

61st World Health Assembly

Attendance at this year's Health Assembly (19-24 May 2008), which coincided with WHO's 60th anniversary, was a record high with 2704 participants among them representatives of 69 NGOs in official relation with WHO.

The 61st WHA passed groundbreaking resolutions, set new strategies and approved action plans. These related to removing intellectual property barriers, tackling non-communicable diseases, reducing the harmful use of alcohol, protecting health from climate change, elimination of female genital mutilation, and dealing with migrants' health.

In her opening statement, WHO Director-General Dr. Margaret Chan outlined three looming crises that confront public health: the food crisis, climate change and pandemic influenza.

The four technical briefings on primary health care, social determinants of health, the International Health Partnership and the scaling up of tobacco control at country level attracted also many NGOs. Several special and side meetings took place, some of them organized by NGOs, on key public health issues such as: the Inter-African Committee on Traditional Practices Affecting the Health of Women and Children ([IAC](#)) on female genital mutilation (FGM) or the International Pharmaceutical Federation ([FIP](#)) on combating counterfeit medical products.

IAC also made a [Statement](#) on behalf of the [NGO Advisory Group on Health Promotion](#) on the agenda item "Health promotion in a globalized world", a [progress report](#) on the implementation of [Resolution WHA60.24](#) in committee B on 23 May.

In replying to the comments of Member States on this progress report the WHO thanked the Group for its 10 years' cooperation and contribution to achieving WHO's health promotion objectives. The statement is available also on the Group's website: <http://www.ngos4healthpromotion.net/>.

NEWS FROM THE HEALTH PROMOTION PLATFORM

Joint NGO project for the 7th Global Conference on Health Promotion

The main theme of the next Global Conference on Health Promotion to be organized in Nairobi, Kenya, in August 2009 will be: Health Promotion on the Global Development Agenda. The NGO Advisory Group has been encouraged to participate in the preparation for the Conference.

Following the AGHP (NGO Advisory Group on Health Promotion) meeting held during WHA61 a discussion was launched (using the Delphi method) about a project proposal "Grass-roots advocacy and action for community development". The intention is to identify local/regional NGO networks and their successful initiatives which advocate for the use of local knowledge and community assets. Our aim is to demonstrate the benefits of globalizing indigenous knowledge and provide a framework for NGOs for strengthening grass-roots advocacy in this process.

NGOs are requested to answer 3 questions:

1. What are the main community knowledge assets that your organization is promoting or is interested in promoting?
2. Describe one (or more) project(s) where Local Knowledge has been involved successfully in health promotion.
3. Name (and give the coordinates of) your local/regional affiliates, NGOs or civil society networks which have participated in your projects promoting health.

If you have not received the above proposal and want to share with us your experience in mobilizing communities to use indigenous knowledge for health promotion activities you can find it on our website:

www.ngos4healthpromotion.net

and can send your input to localwisdom@ngos4healthpromotion.net.

The best practices will be published before the Conference.

Support from WHO for Local Knowledge

After assigning Alessandro Demaio, a medical student as an intern of WHO Health Promotion Unit to prepare a research study on Local Wisdom for the AGHP, Gabriella Sozanski (sozanskig@who.int) joined the WHO HP Unit as a volunteer to continue work on the above joint NGO project in collaboration with the Bern University's BNF programme.

FEATURE NGO

International Pharmaceutical Federation

FIP is the global federation of national organisations of pharmacists and pharmaceutical scientists. Founded in 1912, FIP works in partnership with health related NGOs to advocate and initiate action across a wide spectrum of public health issues and has been a NGO in Official Relations with the World Health Organization (WHO) since the inception of WHO. Through its 120 Member Organizations, FIP represents and serves over one million practitioners and scientists in more than 80 countries around the world.

The mission of FIP is to improve global health by advancing pharmacy practice and science to enable better development, access and use of appropriate cost-effective quality medicines worldwide, through the excellence of professional pharmaceutical services. For almost a century, FIP has established itself as a global visionary and advocate for the role of the pharmacist in the provision of health care services, especially in the promotion of good health and well-being of communities.

FIP has always taken upon itself to both support and create health promotion initiatives, as seen with our involvement in the WHO Tobacco Free Initiative and within our own Tobacco Cessation projects. We recently launched a report at the FIP Congress 2007 in Beijing entitled 'Curbing the tobacco pandemic - the global role for pharmacy' during a half day program for the *Global Network of Pharmacists Against Tobacco*. This report together with key leaders in pharmacist led tobacco cessation services urged pharmacists to take an active role in their countries and described various means in which this has been achieved internationally. FIP has also endorsed and disseminated the Code of Practice on Tobacco Control for Health Professional Organizations. For more information on our activities and projects, please visit www.fip.org and click on Tobacco Cessation.

