

HIV and Gender – Creating an Enabling Environment for HIV Prevention Third Regional HIV Conference in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina Sarajevo - March 27 – 28, 2008

At the end of March, approximately 150 representatives from Balkans ministries of health, national AIDS commissions, non-governmental organizations and international organizations (UNAIDS, UNIFEM, UNFPA, UNDP, UNICEF, and GFATM) will gather in Sarajevo to exchange information and learn about the role of gender in HIV prevention and AIDS care. This Third regional conference is a key component of *Partnerships in Health* programme that has been supported by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) since 2003.

Gender norms and inequalities influences the way in which men and women are vulnerable to HIV infection and how they are affected by the disease. Women often do not have options to protect themselves and are more likely to become infected. HIV positive women can have more difficulty accessing care and carry a heavier burden of caring for themselves and others in a cultural context of more limited economic opportunities and decision-making autonomy. Societal norms in the Balkans also continue to allow for male promiscuity and trafficking of women and men for sex work, and other related factors (worker mobility, injecting drug use) are on the rise.

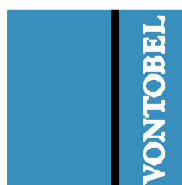
Conference presenters and participants will discuss how gender is influencing HIV in the countries and how gender issues can be integrated more effectively to change behaviours and combat HIV infection in the region.

Details about the Programme and Conference can be found on the website www.balkans-fight-HIV.org



Second Regional Conference in Montenegro (2006)

World Diabetes Day 2007 Screens and Identifies Individuals at Risk

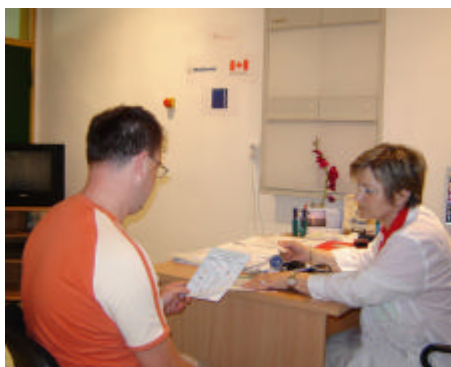


Diabetes is one of the most costly and devastating chronic diseases for the patient, his/her family, and the health care system. Diabetes can also lead to heart and kidney disease, blindness and amputations. In partnership with the canton of Sarajevo, and with support from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), the Medtronic Foundation, and the Vontobel Stiftung, FPH is improving the prevention and treatment of this disease.

One of the challenges is to identify people with high glucose levels before they arrive at the hospital in serious conditions and to prevent the disease through promotion of life style changes in the public. The World Diabetes Day, in 2007 celebrated on November 14th gave FPH and its local partners this opportunity.

Twelve FPH trained family medicine teams provided free screening in five health centers and 12 practice sites in the canton. On this day, 618 individuals were screened, and 32 had glucose levels exceeding 7mmol. These individuals were referred for further diagnosis and follow-up and will benefit from the services provided by the well-trained providers.

In addition, a large media campaign was organized, and the World Diabetes Day activities in the local clinics and the FPH developed Diabetes Counseling Center in Ilidza were covered by local TV. FPH disseminated diabetes education and prevention materials and distributed its diabetes education booklet to children



HIV EDUCATION FOR PRIMARY HEALTH CARE DOCTORS AND NURSES IN ALBANIA, BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AND UNMIK KOSOVO

A one-day course on HIV, covering basic HIV facts, work place protection, client rights to confidentiality, and stigma and discrimination is being provided to primary health care doctors and nurses across Bosnia and Herzegovina. Between June and December 2007, 440 doctors, 1'217 nurses and technicians, and 111 non-medical staff participated in this training activity. Nine qualified trainer teams are conducting the training with FPH's support and oversight. Albania is recommencing its training activities and is planning to train about 600-700 doctors and nurses between February and June 2008.

Partnerships in Health has also trained 48 doctors and nurses as counsellors for the Bosnia HIV voluntary counselling and testing centers through December of last year. The six operating centers have already counselled 2'059 individuals about HIV and provided HIV testing and post-test counselling to 1'965 of these clients. The VCT Centers also provide informational materials and condoms to the clients. FPH VCT activities in UNMIK Kosovo continue to reach injecting drug users, men having sex with men and for the first time soon also populations in local prisons.

Individual being counselled in Bosnia and Herzegovina



New activities

Adolescent Reproductive Health - Tajikistan SPONSORS NEEDED

FPH's proposal on adolescent reproductive health in Tajikistan was approved by FEDEVACO. As this proposal covered only parts of the project, FPH is urgently seeking donors for co-financing this new initiative that is so important in assuring that these young people will be able to rebuild their country, one of the 20 poorest globally.

