

Building Sustainable Human Capacity in Asia and Africa: Bangalore Boston Nutrition Collaborative (BBNC)



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WHY DID WE THINK OF IT?

- Need to develop Indian professionals with appropriate skills, knowledge and abilities to work across various disciplines to design appropriate research studies that influence policy-making at the local, national and global level.
- No affordable comprehensive course which trained students to acquire necessary skills and competencies to conduct high quality research in nutrition.
- No single institution had infrastructure and methods for human nutritional studies, public health nutrition or laboratory-based analyses.
- Existing courses were expensive.

OUR AIM

- BBNC – an educational collaboration between nutrition scientists was established in 2009 to address this training gap. Partners were SJRI, Harvard T H Chan School of Public Health and Tufts University.
- To conduct an interdisciplinary, hands-on course to train the students with skills and knowledge to work together to plan and conduct research studied from “Cell to Society”, influencing policy making at national and global level.

OUR AIM

- Pipe Dream- Create a course that was intellectually excellent, using in-house SJRI expertise complemented by Boston faculty, infrastructure, BUT completely free for the Indian student.
- Identify promising students and junior faculty to undergo summer courses or training in Boston.
- Develop distance learning modules.



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PUT IT TOGETHER WITH OUR FRIENDSHIP, ENTHUSIASM AND WHOLE-HEARTED DRIVE



Dr Kurpad



Dr Duggan

Dr Griffiths



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ACHIEVEMENTS

- Started in Jan 2010 with 25 students.
- **USAID through NIL, Tufts collaborated and supported students from Nepal and Uganda since 2011.**
- Unique – No course fees and travel, accommodation and meals covered for Indian students.
- Every lecture was co-taught (SJRI + Boston) faculty.
- All training carried out at SJRI.
- Over 550 students have been trained.

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 11 years of high-quality capacity building of students from India and other countries such as Nepal, Uganda, Australia, Bangladesh, Denmark, Doha, Germany, Mauritius, Pakistan, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Tanzania .
- Web based learning system has been developed (<http://tyro.sjri.res.in>) which is widely used during the two-week course for lecture dissemination, course feedback and interactive learning.
- Twelve students/faculty from SJRI have visited Boston and worked on mutual research activities and educational efforts.
- Harvard College and graduate students have visited SJRI and worked on collaborative clinical research projects, with some publishing their results in the scientific literature.



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Collaborative teaching and building of new partnerships

Who did we train?

- Research Scholars/Nutritionists
- Doctors
- Mid-level faculty
- Technical Consultant/Coordinators to state and central government and other organizations like UNICEF, Southeast Asia Office (SEARO)
- State/National Nutrition Program Manager/officer
- Public Health Officer
- Policy advocacy officer

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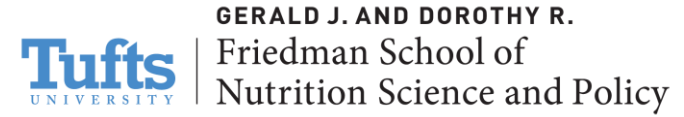
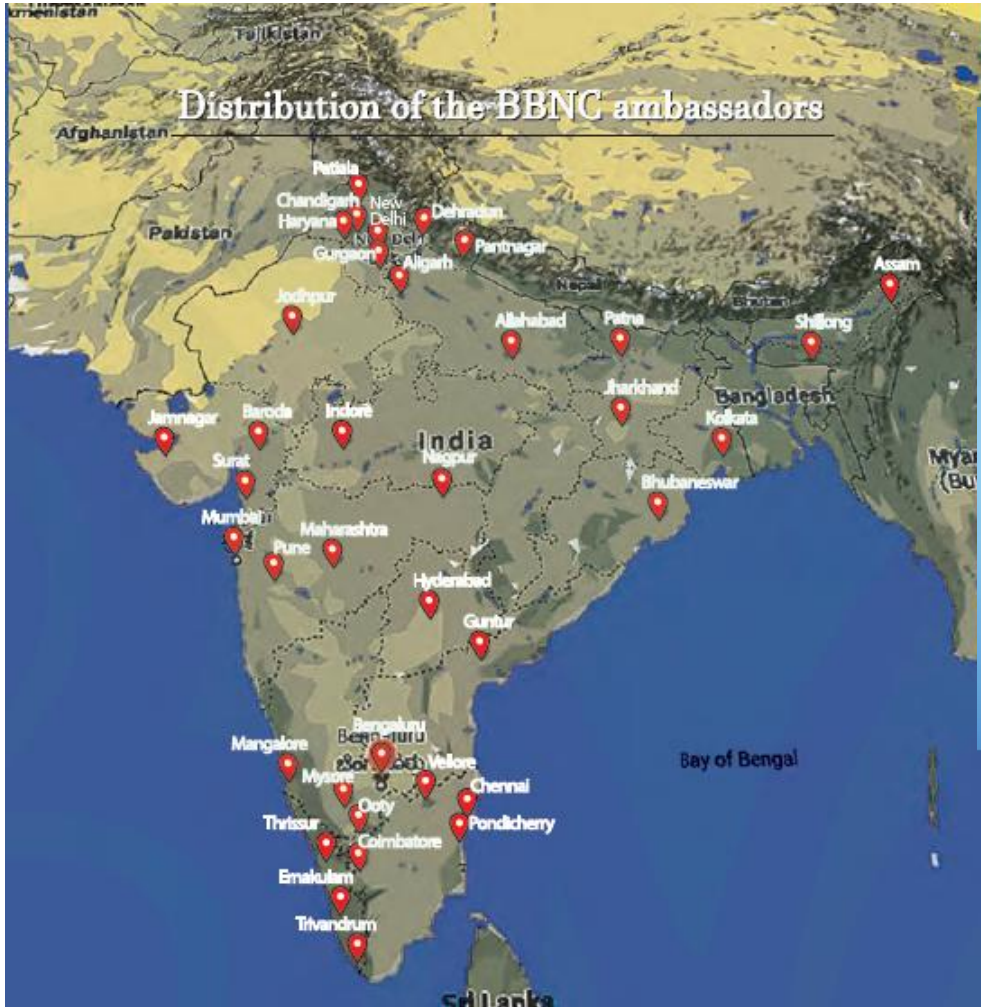
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Impact of BBNC – About 550 trained across the globe



