

Training Offer Report | “Place” in Global Health

1. Training Information

Full Title

Integrated Training on “Place” in Global Health – From Geospatial Methods to Positionality

Place and Date

Mainz, 9 – 11 September 2026

Number of Participants

On site: 25



Category



Basic Training Offer



Targeted Training Offer



Advanced Training Offer

2. Training Summary

Background and Context

The training addressed how to conceptualize, analyse, and communicate “place”. Although geospatial data are increasingly available, place is often reduced to a geographic location, overlooking its social, political, economic, psychological and epistemic dimensions. The training therefore brought geospatial approaches into dialogue with social theory, positionality, identity and power. This enabled participants to strengthen both methodological and contextual competencies and to reflect on how place shapes research questions, methods, interpretation, and communication. Developing research narratives also supported participants’ broader communication skills.



Objectives

Participants learned to critically distinguish between “space” and “place”, assess the opportunities and limitations of geospatial methods and reflect on positionality and power throughout the research process. They explored how spatial data can be combined with qualitative, participatory and creative approaches and strengthened their ability to communicate complex research to diverse audiences. The training particularly reflected Competencies 7.1 Global perspectives for research, 3.1 Collaboration across disciplines, 4.1 and 4.2 Communication and knowledge translation, and 6.1 Personal effectiveness and professional development from the GLOHRA Catalogue of Competencies.

Training Approach

The training focused on the participants' experiences and research questions, revolving on learning-by-doing and peer support. Complementing this core, keynotes from Dr Sadiq Bhanbhro (Sheffield Hallam University) and Dr Alexandre Pereira Santos (University of Bonn) and a World Café session challenged preconceived notions about place and space and achieved a common understanding of them. Finally, a hands-on exercise explored spatially located global health narratives grounded in place while investigating the inequalities in COVID-19 outcomes in São Paulo using statistics, StoryMaps, photography, and other media.



Key Insights & Outcomes

The central insight is that both place and geospatial information provide powerful lenses with which to approach global health questions. While no map can capture the full complexity of lived experience, location, distances, and spatial patterns help see wider contexts beyond the individual experience. The StoryMap exercise explored ways of combining these methods to produce more contextualised and accessible global health research..

Outlook

The keynotes and training materials will be available on the GLOHRA Training Platform. We look forward to continued exchange with participants on how they integrate “place” into their projects.

3. Organizers and Partners

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Further co-organizers:

- Dr. Alexandre Pereira-Santos (University of Bonn, Institute of Geodesy and Geoinformation)
- Prof. Dr. Melanie Böckmann (University of Bremen, Department of Global Health)

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