
Peoples-uni: public health capacity building through online education

Marta Minwyelet
Wendemagegn Embiale
Aman Hussien
Omo Oaiya
Berhanu Beyene
Richard Heller



Rationale for Peoples-uni (<http://peoples-uni.org>)

- Builds Public Health capacity to meet the enormous needs for improving the health of populations in Low to Middle-Income Countries (LMICs).
- Open Education Resources and open platform allows education for health professionals to be provided fully online.
- Collaboration among international faculties to develop and deliver courses.

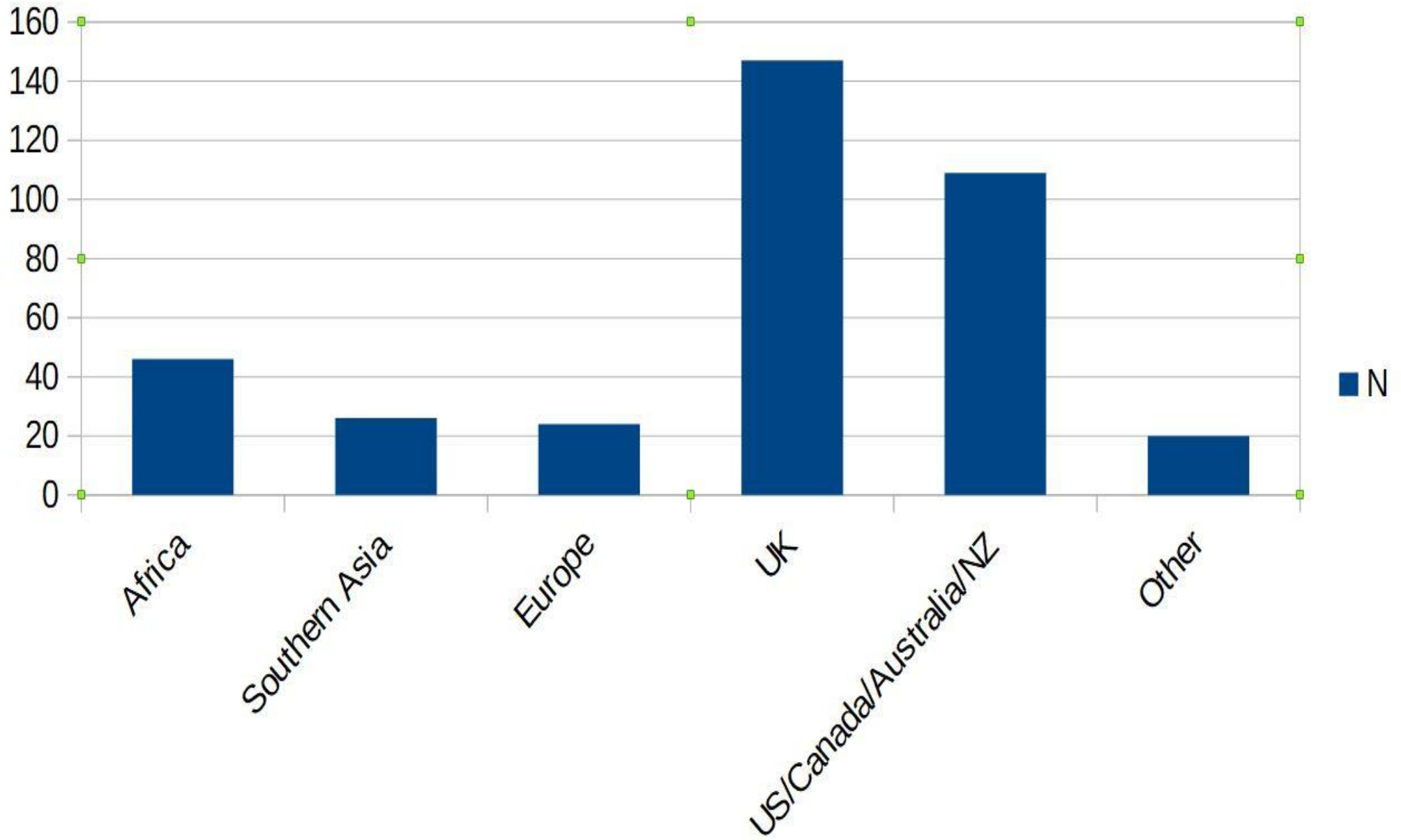
Approach/Techniques

- Outside, but benchmarked to, the traditional higher education system; very low cost; fully online Masters level courses have been offered since 2008.
- 19 modules covering the foundation sciences of Public Health and health problems facing LMICs populations.
- 70% percent of students are from Africa and 12% from the Southern Asia.

Enablers/Hindrances

- Volunteer tutors (from 51 countries)
- Use of Open Educational Resources
- Collaboration with a traditional UK university was a success
- Major hindrance is failure so far to identify an alternative university partner, either in a high-income country or an LMIC.

