The World Gastroenterology Organisation and WGO Foundation
Did You Know . . .

- Many common digestive disorders and diseases – such as digestive cancers, viral hepatitis, diarrhea, and many more – are **preventable and treatable**?

- *Each year,* digestive and liver cancers cause 2,600,000 deaths with another 3,000,000 new cases diagnosed?

- *Every day,* 4,500 children under the age of five die from diarrhea – more than malaria or HIV/ AIDS?

- Worldwide, nearly 600,000,000 people are chronically infected with viral hepatitis resulting in an estimated **1,000,000 deaths annually**?

- Despite rating in the top ten causes of mortality, digestive disorders rank low in both public awareness and healthcare priority in many countries?

- The World Gastroenterology Organisation (WGO) has a portfolio of training and educational programs designed to address these challenges on a global scale?
There are many global health care issues that need time, money, and attention, but treating gastrointestinal diseases provides a greater opportunity to have an immediate impact on quality of life.

Digestive disorders have not received a proportionate share of funding or garnered the same level of awareness as other diseases.

Funding ($ million)

Disease Burden (x100,000 disability-adjusted life years)
About WGO and the WGO Foundation

- As the only global society for gastroenterology professionals, WGO has been bringing together the world’s leading minds in its field for over 75 years.

- WGO’s sole focus is to improve the standards of training, education, and practice of gastroenterology worldwide.

- As a federation of more than 100 national societies, WGO represents over 50,000 practitioners around the world.

- WGO has partnered with local and national health agencies and leaders in industry to deliver its mission.

- The WGO Foundation has sought to secure support for WGO programs since 2007 as its philanthropic arm.
Transformation of our Mission

- Over the past 10 years, WGO has shifted its focus to the needs of low-resource nations.
- There have been many recent breakthroughs in the causes, diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of digestive and liver diseases.
- Unfortunately, the related benefits from their discovery have not been felt equally, especially in nations facing the greatest need, due to limited resources and infrastructure.
- WGO strives to provide the resources, training, education, and advocacy required to address these challenges.
Training & Education Programs

- WGO has a unique portfolio of programs designed to address challenges faced by low-resource countries and create sustainable, long-term change including:
  - Training Centers;
  - Outreach Program;
  - Train the Trainers;
  - Global Guidelines;
  - Education & Advocacy; and
  - Public Awareness.

- Each program plays an essential role in delivering on the mission of assisting low-resource countries to improve their level of training and education.
WGO Training Centers

- Twenty-three (23) locations around the world have provided training and educational programs to nearly 1,600 professionals since 2005.

- Disseminate locally relevant knowledge and develop appropriate skills among medical practitioners and healthcare workers to:
  - Optimize standards of patient care while ensuring a focus on regionally-relevant digestive disorders; and
  - Attempt to reduce the exodus of highly skilled practitioners from low-resource countries by providing training close to home.
Training Center Spotlight: Rabat, Morocco

- Benin is a West African nation with 8.8 million residents.
- There are presently only two practicing gastroenterologists in the entire country.
- Two physicians from Benin are currently receiving advanced training in gastroenterology at the WGO Training Center in Rabat, Morocco.
- The end result is to help local medical professionals provide more expansive care to the Beninese population.

One of two Beninese physicians currently training in Rabat, Dr. Alassan uses an endoscope with a patient simulator and will be her country’s first female gastroenterologist upon her return home.
WGO Outreach Program

- Connects manufacturers with public hospitals or clinics in low-resource areas to introduce, upgrade, or restore endoscopic services to areas in need.
- Equipment considered obsolete in some nations often has remaining usable life and, once refurbished, can be put to good use in other parts of the world.
- Helps ensure WGO Training Centers and the home health care institutions of trainees are properly equipped.
Outreach Program Spotlight: Burkina Faso

- Burkina Faso in West Africa is among the poorest countries in the world with an annual per capita income of less than $300.
- Its citizens are faced with high rates of liver, stomach, and esophageal cancers.
- Professor Bougouma (inset) and his colleagues used their donated equipment to establish an endoscopy clinic at their hospital in the capital of Burkina Faso.
- In the first three (3) years after the donation of equipment, over 3,600 procedures were performed that were not possible before.
WGO Train the Trainers

- Continuing education for trainers plays a key role in the development of future gastroenterological practitioners.

