, Global Surgery, and Vision Care. Carlos has established a solid reputation as a scientific leader and strategic thought partner. In his prior role as Global Head of Global Public Health Medical and Scientific Affairs at J&J. Before that, Carlos was Vice President of Strategy and External Scientific Affairs within J&J's Office of the Chief Scientific Officer. Carlos's tenure at J&J spans over 17 years in roles across R&D, Clinical Operations, and Medical Affairs. He joined Janssen in Mexico City in 2007 after holding positions at Novartis Pharmaceuticals and Schering AG.



**Michelle Erwee**  
**Global Head of Access to Medicines, Takeda**

Michelle Erwee is the Global Head of Access to Medicine at Takeda, where she is responsible for accelerating patient access to Takeda's highly innovative medicines in underserved communities.

Michelle started her professional career in South Africa as a midwife, hospital Unit Manager and later as hospital operations head. She then joined the pharmaceutical industry in 2004 and has spent the last 16 years at Takeda in various leadership positions across commercial business units, strategy & portfolio and general management covering many geographies. A career spanning more than 25 years in the health industry has taken her across the globe, from Africa, Eastern Europe to the Middle-East and Asia.



## Reflections



**Dr. Hanna B Demeke**  
**Nurse Epidemiologist**

Dr. Hanna B. Demeke, RN, MSN, PhD, is a PEPFAR's Nurses Leadership Initiative steering committee member. Dr. Demeke has over two decades of experience in nursing, public health, teaching, healthcare management, and research. She currently serves as a nurse epidemiologist at the CDC within the Centers for Global Health, supporting multiple PEPFAR countries. Previously, Hanna has worked as a nurse consultant in the Division of HIV Prevention and as a nurse manager at a state health department. Her academic journey includes studies at universities in Ethiopia and the completion of her master's and PhD degrees at Emory University in the USA.

## Call to action



**Madhu Deshmukh**  
**Vice President, Program Strategy and Innovation, CARE**

As Vice President of Program Strategy and Innovation (PSI) at CARE, Madhu leads a team of experts to provide program leadership for evidence based, human-centered innovations, transformative solutions and pathways to scale impact for poor communities especially women & girls. Program areas include Gender Justice, Climate Justice, Health and Equity, Education, Food and Water Systems, Women's Economic Justice and Innovation. A proven leader, and innovator with passion and vision to scale social development programs, Madhu has served in executive and leadership roles across 33 years of deep and extensive experience rooted strongly in the communities. She has led transformative agenda and teams within global organizations including CARE, ICRW, UNDP, WHO/UNAIDS, UK Government's DFID, National NGOs and support to Government of India. During her long tenure at CARE, Madhu has served in various leadership roles working closely with Country offices including serving as a CEO for CARE India and built successful large programs in India and across other geographies. Madhu holds a master's degree in social sciences from the Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai, India.



## RESOURCES

### Frontline Health Workers Coalition

The Case for Investing in Primary Health Care Workers: *Achieving Universal Health Coverage and Improving Health Equity* [English](#) [French](#)

### Living Goods

Living Goods Quarterly Report [Link](#)

### Project Hope

Training Health Care Workers and Saving Lives: How Project HOPE empowers health care workers and builds healthier, more resilient communities for an equitable world [Link](#)

### WHO

The Africa Health Workforce Investment Charter [English](#) [French](#) [Portuguese](#)

Windhoek statement from The Africa Health Workforce Investment Forum [English](#) [French](#) [Portuguese](#)

