



Photo: Dr Siyad Mohamed Abdi (bottom right) addresses Dr Tedros, President Macron and WHO Academy Executive Director, Dr Agnès Buzyn (top right) during the groundbreaking ceremony in France, while health professionals from other countries listen to the discussion, 27 September 2021

MOGADISHU, 29 September 2021 – The World Health Organization (WHO) Academy held a groundbreaking ceremony, in the presence of the President of France, HE Mr Emmanuel

Macron, the WHO Director-General, Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus and Executive Director of the WHO Academy Dr Agnès Buzyn to inaugurate the construction of its futuristic campus in Lyon, France, on 27 September. At the event, President Macron addressed Dr Siyad Mohamed Abdi, a Somali surgeon and trainee of the WHO Academy certified training course on mass casualty management held in Mogadishu, to hear about his learning experience.

The WHO Academy developed and organized an operational, context-specific and team-based training course for Somali health workers in January and February 2021 that prepares them to respond effectively and efficiently to mass casualty incidents. This was the first certified course of WHO Academy organized in Africa on mass casualties management to be organized by WHO Somalia country office, with funding from the World Bank's Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility. As part of the course, 10 international master trainers from the WHO Academy trained 74 doctors and nurses in mass casualty management in Mogadishu and Hargeisa.

Dr Abdi, who works at a number of hospitals in Galmudug State in Somalia, explained the training enabled health professionals to design and upgrade their own hospital mass casualty plans, to be more effective and efficient, work as teams, and exchange best practices and experiences with one another.

"Somalis witness road traffic accidents, bomb explosions, and natural disasters so often. Additionally, conflict causes around half of all civilian trauma cases," added Dr Mamunur Rahman Malik, WHO Representative and Head of Mission to Somalia. "We are thankful to the World Bank, the WHO Academy, the WHO headquarters and our Regional Office, as well as to several other partners who gave Somali doctors and nurses the well-planned and evidence-based learning opportunity to rethink their response, both individually and collectively, to casualties. This course offered them skills and practical simulations that will help them plan for, respond to, and cope with mass casualties, which will inevitably save more lives."

"The quality of the health workforce is the key to resilience during a health crisis," said President Macron. "Investing in health systems is the best way to prepare for future pandemics. Success requires unprecedented coordination of all actors. WHO is, of course, a key player and its Academy will be an essential platform for disseminating learning."

"The ambitions of the WHO Academy are not modest: to transform lifelong learning in health globally," said Dr Tedros. "The COVID-19 pandemic is a powerful demonstration of the value of

health workers, and why they need the most up-to-date information, competencies and tools to keep their communities healthy and safe. He added, “The WHO Academy is an investment in health, education, knowledge and technology, but ultimately it’s an investment in people, and in a healthier, safer, fairer future.”

Representatives from the Government of the Republic of France, Federal Republic of Somalia, UN, international organizations, academia and the health, academic and economic sectors participated in the event. It was broadcasted live on the WHO website and on social media ( [Twitter](#)

, [YouTube](#)

, [Facebook](#)

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## **NOTE TO EDITORS**

The World Bank, through its Pandemic Emergency Financing facility, provided support to the Mass Casualty Management training in Somalia.

The WHO Academy is a state-of-the-art training institution that aims to bring the lifelong learning revolution to the health sector and reach 10 million learners around the world by 2023. For additional information, please see the [WHO Academy website](#) and [press release for the ceremony](#)

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