

# HEALTH SYSTEMS PLANNING UNDER PRESSURE: TANZANIAN – SWISS COURSE

JANUARY 11 – 20, 2026.

## Training Summary

Experience public health where it matters most: This course takes you to Bagamoyo, Tanzania, to explore how health systems function under limited financial resources. Together with Swiss students and experts from Tanzania and Switzerland, you will gain insights into global health challenges, experience hands-on health systems planning, and compare perspectives between Tanzania and Switzerland – all within a unique, immersive setting.

## What will you learn?

In this course, you will learn what it means to make decisions without knowing everything, without the time to examine everything and most importantly, without being able to cover everything, which is necessary to provide a good health system for the local population in Tanzania. Together with Swiss students as well as healthcare professionals and Tanzanian peers, you will dive into topics such as public health, epidemiology, health equity, and the structures of healthcare systems in both Tanzania and Switzerland. Interactive lectures by Dr. Grace Mhalu (Ifakara Health Institute, IHI) and Prof. Mirko Winkler (Swiss TPH) will lay the foundation, followed by a team-based planning challenge led by Micha Bigler – an alumnus of the present course.

The goal of the planning group exercise, which will be an integral part of the course, is to design a health system for the Kilombero region in southern Tanzania in small, interdisciplinary Swiss-Tanzanian groups. This district comes with a wide range of challenges, from the sprawling Ifakara town with more than 100,000 inhabitants to rural villages without road connection. Big income disparities, seasonal flooding, growing rates of obesity while still having malnutrition, and outbreaks of Malaria, Tuberculosis, and sexually transmittable diseases force you to plan your interventions carefully and planfully.

You will have to reflect on the effects of your decisions, not only from a planning view, but also from an ethical perspective, provoking discussions about equity and equality in a health care system.

### **Beyond the Classroom: Discovering Tanzania**

Besides examining different aspects of health system planning in an interactive course setup, the discovery of other interesting aspects of the coast region will not come up short. Excursions to the former slavery trading post in the colonial city of Bagamoyo, visiting alternative and more traditional concepts of a health system in the fishing village of Mlingotini and enjoying the beautiful wildlife directly bordering the Indian Ocean in the Saadani National Park will complete this course. Of course, we will leave you with enough free time to discover the lively town of Bagamoyo by yourself and your colleagues.

### **Our Host: The Ifakara Health Institute**

The Ifakara Health Institute (IHI), the host of this course, is one of the most renowned research, training and service organizations on the African continent. It began in 1949 as a research and training partnership with the Swiss Tropical Institute (now the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute; Swiss TPH) before becoming the Swiss Tropical Institute Field Laboratory in 1956 and later an independent Tanzanian research institution in 1996. Today, the institute's work spans a wide range of sciences, including biomedical, ecological and health systems research and remains a close partner of Swiss TPH and Switzerland, together with many other key partners around the world.

**Course Dates:** January 11 – 20, 2026.

**Facilitators:** Professor Mirko Winkler (Head of the Urban Public Health Unit at Swiss TPH and the University of Basel), Dr. Grace Mhalu (Head of the Health Systems, Interventions, Impact Evaluation and Policy unit at IHI) and Micha Bigler (PhD candidate in health systems planning at Swiss TPH and beneficiary of the Swiss Study Foundation).

**Keynote Speakers:** Dr. Honorati Masanja (Chief Executive Director at IHI), Dr. Ntuli Kapologwe (Director General at East Central and Southern Africa Health Community), Dr. Kandi Lussingu (District Medical Officer in Bagamoyo), Dr. Luyana Lyimo (Medical Officer in charge at Bagamoyo District Hospital), and many more.

**Organizers:** Dr. Kafuruki Shubis and Dr. Dickson Lwetoijera (Ifakara Health Institute Training Department).

### **Qualifications and Experience**

- Healthcare workers professionals with an interest in planning and policy for health.
- Master's students in the related field with an interest in planning and policy for health.
- Only students who did not participate in the previous seminars in Tanzania are eligible to participate.

**Participants:** Maximum of 10 students (students and healthcare professionals).

**Costs:** The course offers fully sponsored accommodation, meals, and transport. No additional allowances will be provided.

### **Mode of Application**

All candidates who meet the above criteria should send their application letters together with their detailed curriculum vitae (CVs) showing contact addresses, including email, telephone/cell phone numbers and copies of academic and professional certificates to the email address below:

Training Department, Ifakara Health Institute.

Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Cecilia Francis,

**[cfrancis@ihi.or.tz](mailto:cfrancis@ihi.or.tz)**

**Application Deadline:** September 30th, 2025