

... BECAUSE HEALTH IS A HUMAN RIGHT



Upcoming Regional HIV & AIDS Conference organized by Partnerships in Health



On March 26 to 27, 2009, Fondation Partnerships in Health (FPH) is organizing a regional HIV & AIDS Conference, to be held this time in Durrës, Albania with the support of the main program donor, the Swedish International Development and Cooperation Agency (Sida) and other donors and partners.

The theme for this 4th Regional Conference will address migration and its effects on HIV and AIDS. The Balkans region today is highly mobile: people are migrating to other countries for work, while others are returning to resettle from higher prevalence countries. Increasing rates of injecting drug use and human trafficking also increases vulnerabilities.

This trend in the Balkans region is recognized by key stakeholders, and they value the opportunity presented by FPH to come together to share best practices and find solutions that will cross ethnic and state boundaries. The ultimate goal is to reduce the risk of increasing HIV transmission, which could easily cripple already fragile health sectors in Albania, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Kosova, Montenegro, Serbia and other countries.

World Diabetes Day 2008

During 2008, *Partnerships in Health* and the Ministry of Health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) expanded the diabetes prevention and care activities to include the rural canton of Gorazde.

Four family doctor-nurse teams were trained in diabetes care. The ribbon for the first diabetes counselling center in Gorazde was cut on World Diabetes Day on November 14 by our technical advisor, Professor Heljic, from the Clinic for Endocrinology, Diabetes and Metabolic Diseases University of Sarajevo, Mrs Mirsada, the head of the Gorazde diabetes patient association, the mayor of the Gorazde canton, and the cantonal health authorities. The event was covered by national media (picture on the right).



In addition, the newly trained Gorazde staff and 12 high school students from the medical vocational schools and FPH partners in Sarajevo conducted a diabetes awareness campaign and screened high-risk 1'199 individuals; 49 individuals with high glucose levels were referred to the trained providers for further diagnostic work-up and treatment.

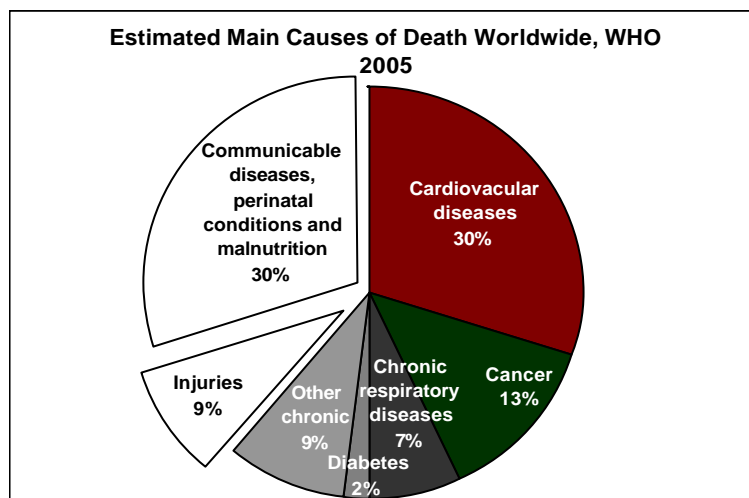
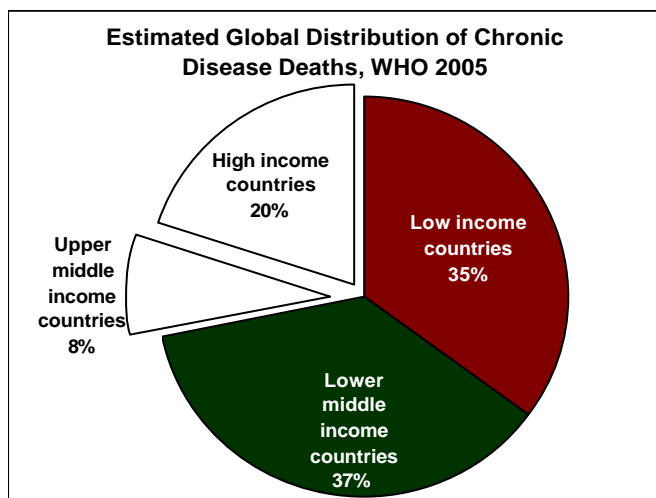
FPH thanks FEDEVACO (Fédération Vaudoise de Coopération) and the cities of Nyon and Montreux who have contributed to public awareness raising about diabetes and the early diagnosis of individuals with high glucose levels. (picture on the left).