- Unfortunately, few medical professionals, if any, have received formal instruction or training as educators.

- The WGO Train the Trainers program attempts to correct this deficit by bringing together trainers and leaders in education from around the world.

- The program consists of interactive sessions dedicated to the development of teaching and training skills.

An educator receives training during a Train the Trainers course at the Rabat, Morocco Training Center.
Impact of Train the Trainers

Six-month follow-up surveys were conducted from two recent training sessions with participants indicating how they applied their new skills.
WGO Global Guidelines and Cascades

- A collection of 22 practice guidelines written by teams that have non-Western experts to ensure global application.

- Utilize *cascades* which provide various diagnosis and evidence-based treatment options that are scalable to a variety of conditions.

- Cascades make the WGO Guidelines unique by offering multiple ways to achieve the best possible outcome based on available local resources.
Viral Hepatitis: A Global Problem

- Worldwide, two billion people have been infected with the hepatitis B virus, resulting in more than 350 million chronic liver infections.

- Another 200 million people around the world are chronically infected with hepatitis C.

- Together, these two diseases are globally responsible for:
  - An estimated one million deaths annually; and
  - The majority of hepatocellular cancer cases, the third leading cause of cancer death.

Source: WHO
WGO’s Response to Liver Disease

In response to the global need for education, information, and treatment options, WGO has:

- Trained nearly 80 physicians how to band esophageal varices at the WGO Cairo Training Center;
- Published Global Guidelines for managing ascites in cirrhosis patients, treating esophageal varices, hepatitis B, and hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC);
- Developed, with over 300 delegates from 45 countries, the Declaration of Rabat to address viral hepatitis and HCC on the African continent; and
- Partnered with the Indian Society of Gastroenterology to lobby the government to change policy and introduce a hepatitis B vaccine.

Hepatitis C Virus

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World Digestive Health Day

- Every May 29th, WGO organizes World Digestive Health Day (WDHD) with a worldwide public health campaign coordinated with member societies.

- Each year, the initiative focuses on an important topic in the area of digestive health and disease to increase general awareness of prevention and treatment.

- Initially a one-day event, WDHD has evolved into a year-long activity serving as the primary topic in a series of symposia and programs.

- Topics have included optimal health and nutrition, viral hepatitis, IBS, IBD and Enteric Infections, From Heartburn to Constipation: Common GI Symptoms in the Community: Impact and Interpretation, Liver Cancer, and Gut Microbes. The 2015 campaign is HEARTBURN: A Global Perspective.

Bicycle rally in India as part of WDHD 2007
Vision for the Future

- WGO seeks to create a **Global Education & Training Network** leveraging the strength of the existing WGO programs.
- This network will expand each program’s impact and reach to maximize resources and training efficiency.
- The long-term outcomes of this initiative include:
  - Increased access to high-quality patient care; and
  - Retention of top healthcare providers locally.
WGO – Serving the World

As the global guardians of digestive health, WGO is uniquely positioned to be a catalyst for change.

- **Unparalleled Reach** – More than 100 national member societies representing over 50,000 practitioners worldwide.

- **Proven Track Record** – Experience in convening leaders from practice and education for the World Congress of Gastroenterology.

- **The Logical Choice** – WGO is the only place to go to deliver programs on a global scale because of our exquisite focus and ability to make an impact.

The World Gastroenterology Organisation plays a complementary role to ours. While the Chilean Society of Gastroenterology, which I preside, focuses on local professional matters, the WGO assists in the identification of regional and global trends in digestive care. Because of that, the WGO finds itself in a unique position to bring together practitioners from around the world to focus on matters that affect us all and society-at-large.

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