

EPES Highlights

- ✓ **187 participants from 25 countries have attended EPES International Training Program (ITP) on Popular Education and Community and Participatory Strategies for Health.** Forty-five Lutherans from Latin America, Africa and the U.S. have attended the ITP. The course's hands-on approach is unique. Using the EPES model we teach participants how to work in poor communities with local health teams and we provide concrete tools and strategies to promote participation that facilitates long-term change. Many programs and activities have grown out of the International Training Program. Here are three examples.
 - *Hope Foundation for African Women (HFAW)* was founded in Kenya by Grace Mose after graduating from our first international training in 2010. She saw how popular education could be an effective approach to address female genital mutilation and gender-based violence. We have provided ongoing support to Grace and her team since 2010.
 - After the January ITP, three participants quickly set in motion popular education initiatives in their respective communities. **In Ethiopia**, Worknesh Begi, Director of Tarkanfi, developed popular education courses for three groups: elementary school teachers, city officials, and leaders of groups women displaced from their land. **In South Africa and Zimbabwe**, Chengitai Chismaba, of the Lutheran Community of South Africa, and Yeukai Muzazawa, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Zimbabwe, held two popular education training workshops for 50 HIV/AIDS and malaria prevention program coordinators.
- ✓ **In 2013, it became illegal to smoke in indoor public spaces because EPES helped change Chile's tobacco laws through our leadership of Smoke-Free Chile.** Since then, we have been invited to participate in many regional and global meetings to share our experience. Heart attacks decreased by 8% a year after the law changed – 764 cases a year (or 3820 fewer heart attacks in 5 years!) according to a joint study by scholars from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Chile.
- ✓ **Our cutting edge, anti-obesity nutrition program** uses a gender and human rights approach to create healthier food environments. The coordinator of this program has become a nationally recognized voice and is regularly interviewed and invited to teach the EPES approach. Our recent community monitoring project, found that among 219 food carts and stores in proximity to 38 public schools and public health centers where EPES is located, **only three offer natural, unprocessed food.** We are working to change this!
- ✓ **EPES is part of Chile's national leadership of the Health For All coalition** working to build a social movement strong enough to defend the public health system and the rights of the poor. Eighteen thousand people died last year in Chile WAITING for a hospital bed or medical intervention – there is still much to do.
- ✓ **EPES won a competitive grant from the Chilean Ministry of Health to develop a National Community Health Agent (CHA) program** – we led the process to develop the profile of the CHA; wrote a 200-page training manual published by the Ministry and distributed it throughout Chile. We trained the first 100 CHAs, before the program was defunded by the incoming government.
- ✓ **EPES coordinates the Chile Forum of ACT – churches acting together to face natural disasters and the effects of climate change.** We have been on the frontlines in responding to major national disasters like the 8.8 earthquake and tsunami in 2010, fires in Valparaiso in 2014 and fires in the Bio Bio region in 2017.
- ✓ EPES built our two centers in poor neighborhoods in Santiago and Concepcion, and for 37 years, we have worked with these communities to improve health and well-being. **We have been recognized locally and internationally for the quality of our programs and for our long-term commitment to building a more just and healthy society.**