

# WHY ONLINE MASTERS IN PUBLIC HEALTH MUST BE CONFINED TO DUSTBINS

*Posted on May 13, 2022 by Dr Edmond Fernandes*



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At times I get intrigued by some questions which people raise wanting to do an online [Masters in Public Health \( MPH\) programme](#). I don't get annoyed but amused with the thought of an online programme. After years of [dedicated work in the field](#), we still never have the right kind of confidence in bringing about the kind of change we actually want from the ground. The work there is to do on the ground, changes from place to place, programme to programme, cultures to cultures. At times, it needs to also be achieved from borrowed goodwill to bring in a real world change.

An online MPH programme is like going to battle or war by practicing military skills online and getting a simulator training for some practical exposure. Or perhaps it is like being a doctor by learning medicine online and watching videos on how to treat patients.

This is not how anyone can win a battle. Likewise fighting disease and deaths, or framing policies that have on-ground implications can never be achieved by remote learning programmes unless someone wishes to collect a degree of MPH for fashion.

We must mature to understand the fact that public health is too serious a work and a field that can be practiced by securing a degree online. Unless practitioners of the trade go to the field, interact with stakeholders on the ground, understand the dynamics of the problem and solve real world

problems, public health can never get converted to public wealth.

We need to understand that our world is in crisis, much of it created due to our own fallacies. Natural disasters, [climate change issues](#), pandemics and the public health consequences of it all has serious implications on the kind of world we are living in.

To enhance and improvise this, we need to seriously learn, understand and approach [public health in heart and spirit](#) with dedicated learning and dedicated outcomes.