Source of 372 tutors





Open Educational Resources, open source educational delivery via the Internet, volunteer faculty

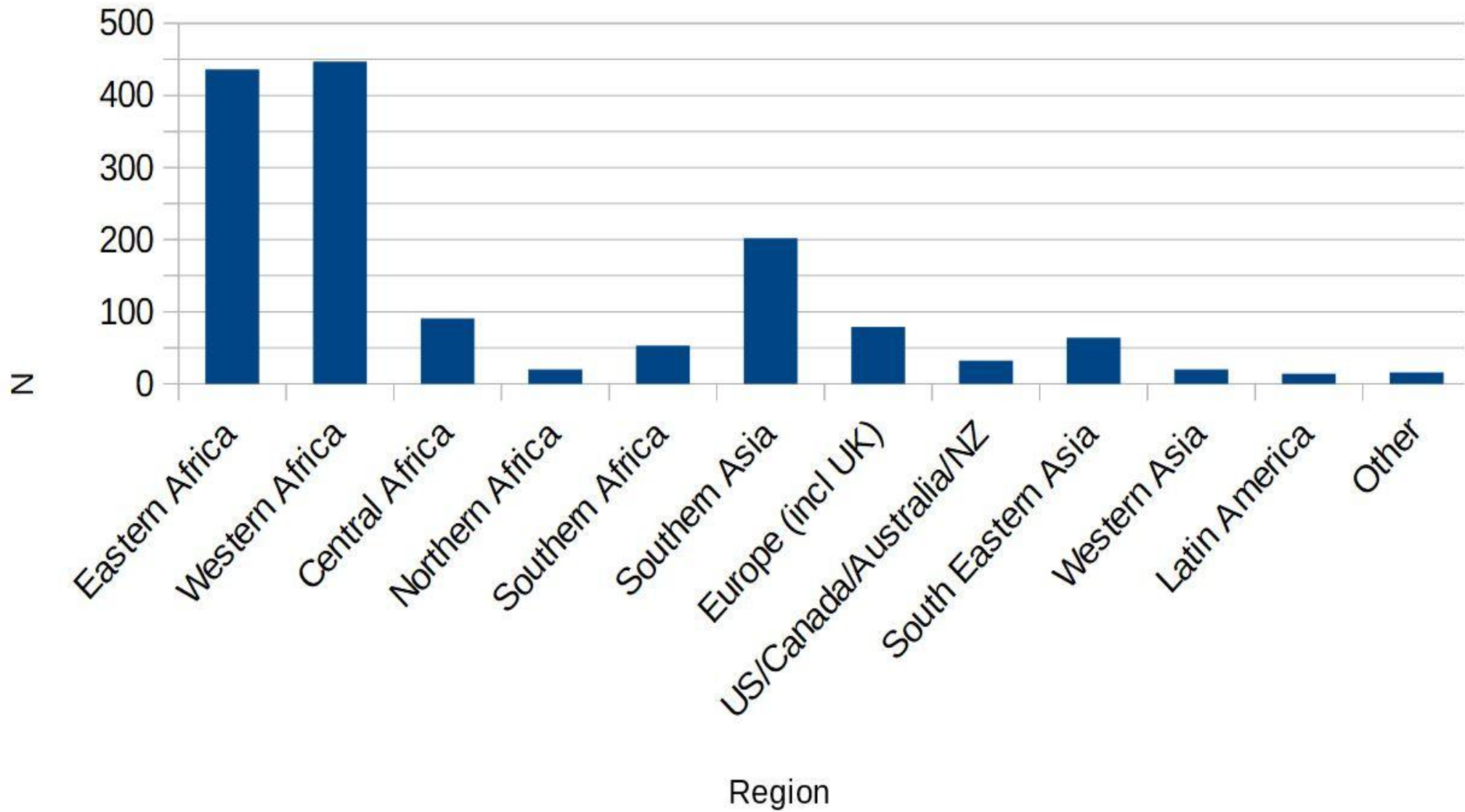
Certificate, diploma in Public Health, MPH



Outcomes

- 1474 students have enrolled on 5449 modules: 35% of students have passed at least one module at the Masters level.
- In a partnership with a UK University, 128 students, who had already passed two modules, enrolled on the MPH programme: 73% graduated with an MPH and a further 14% gained a graduate Diploma or graduate Certificate

Source of 1474 students



Outcomes: Alumni

- Graduates collaborate by joining as tutors themselves or as Student Support Officers.
- Alumni perform collaborative research as a group.
- Platform has created an international forum for south to south collaboration.

- Self-paced learning in a number of health areas not usually found in university courses.
- Free access, self enrol
- Most developed collaboratively with, or for, other organisations.
- Example: course for Continuing Professional Development in Non-Communicable Diseases delivered in partnership with a large healthcare organisation in Uganda.

Collaboration in Ethiopia

- Led by the Education Strategy Center
- Create and offer an online course in trauma.
- Included Ethiopian Civil Service University, ICE-Addis, Jimma University, Gondar University, the Ethiopian Research and Education Network (EthERNet), Peoples-uni
- An EU grant application was unsuccessful, but we are exploring alternative ways of developing the course.



<http://peoples-uni.org>

Lessons learned

- Programme development made possible by collaboration with IT group who understands the requirements of online education in LMICs.
- MoUs have been signed with the Africa Training Initiative, to provide content in the field of Public Health to the IT infrastructure offered by the ATI and the Ivoirian Research and Education Network (RITER) and the Virtual University of Cote D'Ivoire to collaborate on modules for French speaking populations.
- Challenges remain in how to collaborate with African universities to accredit our awards.

Outcomes: Summary

- Chance for access to high quality Public Health education has been given to many unable to access this otherwise
- Public Health capacity being built across Africa
- Global Public Health community created

Peoples-uni: The future

- Peoples-uni, a small organisation but with ambitious goals, seeks further opportunities for collaboration.
- Educational partners can help with programme accreditation.
- NGOs, ministries, regional research and education networks and others can take advantage of staff training and opportunities for research collaboration with our well trained graduates.

Thank You!