Tajikistan is one of the 20 poorest countries in the world with 48% of the population under age 18. 12.9% of births are to women under 20. Use of contraceptives is very low, and abortion rates are increasing in adolescent girls. Adolescents have inadequate knowledge to protect themselves against sexually transmitted infections; 86.1% of reported cases of HIV are in young people 15-29. The primary mode of transmission is sexual followed by intravenous drug use, an increasing challenge faced by Tajik society. National Plans have identified youth as the primary target group for reproductive health and HIV prevention education, but there are only limited fragmented activities implemented to-date.



Our Mission

Because « good health is a fundamental resource for social and economic development, » as well as an inalienable right, Fondation PH (FPH), a Swiss NGO, is dedicated to building critical health knowledge and skills through health education and training of primary care providers. In partnership with the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, FPH assists local institutions to build up their capacities and achieve sustainable improvements in the quality of basic and essential health services.

Program Expertise

- Family Medicine
- HIV and AIDS
- Reproductive Health
- Maternal and Child Health
- Chronic Diseases

Program Countries

Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kyrgyz Republic, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Tajikistan, UNMIK Kosovo, Uzbekistan

Programmes in need

Give Tajik adolescents reproductive health and life skills

Premature pregnancies, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection endanger the health of Tajik youth. In Tajikistan, the fertility rate among adolescents is 3 times greater than in Switzerland; almost 20% of births are to women under 20 years of age; the number of abortions among adolescent girls is rapidly increasing; and 86% of HIV victims are under 29. Support the first life skills education program that reduces unwanted pregnancies, abortions, and life-long health problems, to help the Tajik youth to rebuild their post-war country.

CHF 70'000 still needed for Year 1 of this project



Prevent diabetes and improve diabetes treatment in the Balkans

Diabetes is becoming one of the world's most prevalent disablers and killers. In the Western Balkan countries, approximately 730,000 people are affected by diabetes, and it is estimated that the number will increase to more than 1 million by 2030. In Serbia alone, a risk factor reduction approach could save 19 million euros in direct diabetes disease management costs. Contribute to the implementation of a multidisciplinary approach that improves public education, disease prevention, and cost-effective treatment at the primary care level.

CHF 160,000 per country per year



Increase the survival of Kyrgyz mothers and young children

In the mountainous region of Naryn, people live at 3000 meters above sea level. These isolated rural communities, with poor access to acceptable health care, experience child and maternal deaths that exceed those of Switzerland twenty-fold and more; one-third of child deaths occur in the home or within 24 hours of hospitalization. An innovative project focused on building the skills of community nurses and grandmothers, who are often the key decision makers for family health, will increase local knowledge of maternal and child disease prevention, and increase timely care-seeking for health care as well as the quality of home care.

CHF 300,000 per year



Help prevent death and illness related to smoking

Tobacco use is projected to cause nearly 450 million deaths worldwide during the next 50 years. In Serbia and Macedonia, smoking rates among the general population are extremely high. Doctors and nurses can play a critical role in reducing tobacco use by advising and counseling patients who want or need to stop, but don't know how. However, these health professionals lack the skills to help their patients in dealing effectively with their tobacco addiction. Support the replication of a successful programme implemented in Bosnia & Herzegovina that prepares health professionals in tobacco-use prevention and cessation counseling.

CHF 45,000 per country



To contribute to any of these programmes or to our ongoing programmes, please contact the Foundation's head office.

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Look for us on the web:
www.partnershipsinhealth.ch
www.balkans-fight-hiv.org

Dr. LeeNah Hsu takes over management of the Western Balkans HIV and AIDS Programme

Dr. LeeNah Hsu has been involved in *Partnerships in Health* activities since 2005, when she conducted the midterm evaluation of our Western Balkans HIV and AIDS Programme funded by Sida. Coming from a prior engagement with UNDP in South East Asia where she managed a 12-country regional HIV prevention programme, she has introduced many new ideas based on her past experience in our programme in the Balkans.



One of Dr. Hsu's goals is to strengthen the capabilities and initiative of the local Partnerships in Health staff and our local partners. As a "health" NGO, we also approached HIV from a health perspective, but she has shown us that HIV is a multi-sectoral issue and cannot be resolved by the health care sector on its own. This change is enriching Phase II of this programme which started in mid-2007.

Dr. Hsu is a Family Nurse Practitioner, with a masters degree in Health Policy and Management, a Doctorate of Science in Public Health from Harvard, and a J.D. from La Salle University Law School. She has taught at Maastricht University, Thailand, The Johns Hopkins University and is an adjunct faculty at the Simon Fraser University in Canada. She has served on Technical Review Panel of the GFATM and at The Independent Review Committee for Health Systems Strengthening of GAVI, and conducted several large programme evaluations.

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A big thanks to our current volunteers: Djordje Gikic, Pierre Giovannini, and Laja Destremau