

Career Development Workshop

2023



The 2023 career development workshop for newly graduated master's students commenced on Friday 15th September 2023 at Bammental, about 20 minutes away by car from Heidelberg.

Very charming and fascinating place, surrounded by catchy nature...to relax, think, write and act...



We were seven graduates (Benjamin, Temidayo, May, Esther, Adele, Sara, and Olive) with two facilitators Andreas Deckert and Mahir Bhatt.



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We were given cards to write down our expectations and questions regarding this workshop. This was followed by a discussion of the expectations for clearer understanding.

The night ended with an exciting potluck where we prepared locally cherished dishes from their home countries. This was “so lecker” 😊

2



The second day was very intense and educative as we did self-assessments to identify our Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (**SWOT**).

We shared our SWOT, and facilitators shared their thoughts on what they have seen over the past year, where to improve and how to do it. At the end of this section, one participant jokingly said: *here we present ourselves not as public health practitioners but as humans.*

After the lunch break, we developed a pictorial drawing of our current situation including the advantages and disadvantages, and the future goals. It was fun because it helped us to rethink and develop strategies to achieve our goals. It also revealed the artistic talents that were hidden in many of us. In the evening we had a dinner at the Greek restaurant which was graced by a couple of scientists from the Heidelberg Institute of Global Health.

We asked questions relating to personal life through family life to professional life as these guests shared their experiences over the years together with pieces of advice to help us as young enthusiastic graduates not trek on the same path that has cost them deeply.

3



Sunday morning started with a nice breakfast at the hotel then checking out of the hotel. The section afterwards had the facilitators read out the questions to check if our doubts had been resolved.

Also, the facilitators sought the assessment of the workshop and areas of improvement.

At the end, we expressed our profound gratitude to the facilitators for the immense impact and the confidence we have now to face the world to make a difference.

One participant iterated “the *reflection and connection we got from this workshop can play a more important role in our lives than knowledge from the classroom. Because 10,20 years later, we will not remember the knowledge, but this will stay with us*”



In 20, 30 years to come, we may not remember everything we were taught in class, but lessons from this workshop will continue to shape us for the better as individuals and professionals" - this workshop sure gave a holistic icing on the cake for the MScIH program. **Temidayo**

This workshop acted as a gateway to the new chapter of our lives. It gave us the opportunity to take an exhaustive inventory of ourselves to determine the resources available to us, where we have come from, where we are now and where we can go from here with the resources. **Benjamin**

I think this Career Retreat serves as a Stop button for all recent graduates of MScIH Heidelberg. It pushes us to stop and think about our experience and where we want to go moving forwards. It builds on the rich experience of an exchange year, with classmates that sit alongside us this past one year, facilitated by facilitators who enable fruitful dialogues and bring the best and the most vulnerable of each person, and in a safe and warm environment. It is a perfect concluding chapter of my journey in Heidelberg. As said by other participant, this retreat allows us to be fully human and to plan not only our career, but also our life. I am truly grateful for this experience. **Oliv**

The Career Retreat was a time of reflection on what has been happening in my life and my one year in Heidelberg, what was happening after graduation, and using it to lay down my future goals and dreams. It ended my MScIH at a high note, not only helping to affirm my strength as a person but also as a professional with the capability of achieving my set career goals. It also helped me to connect more with my colleagues. The three days were worth it. **Esther**

It gives us an opportunity and safe space to open up to show our struggles and vulnerability. Throughout the workshop, I get to know my classmates more. I feel we are more connected in personal level not just the professional level. **May**

It was a good experience for me to share my strength and weakness within a group of people. It was a great opportunity to know myself and my friends and I believe such kind of programs help students to get ideas about their future careers within a friendly and reliable environment. **Sara**

Whatever you decide to do, make sure it makes you happy. This workshop gave me a new perspective of how should I look at my life and organize it. **Adele**