Chronic Diseases – Will Our Regions Be Able To Cope?

Worldwide, chronic diseases (heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, cancer, and respiratory disease) have reached epidemic proportions and will prevent low and middle income countries from reaching their Millennium Development Goals. Cost-effective tools for prevention and improved treatment are available, but there is still a pervasive lack of leadership and action. The stakes are high: According to the World Health Organisation, a 2% reduction of the expected deaths rates would prevent 36 million deaths over the next 10 years.

The Western Balkans countries are particularly affected. Post-war stress factors, low employment rates, and limited resources for prevention are contributing to high rates of heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, and cancer. Smoking, one of the key contributors to chronic diseases and death, is all pervasive in the region. In Serbia, approximately one third of the population smokes and two thirds are exposed to smoke at home. Among 45-54 year old Bosnians, there are 6.4% with diabetes, many having suffered for years before being diagnosed with critical and irreversible conditions.

The ministries of health in the region are becoming acutely aware of the threats that chronic diseases represent and are interested in new partnerships to develop effective programs. FPH is prioritizing chronic disease prevention and care in its program development and implementation.



Progress Brings New Challenges for Central Asian Countries

Road infrastructure construction projects improve the transport of goods and people. However, they also facilitate the spread of communicable diseases and increase drug or human trafficking. According to the Asian Development Bank (ADB), these issues have to be addressed quickly and systematically with countries that are developing a new road network.



ADB commissioned Dr. Lee-Nah Hsu, FPH's Senior Technical Advisor, to conduct HIV vulnerability assessments in Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan together with representatives from local ministries along ADB-financed segments of the Central Asia Regional Economic Commission (CAREC) roads.

Field assessments were carried out in 2008 including interviews with transport, health and local administrative officials. Focus group discussions with residents of communities were held along the routes, and a survey of foreign and local construction workers, cross-border long-distance truck drivers, train conductors, and passengers was carried out. Maps (like the one shown here) show the location of commercial entertainment establishments, sex services, drug user aggregation sites, health facilities, and guest houses. By assessing the existing and potential vulnerabilities along these transport project routes; one can identify early warning signals of potential vulnerabilities of villages or towns along the routes.

It is essential that prevention education and health services take into account linguistic and cultural barriers, and that the services are culturally, financially and physically accessible to construction workers and other individuals moving along transport corridors. FPH specializes in building local capacities to address these gaps to reduce people's vulnerabilities and build community resilience.

Johns Hopkins Children's Center Conducts Child-Friendly Training in Kozle Hospital, Macedonia



In collaboration with The Johns Hopkins Children's Center, FPH piloted a new project at the Kozle Pediatric Hospital, Macedonia. Patrice Brylske, the Director of Child Life at Johns Hopkins, and Erin Munn, Education Coordinator, travelled all the way from Baltimore to Skopje to provide a five-day training course for about 30 Kozle health professionals. The training focused on integrating children's developmental levels and understanding of illness and hospitalization into service delivery. It also addressed children's rights in the healthcare setting, family-centered care, children coping abilities, and the role of medical play. One of the FPH volunteer medical officers, Djordje Gikic (Hopkins alumni) was also present to assess the staff's reaction to the training and discuss possible next steps.



The impact on the way medical care was delivered at Kozle was immediate and visible, as nurses reported a tremendous increase in children's acceptance of medical procedures and hospitalizations. Kozle staff reported being "overwhelmed by what had happened during the training" and kept repeating how valued they felt being able to participate. FPH plans to build on this successful experience and continue the collaboration with Johns Hopkins and Kozle by scaling up this training into a regional child-friendly project. Several partners have already expressed an interest in supporting FPH with this project.

