

# Capacity Building Case Study

Expanding the Reach of the MLM



Transforming primary care with future-forward training programs.



# The problem

## Highly Skilled EPI Managers

A routine immunization (EPI) program is only as good as the managers who oversee it. With highly skilled EPI Managers, an EPI program will excel, children will be immunized, and lives will be saved. Without them, immunization coverage stagnates or declines.

## Mid-Level Managers (MLM) training program

In Africa, there's only one accepted way to learn how to manage an EPI program effectively: complete the Mid-Level Managers (MLM) training offered by the World Health Organization's (WHO's) African Regional Office (AFRO). It is the gold standard.

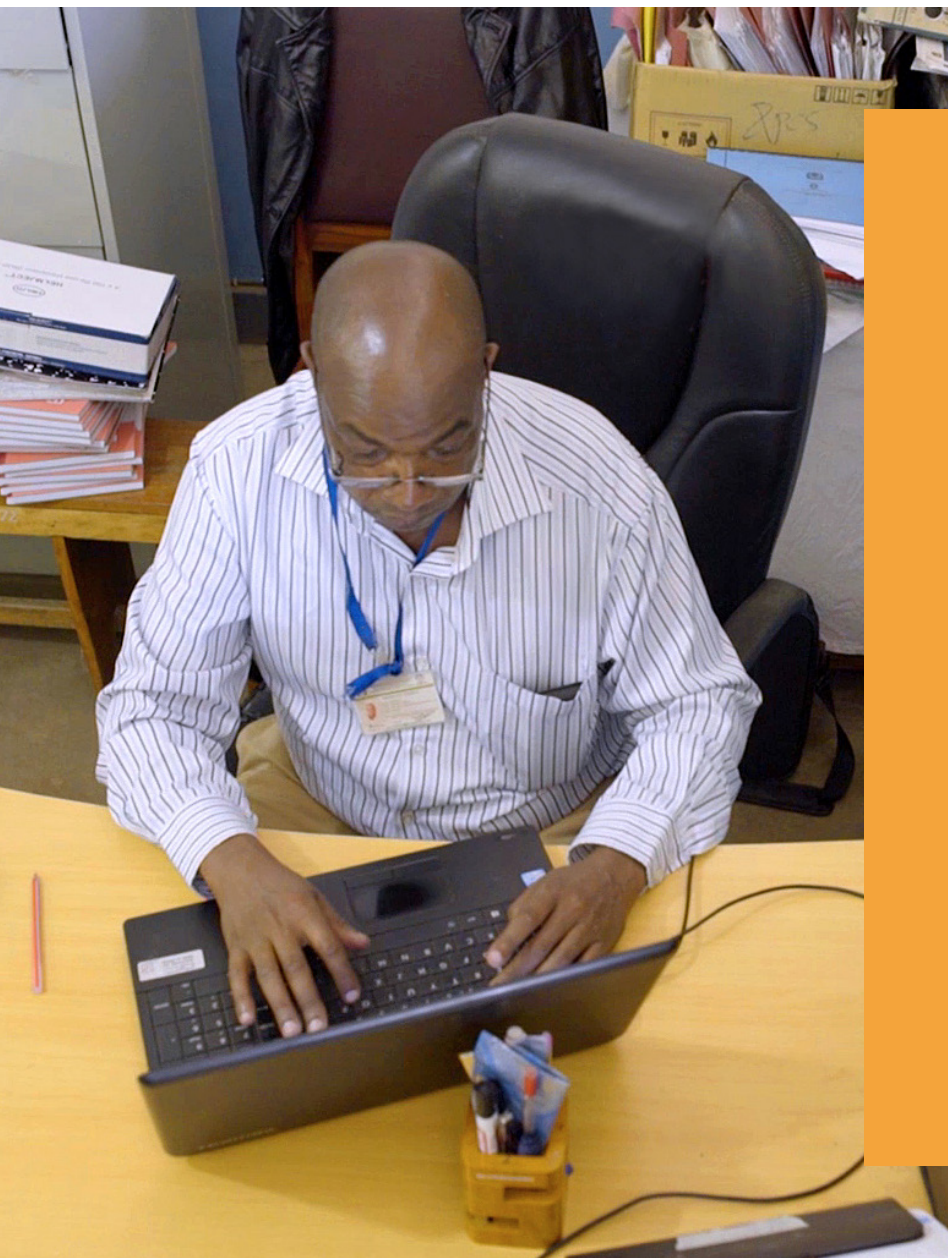
## Finding a way to train more EPI Managers

Until recently, AFRO only had the capacity to offer the MLM to about 100 Anglophone and Francophone EPI Managers every other year. The many thousands of EPI Managers unable to attend just had to figure out how to succeed on their own.

To meet its goal of improving immunization coverage across the African continent, AFRO needed to find a way to bring MLM training to many, many more EPI Managers.