Participants Background

Graduates and Postgraduates

in the field of Public health,
Family Health, Research,
Environment health, Epidemiology,
Agriculture, Agri Economics, Food
& Nutrition Security, Human
Nutrition, Food Science &
Technology

	Uganda (29)	Nepal (25)
Government health organization	Ministry of Health, Tororo Hospital, Mulago National Referral Hospital	District Health Office, Ministry of Health, National Health Mission, National Planning Commission
Academic medical institutions	Makerere School of Public Health, Makerere University, Gulu University	Maharajgunj Medical Campus, Institute of Medicine, Tribhuvan University, Pokhara University
Non-governmental organizations	World Vision, World Food Programme, Uganda Bureau of Statistics	Helen Keller International, Save the Children International, Nepal Public Health Foundation



WHAT MADE IT WORK?

- Excellent multidisciplinary team of expert faculty from SJRI and Boston
- “In-house” facilities at Division of Nutrition
- “Hands-on” practical demonstration.
- Infectious enthusiasm among the students
- Beautiful campus at SJRI, fine weather of Bangalore.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

2010 - 2012: Anonymous funds from Boston

2011 - 2020: United States Agency for International Development (USAID), for students from Nepal and Uganda.

2014 - 2017: United States - India Educational Foundation (USIEF) Obama Singh 21st century Knowledge Initiative Awards

2018 - 2019 : Tata Trust

2020 : Part funding for student related costs Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and Sight & Life

CHALLENGES

- The number of students that we can train each year
- Time when conducted – January
- Financial support



Mr. Muzafaru Ssenyondo (Uganda, 2018)
Nutrition Technical Advisor at Doctors of Africa-CUAMM

"Since BBNC course, three of my Abstracts have been accepted and presented at three International nutrition conferences/symposia that is; in Morocco, Ethiopia and recently in Vienna, Austria at IAEA headquarters. Also, from the BBNC proposal writing group work, I gained skills that eventually led to writing a successful proposal that earned me a scholarship for my Masters that I am currently pursuing at Makerere University, Uganda."

Testimonials



Dr. Prem Basel (Nepal, 2015)
Lecturer at Maharajung Medical Campus, Nepal

"BBNC helped me in acquiring the new knowledge and development that has taken place around the globe with regard to Nutrition. It further helped me to build a network with academicians and colleagues from around the globe for further collaboration and partnership in the field of nutrition. Furthermore after the course, I have initiated and developed a research plan proposal for funding for my PhD."





REFERENCES

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BMC Medical
Education



[BMC Med Educ](#). 2014; 14: 5.

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Innovations in nutrition education and global health: the Bangalore Boston nutrition collaborative

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BMC Med Educ



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WAY FORWARD

Create a Massive Open Online Course(MOOC) for distance learning

Change the structure of the course and focus on specific areas of interest

Connect the BBNC students and encourage collaborations and partnership

Apply for funding to sustain the program to build more capacity in area of nutrition and public health

Follow up on BBNC alumni and assess their academic/ career trajectory

Virtual BBNC course?



CONCLUSION

- BBNC is a true example of how collaboration and partnership can work well.
- It reflects building of capacity, opportunity and network which has been held together by the simple unique passion of our faculty to teach and share.

“BBNC is a sort of crucible- a place where people from different backgrounds melt together for a few short weeks every year, contributing energy, good will and eagerness to make the world a better place!”

- Dr Jeff Griffiths - Tufts



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Q&A



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