Board

Yvonne de Grandbois

Retired, WHO

Me. Henric Immink

Attorney at Law, Python & Peter

Dr. Peter Saladin

Retired, President, H+

Dr. Friedrich Sauerländer

Member on various boards, Chairman

Dr. André Schneider

Managing Director and COO, World Economic Forum
Secretary

Mr. Anthony Travis

Retired Senior Partner, PricewaterhouseCoopers
Treasurer

Headquarters

Dr. Bettina Schwethelm, Executive Director

Laurent Zbinden, Administration & Fundraising

Countries

Balkans Regional

Dr. LeeNah Hsu

Albania

Migena Muhaj

Sonila Celiku

Endri Cunaj

Serbia

Dragana Nikolic

Jasmina Petrovic

Kosovo

Irid Bicaku

Kyrgyz Republic

Chinara Masiralieva

Anara Dolotova

Bosnia & Herzegovina

Aida Kurtovic

Dzenana Durajlic-Elezovic

Amer Paripovic

Damir Lalicic

Dr. Suzana Hadzialjevic

Haris Karabegovic

Adi Kolasevic

Igor Skalceri

Miro Colic

Snjezana Hondo

Amir Sabanovic

Lejla Adilovic

Finance (outsourced)

Gina Empson, Director, ICS

Signe Westerberg-Joshi

New Staff, volunteers, and news

Dr. Djordje Gikic - civil service volunteer, Switzerland

Linley Chakwera, volunteer, Switzerland

Malik Medjahed-Schwethelm, volunteer, Switzerland

Dr. Valbon Krasniqi - Training Coordinator, FPH Kosovo

Albana Cunaj, Regional Conference Coordinator, FPH Albania

Twin girls, Milica and Stasha, were born to Jasmina Petrovic, FPH Serbia Program Development Officer, and her husband Vladan Stevanovic on October 15, 2008.



Programmes Looking for Sponsors



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 and life-long health problems, to help the Tajik youth to rebuild their post-war country.

CHF 85'000 still needed for this project (CHF 65'000 already committed)

Prevent chronic diseases in the Balkans

Diabetes is becoming one of the world's most prevalent disabling 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 100'000 is needed to start this project

Child-Friendly Hospital Initiative

Admission to the hospital can be a serious and lasting trauma for children and their families. Knowledge of child psychology and child development, as well as the use of modern methods in line with the child's level of understanding are not common in many countries, including the Balkans. Support a needs assessment of major hospitals treating children in that region and a working meeting of key hospital managers and staff to develop a "Child friendly Hospital Initiative for the Balkans region."

CHF 200'000 per country (CHF 30'000 already donated by Swiss foundations)



HIV Education and Testing for Migrant Workers in Kyrgyzstan

High rates of unemployment, low income, and political instability have caused an increase in migration from Kyrgyzstan. Currently, more than 350,000 individuals from Kyrgyzstan are labor migrants working in neighboring higher-prevalence HIV countries. These workers, if infected with HIV while away, transmit HIV to their spouse upon return and spread the disease to the general population. Support the implementation of a community-based program to educate migrant workers to prevent HIV infection to reduce the rapid increase of HIV infection in Kyrgyzstan. **CHF 75'000**

To contribute to any of these above or ongoing programmes, or if you simply would like to get more information, feel free to contact us in Céligny.

Fondation PH Suisse – Partnerships in Health

60, route des Coudres
1298 Céligny, Switzerland

Phone +41 22 776-7887

Fax +41 22 776-7927

Email contact@partnershipsinhealth.ch



Bank Information

Crédit Suisse
1-3, rue de la Monnaie ; CP 500
1211 Genève 70

IBAN CH52 0483 5047 4344 5100 0
SWIFT CRESCH ZZ 12A
Postal 80-500-4

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