



## Authentic Learning in Virtual Contexts

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**Abstract:**

PHCM2003: Health Promotion is a newly developed, fully online course that will be delivered next year as part of the Bachelor of International Public Health. One of the goals of the course is to get students to develop their higher order thinking and reflection skills by making their learning authentic and meaningful. With this goal in mind the team developed an extended case study centred on the fictitious island nation of Pambani. Using photomontage and Prezi students zoom in to the town of Akiyakanda and visit various families, a health clinic, a garment factory and the local school. Through observation and listening to members of the town talk, they are asked to identify the health issues people are experiencing and possible solutions and barriers to affecting change. While the island is fictitious the case study is based on real data gathered in Sri Lanka as part of Dr Albie Sharpe's PhD thesis. In this way the students are presented with authentic real-life scenarios that give them an opportunity to apply the concepts they are learning about from the perspective of a public health practitioner. These skills can then be applied to other real-life scenarios helping them develop their higher order thinking and reflection skills.