*“With highly skilled EPI Managers, an EPI program will excel, children will be immunized, and lives will be saved.”*





## The goal

AFRO enlisted the support of BCL to help expand the reach of the MLM training. From the outset, the general goal was to make the training as convenient and accessible as possible. This meant allowing EPI Managers to train from work and/or home. We determined that it also meant making sure EPI Managers can easily fit training into their busy schedules without taking extended time away from work.

# The solution

To achieve these goals, BCL designed and created an innovative online MLM course that is:



### Fully online

So EPI Managers can learn anywhere they choose



### Completely self-paced

So EPI Managers can fit learning into their schedules



### Modular

So EPI Managers can learn in small chunks without disrupting work



### Multilingual

So English and French speaking EPI Managers can learn and grow

The screenshot shows the website header with the WHO logo and 'MLM Online Training' title. Navigation links include 'Courses', 'FAQ', 'Contact', 'Create an Account', and 'Log In'. A main banner reads 'Improve your on-the-job performance with MLM Online Training courses' and 'Enroll in one of the courses below, or enroll in the MLM Master Certification program.' Below is a grid of course cards:

- COURSE 1: The Role of the EPI Manager** - Explore the operational and supportive components that impact an EPI program -- and their connection to the external environment. (Enroll, View Details, Est. Time 1.5 Hours)
- COURSE 2: Solving Immunization Problems** - Learn about and practice a systematic problem-solving approach that can help identify problems and generate and implement solutions. (Enroll, View Details, Est. Time 2 hours)
- COURSE 3: Planning** - Discover more about EPI planning -- a continuous process for analyzing data, evaluating achievements and constraints, and decision-making to achieve objectives. (Enroll, View Details, Est. Time 2.5-3 hours)
- COURSE 4: Communication and Community Engagement** - Learn about different types of communication and strategies for community engagement. (Enroll, View Details, Est. Time 2 hours)
- COURSE 5: Costing and Financing** - Practice creating budgets.
- COURSE 6: Vaccine Stock Management**
- COURSE 7: Cold Chain Management**
- COURSE 8: Monitoring Immunization Systems**

## MLM Online Training

The online MLM is composed of 14 smaller modules, allowing learners to focus on those skills they feel they need the most. This makes training more relevant. It also lets learners more easily fit learning into their lives and increases usage by lowering the overall time commitment they need to make.

# The solution

This screenshot displays a grid of course cards for the MLM Online Training program. Each card includes a title, a brief description, and an 'Enroll' button. The courses listed include:
 

- Monitoring Immunization Systems**: Learn about and practice all of the essential elements of monitoring your immunization program. (4 hours)
- Immunization Safety**: Learn about four aspects of immunization safety: vaccine safety, injection safety, waste management, and surveillance and management of AEFI. (4 hours)
- New Vaccine Introduction**: Learn about the decision-making, planning and implementation considerations for EPI regarding new vaccine introductions. (4 hours)
- Planning and Monitoring SIAs**: In this module, you will practice the decisions needed to plan, implement, and monitor a high-quality SIA. (4 hours)
- Surveillance of VPDs**: Learn to establish and maintain a disease surveillance system. Practice selecting strategies and actions as part of an outbreak response. (2 hours)
- Supportive Supervision**: Practice key skills, including planning for visits, observing at a facility, identifying priority issues, and providing coaching and feedback. (5 hours)
- Conducting an EPI Review**: An overview of the process of planning, conducting and following up on an EPI review. (4 hours)
- MLM Master Certification**: Enroll in all 14 courses at once. Take all the time you need to complete the coursework. When you are finished, you will earn Master Certification from WHO AFRO. (9 hours)

 A footer section contains 'Links', 'Contact' information for the Regional Office for Africa, and an 'Updates' subscription form.

This screenshot shows the course page for 'The EPI Program as a System'. The page features a navigation menu with 'Courses', 'FAQ', 'Contact', 'Nathan Plenkowski', and 'Log Out'. The main content area includes:
 

- The EPI Program as a System** overview with sub-topics: Identifying Program Components, Predicting Impact of Program Changes, Working with ICC/NITAG, Human Resource Management, and Conclusion.
- Lesson 1: The Role of the EPI Manager** with a 'START' button.
- Discussion Board** with an 'Add comment...' field.
- Resources** section with a link to 'Role of the EPI Manager Resource Book (pdf)'.

