

A Decade of Public Health and Epidemiology Training in Africa: Experience from Mali

P1-S10

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Over the past decade, **316 Master's students** have been trained in public health at USTTB, Mali, with **87% securing new jobs or promotions** within six months of graduation. Alumni have taken on **leadership roles** in health directorates, hospitals, academic institutions, and NGOs, contributing to outbreak control efforts and the sustainability of training programs

BACKGROUND

- Africa faces significant health challenges, including infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, and emerging health threats, requiring a skilled public health workforce.
- Training programs in public health are essential for equipping professionals with the necessary skills to address these challenges at local and global levels.
- The University of Bamako-USTTB created the MPH program in 2011 to strengthen public health capacity in Mali and the broader West African region.
- The program aims to address workforce gaps in public health by offering specialized training in multiple disciplines, such as epidemiology, community health, and nutrition

OBJECTIVES

- To evaluate the success of the MPH program in training health professionals over a decade.
- To examine the impact of the program on graduates' career trajectories, their roles in health systems, and contributions to managing public health challenges.

METHODS

- **Data Collection:** Data were collected from program records and alumni surveys. The records included student enrollment, demographic data, concentration of study, and funding sources. The alumni survey gathered employment outcomes, including job placements and promotions within six months of graduation.
- **Analysis and Outcomes:** Descriptive statistics were used to analyze student demographics, funding sources, and employment outcomes. Alumni employment data were further analyzed to identify leadership roles in public health institutions and contributions to outbreak management (e.g., COVID-19), and roles in sustaining the training program.

RESULTS

- After a decade, **316** students from Mali and neighboring francophone countries have completed the MPH program (Figure 1)
- Within six months, **87%** of graduates secured new jobs or promotions. (Figure 2)
- Alumni occupy key leadership roles in national health directorates, hospitals, disease control programs, and NGOs. (Figure 3)
- Alumni have played a vital role in managing health crises, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and 15 have returned to serve as faculty in the program, ensuring its sustainability.

RESULTS CONTINUED

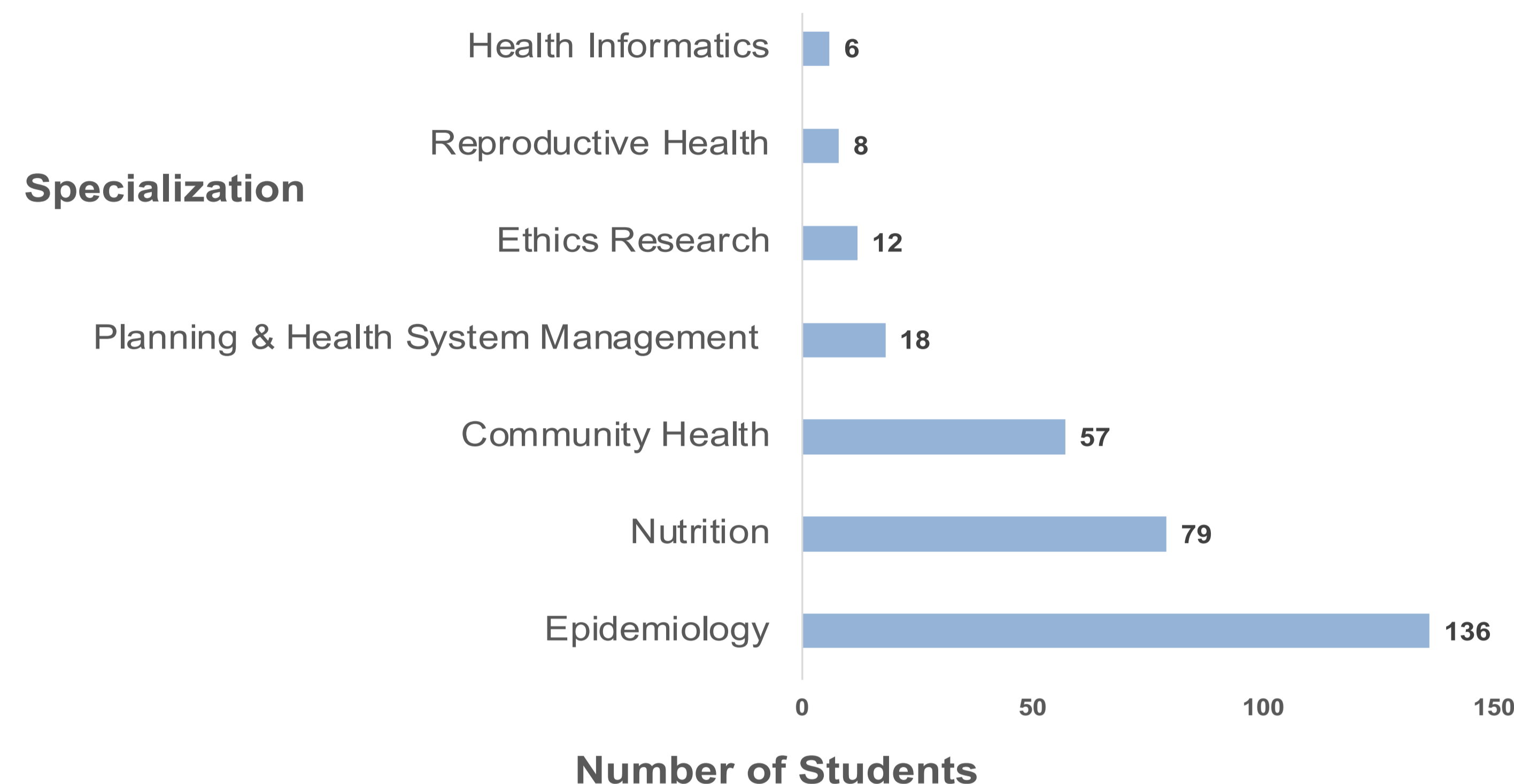


Figure 1: Distribution of Students across Master of Public Health Specializations

