ADAPTING FACE-TO-FACE ACTIVITIES TO AN ONLINE ENVIRONMENT DURING THE COVID PANDEMIC

** Oral Presentation  
*Innovative Ways for Community Mobilization and Engagement of Stakeholders*

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** Background**  
The Social Innovation in Health Initiative (SIHI) Network is a global network of university-based hubs, social innovators, and contributing partners that share a passion for uplifting social innovations in health. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, SIHI developed strategies to engage current and potential partners in innovative ways. Methods A strategy employed was shifting from in-person meetings with global partners to online meetings that used innovative techniques to adapt the online environment. Activities adapted online included the World Café and Six Thinking Hats, which allowed for participatory conversations among stakeholders in different parts of the world. Adapting the activities required meticulous planning. Online services and software were explored to adapt aspects of activities that were usually physical in nature. These were also used to supplement capabilities of video conference software. Engagement of participants and interactivity was prioritized during development of these methods and tested through mock runs. Close coordination with participants was done over a longer period. Various materials were requested from participants such as premeeting work to facilitate the actual sessions. Materials for the sessions were made available through emails, online cloud storage, or event webpages. Results  
The online nature of the meetings allowed more participants to attend, especially those from resource-constrained settings. Feedback about the meetings was positive as participants noted the unique style and interest in the activities. These meetings also provided foundations for collaborations with new partners. Conclusion  
In-person activities can be successfully adapted into online environments and offer some advantages.