

Advancing cancer research in resource-limited settings: Perspectives from emerging voices across continents

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Abstract

Cancer is a global disease, yet a paradox persists: The most advanced research ecosystems are concentrated in countries with lower disease burden, whereas low- and middle-income countries (LMIC)—carrying 70% of the global cancer burden—face major constraints in research capacity. Closing this gap is essential for equitable progress in cancer prevention, diagnosis, and treatment. Researchers in LMICs are creatively adapting established technologies, research pipelines, and collaborative models from higher-resource settings to local solutions. In this study, 25 American Association for Cancer Research Global Scholar-in-Training Award recipients from LMICs share how cancer research is advancing within resource-limited settings, focused on (i) infrastructure and resources, (ii) training and talent retention, (iii) funding and sustainability, and (iv) cultural and social barriers. We identified shared challenges and cross-cutting solutions, discussed gaps, and suggested steps to further advancing cancer research. We emphasized locally led innovation, strategic partnerships, and community engagement. These perspectives offer a framework for inclusive, synergistic approaches to strengthening cancer research and accelerating impact where it is needed most.