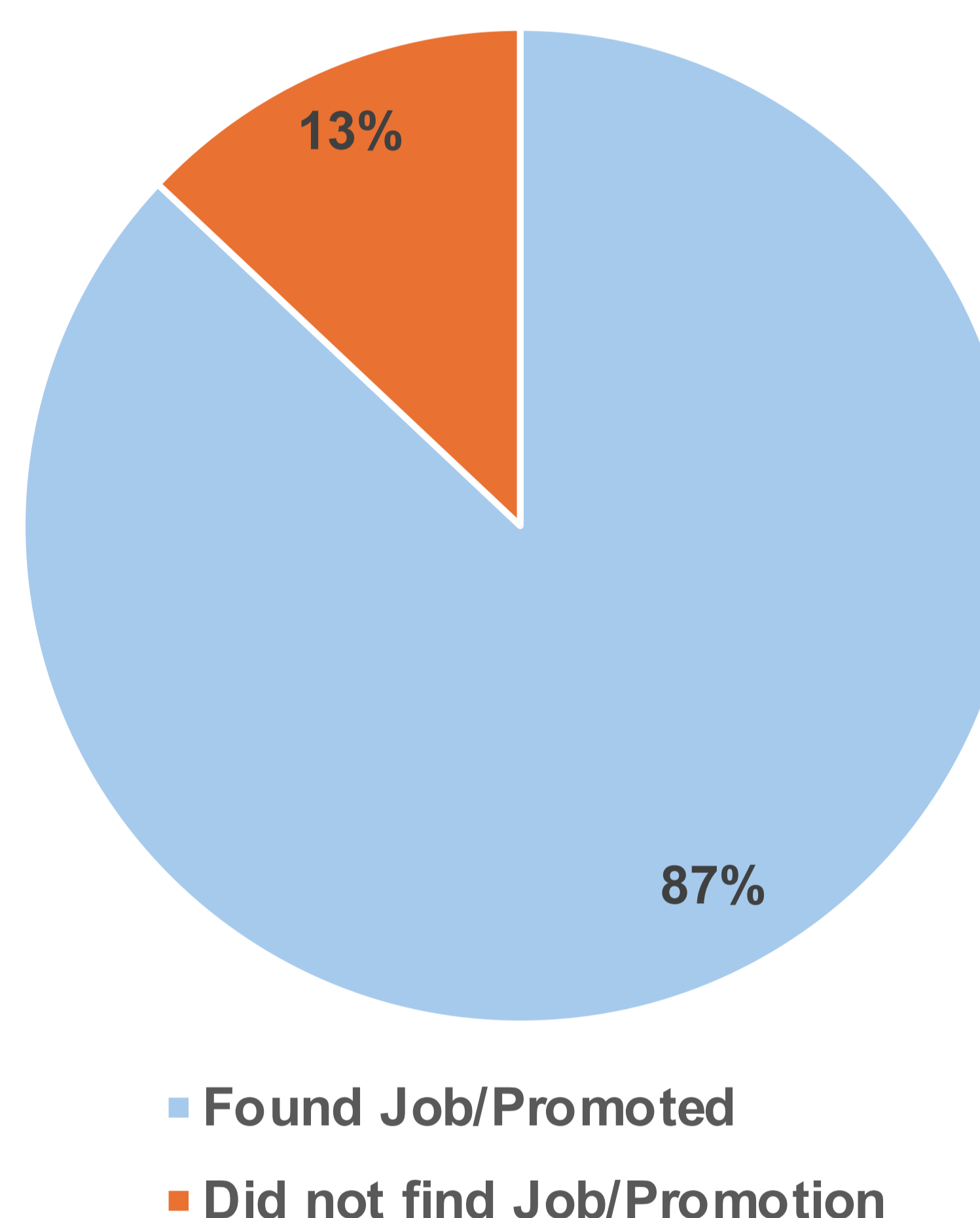


Figure 2: Post Graduation Employment Outcomes (Within 6 Months)



Figure 3: Key Leadership Roles Held by MPH Alumni

CONCLUSIONS

- The decade-long experience of the MPH program demonstrates its effectiveness in building a skilled public health workforce capable of addressing both local and global health challenges.
- Continued collaboration with government and international partners is critical for expanding curricula, ensuring program sustainability, and addressing emerging public health needs.
- Next steps: curriculum development, particularly in specialized fields like disaster risk management, and increasing research opportunities to strengthen public health workforce capacity in Mali and the subregion.

ADDITIONAL KEY INFORMATION

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