This screenshot shows the course page for 'The Role of the EPI Manager'. It includes the same navigation menu as the previous page. The main content area features:
 

- The EPI Program as a System** overview with sub-topics: Identifying Program Components, Predicting Impact of Program Changes, Working with ICC/NITAG, Human Resource Management, and Conclusion.
- Realistic Scenarios**: A text box stating, 'Good work. As an EPI manager, you will need to identify how problems affect not just the component where they first occur, but also other components of the EPI program and program results as a whole. Now, click the box where you could take action as a manager to prevent or reduce the impact on the EPI program results.' Below this is a flowchart diagram showing the relationship between Logistics, Vaccine Supply & Quality, Service Delivery, and EPI Program Results.
- Discussion Board** with an 'Add comment...' field.
- Resources** section with a link to 'Role of the EPI Manager Resource Book (pdf)'.

## MLM Master Certificate

With the modular format, people can slowly work their way toward an MLM master certificate if they wish. Ambitious learners may also choose to enroll directly in the master program from the beginning. Having the flexibility to individualize the experience is one factor that makes the online program “learner-centered.”

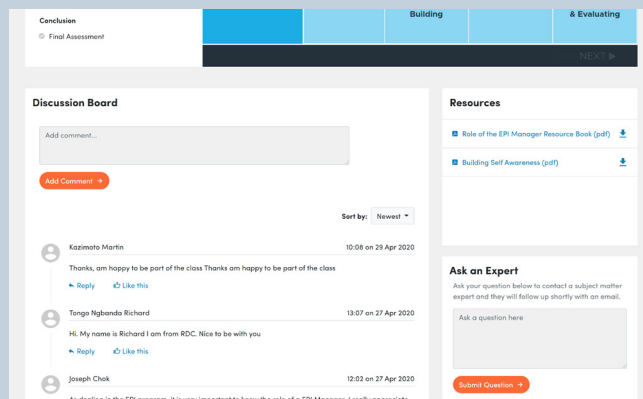
## Self-paced Learning

Once enrolled, a learner can work through each section of the module at a pace that suits his or her work and life. Each module is divided into sections that learners work through one section at a time.

## Realistic Scenarios

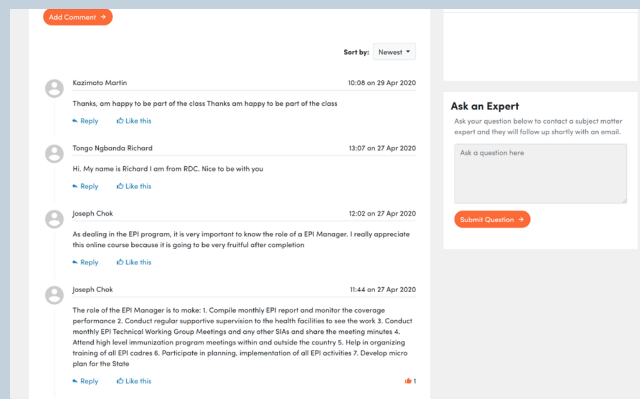
The lessons are all active, putting learners in realistic scenarios, requiring them to choose the best options, and then giving feedback on their responses. This aligns with how adult learners think and learn and ensures their knowledge is not merely theoretical.

# The solution



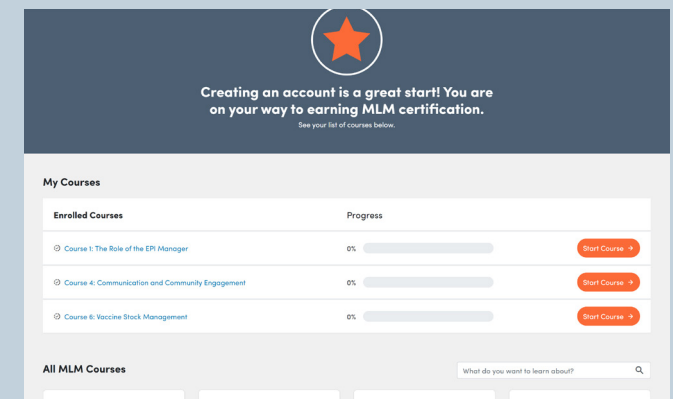
## Discussion Board

While learning, people can seek support from their peers via a discussion board. They can also download job aids, guidance documents, and other resources they can use on the job.



## Ask an Expert

If someone isn't able to get the answers she needs from peer learners or other documents; she can always submit a question to an expert. Within several days of submission, a recognized global expert in the topic will reply with an answer.



## Track Results

Finally, enrolled learners can track their progress and achievements with an easy-to-use dashboard.

# The solution

In sum, the MLM offers a learner-centered training program that adheres to adult learning principles and eliminates most of the barriers to getting crucial skills into the hands of health officials across the African continent.

# The impact

The online MLM exceeded its goals.



**7,504** users  
enrolled  
in at least one of the modules



**28,636** module  
certificates  
have been awarded



**523** master  
certificates  
have been awarded

In addition, by using some of the modules as pre-requisites for the workshop, AFRO has been able to cut the workshop length in half, thereby doubling its capacity to train people in the traditional workshop form.



# bcl



Transforming primary care with future-forward training programs.