

... because health is a
 human right

Western Balkans HIV and AIDS programme enters phase II

We have now entered phase II of our Sida-supported Western Balkans Programme to fight HIV and AIDS. This second phase was designed together with our local partners and programme staff to continue the efforts to slow down the progress of HIV epidemics in the region. Our emphasis will be on engaging partners from multiple sectors, not only healthcare agencies, to prevent HIV and to improve the care, support networks, and advocacy needed by people living with HIV or AIDS (PLHIV).

The programme will continue to support local NGOs working with at-risk and marginalized populations, as well as the growing PLHIV NGO network. The programme will train more primary care doctors and nurses, and also mental health and social workers, to increase the counselling, early diagnosis, and care of at-risk patients.

These activities will also help to lessen stigma and discrimination; which, unfortunately, still present a major barrier to accessing health and social services in the region. FPH will continue to promote the ongoing regional exchange and coordination through the annual regional conferences and capacity building workshops. The Third Regional Conference addressing gender and HIV issues will take place in March 2008 in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

You can find more details about the Programme's activities on the website www.balkans-fight-HIV.org



Roma students in Serbia discussing HIV and AIDS



Health Clinic Ilidza opens counselling centre for patients with diabetes



Diabetes is one of the most costly and devastating chronic diseases for the patient, his/her family, and the health care system. 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.

Until 2007, the only place where patients could receive counselling in diabetes was at the Sarajevo University Clinical Centre. At the request of the canton of Sarajevo and with the support of the Vontobel Stiftung, a family medicine doctor and nurse received special training in diabetes and patient counseling, and FPH assisted in refurbishing and equipping a small counselling centre in the Health Clinic of Ilidza, which serves more than 100 patients and their families every month.

Roche Diagnostics and Oktalparma assisted with essential equipment, tests and reagents. The red ribbon was cut jointly by Dr Smiljana Viteskic, Director of the Ilidza Health Clinic and FPH Director, Bettina Schwethelm, in the presence of cantonal authorities, doctors and nurses, the President of the Sarajevo Diabetic Patients Association, and local newspapers, TV and radio. Since then, 728 diabetic patients and their families have received counselling in controlling glucose levels through diet and exercise, insulin injection methods, and psychosocial counselling.



“The counselling centre is much easier to reach so I come more often for advice. The counsellors are in contact with my doctor at the Clinic so I don't need to go there as much as I used to and that is a great relief.” Javorka Buzaljko, 73-year-old

Update on the Children's Respiratory Disease Project in Kozle, Macedonia



FPH's project with the Children's Institute for Respiratory Diseases in Kozle, Macedonia, supported by Accentus, is now in its final phase. Dr Djordje Gikic, one of our volunteers, just came back from Macedonia, where he met with the director of the Institute and the staff to assess the impact of the project so far and develop a plan for the phase-out activities.

Overall, he was very excited with the changes underway at the Institute, where new leadership helped create and optimize synergies with other donors and partners. The Institute's headquarters had been freshly refurbished, the equipment is well-maintained, and the staff appeared motivated and eager to learn new techniques and improve the quality of care for the children. We plan to support this Institute with three program components:



- Training in partnership with the Johns Hopkins Children's Centre – Child Life programme for advanced psychosocial skills designed for health professionals.
- Specific technical training for selected staff to learn new procedures at children's hospital in the region.
- Equipment donations in partnership with Project HOPE Germany

In this last phase, we will continue our support to the Institute in building a local and regional network of donors and partners to achieve long-term sustainability. So far, this effort has been successful, and we are continuing to move forward in this direction. During a recent visit, Dr. Gikic and the Institute Director met with pharmaceutical firms, private companies, international organizations, and government representatives who pledged support to improve the Kozle Institute. Despite a limited budget, it is apparent that the Institute is becoming stronger over time.

New activities

The **Global Fund** "was created to finance a dramatic turn-around in the fight against AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. These diseases kill over 6 million people each year, and the numbers are growing. To date, the Global Fund has committed US\$ 8.4 billion in 136 countries to support aggressive interventions against all three diseases." By 2007, the GFATM had completed one full round of a five-year funding cycle internationally. The Technical Evaluation Reference Group (TERG), which is an independent group to monitor GFATM activities, commissioned an independent external evaluation of the GFATM on its five-year performance.

Fondation PH Suisse –Partnerships in Health (FPH) has been sub-contracted by the Consortium which won the competitive international bidding to participate in this external evaluation of the GFATM. The Consortium is led by MACRO International with partners including the Johns Hopkins University, AXIO – a consulting firm on logistics and public-private partnerships, DFI – a financial consulting firm, CORE – an umbrella of US non-

government organizations, and the Indian Institute for Health Management.

The evaluation covered three areas: 1) governance; 2) global and country partnerships; and 3) impact on HIV, TB, and malaria. Sixteen countries were selected for in-depth assessment of country partnerships. FPH was tasked to take the lead in the assessment in Cambodia from 22nd July to 3rd August and in Kyrgyzstan from 22nd September to 5th October, with FPH's Senior Technical Advisor, Dr. LeeNah Hsu. The country assessments were based on extensive consultations with key informants - 50 and 90 respectively in these two countries. These informants were people who had participated in GFATM activities, and they represented: government agencies; international and local NGOs for the three diseases of HIV, TB, and malaria; members of the Country Coordination Mechanism; private sectors; people living with HIV and AIDS; NGOs; international organizations; and bilateral donors; as well as other agencies, which work on health-related issues and the three diseases, but are not recipients of the Global Fund.

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 150,000 per year



Prevent diabetes and improve diabetes treatment 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 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 counselling 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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What makes an Austrian school teacher give up his summer vacation?



Klemens Hofer, a school teacher from Austria, spent almost two months interning with the FPH office in Sarajevo. He had been to Bosnia and Herzegovina before and told us that he “really appreciates the country, likes the landscape and the people, so wanted to come back.”

During his time in Bosnia, Klemens mainly worked on a database, analyzing data about the diabetes project, and entering patient questionnaires. But as he told us: “I’m the guy who is open for everything; it depends on where I’m needed.” Therefore, he also accompanied staff from our UNFPA-supported adolescent Reproductive Health project to a training workshop in the Bosnian mountains.

What have you learned in your time in Bosnia? I am applying a lot of my knowledge from being a teacher; I think that the experience is mostly a social and educational one, working in the offices in small groups.

What has been your experience in the FPH office? It has been quite a good one. I’m a person who needs a lot of time to get used to situations, and I came here the first day and felt at home right from the start.

In your days in the field, what has made the greatest impression on you? It’s hard when you start in a country where no one speaks your language. The young people didn’t have an obligation to talk to me, but they started right away to interact with me; they were very open-minded. It was my first experience on the other side of the line, and it had a very big impact on me.

I was very impressed by the organization and the project; we don’t have adolescent peer education in Austria. They did such a great job, dealing with young people. I was amazed by the effort they made. I’m very grateful for the opportunity to be a part of FPH’s work and am planning to come back.

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