OTHER NEWS

Primary Health Care

WHO AFRO marked the 30th anniversary of the Alma Ata Declaration on Primary Health Care (PHC) by organising an International Conference: Towards the Achievements of the Health Millennium Development Goals, 28-30 April 2008 in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. The Conference concluded by adopting the Ouagadougou Declaration. Among other things the Declaration encouraged “Communities, including civil society to seek recognition of their role in governance of health services, particularly in what relates to community-based, public health and other health-related interventions: and explore with governments the possibility of undertaking awareness campaigns among the African diaspora in order to facilitate their effective involvement in development activities.”

AEMRN is the Afro-European Medical Research Network, a member of AIDSFOCUS Switzerland, a Swiss platform for AIDS and International Cooperation

The platform aims to provide information, pool experience and knowledge and offer a forum for exchanging views and learning together; these services are intended to support the Swiss players involved in HIV/AIDS and international cooperation so that they can act effectively to counter the pandemic and its impact and strengthen international solidarity. The upcoming Medical Work camps with mobile clinics in June 2008 as well as the HIV/AIDS Symposium, Bern, in September 2008 can be accessed on the website of <http://www.aidsfocus.ch>.

The coordinator of the AEMRN Team is Dr. Charles Senessie.

ILO launches micro-insurance innovation

With the aim of providing sustainable insurance products for the poor, ILO is calling for applications for grants and technical assistance from organizations willing to establish micro-insurance schemes for their members or clients. NGOs are encouraged to apply. The facility is funded by the Melina and Bill Gates Foundation. Information, guidelines and application forms in English, French and Spanish are available at <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/finance>.

“As the global toll of illness, injury and death from occupational accidents and disease continues to remain at unacceptable levels, this Congress will underline what needs to be done to ensure that a healthy working environment can be achieved”, said Dr. Sameera Al-Tuwaijri, Director, ILO International Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment. More information at: www.ilo.org or http://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/WCMS_093745/index.htm.

New Resource for Civil Society

The Black Sea guide (Advocacy in International Institutions by Civil society organizations: A practical Guide) was written for Black Sea NGOs. It has chapters on the WHO, the EU and UNDP. The Manual can be found on the Black Sea NGOs Network website: <http://www.bsngon.com/activities/public.php> or on the ICSW website <http://www.icsw.org>.

NGO Working Group on Nutrition

Call to Action – A Newsletter was compiled by the Geneva NGO Working Group on Nutrition, a working group of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women. It focuses on the impact of climate change on food, nutrition and agriculture issues from the UN and its specialised agencies, NGOs, academia and other sources. More information from: joannakoch@bluewin.ch.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Global Humanitarian Forum, 1st Annual Meeting, Geneva, 24-25 June 2008

The Forum's President Kofi Annan has called together more than 200 leaders from all sectors of society worldwide to urgently address what he calls "the human face of climate change": the world's poorest and most vulnerable populations affected by increasingly violent storms, drought and floods. More information: <http://www.ghf-geneva.org>.

ICSW (International Council on Social Welfare) 33rd Global Conference 80th Anniversary – will take place in Tours, France from June 30 to July 4. The title is: "The dynamics of social development in the context of globalization: lessons from the past, challenges for today and tomorrow". One of the workshops will discuss Health and development. The program is available on <http://www.icsw2008.org>.

This workshop will look beyond the responses of international NGOs to situations of sanitary crisis. Through concrete examples it will demonstrate how international aid can provide sustainable access to health care while supporting the development of mutual insurance systems. These systems can be adapted to local conditions and developed into viable models through the transfer of competences and structures.

Civil Society Development Forum 2008, 27-29 June, New York

"A Platform for Development: Countdown to 2015 - Implementing the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development".

The CSDF 2008 will be held back-to-back with the ECOSOC Substantive Session and will take place at the Church Center for the United Nations, 777 UN Plaza (corner of 44th Street and 1st Avenue) in New York. Download the invitation letter. Please register your participation by e-mailing both Joseph.kim@ngocongo.org and Martin.andersen@ngocongo.org.

XVIII World Congress on Safety and Health at Work

[World Summit on Safety and Health](#), Seoul, Republic of Korea, 29 June – 2 July 2008

Some 4,000 industry leaders, policy-makers and experts from over 100 countries are to gather in Seoul, Republic of Korea, from 29 June to 2 July for the Congress and will address the current state of safety in the world of work and global efforts to improve it.

The Summit is expected to adopt an unprecedented Declaration on Safety and Health at Work, that will provide a new global reference point for addressing occupational safety and health issues around the world.

XVII International AIDS Conference - AIDS 2008

To take place in Mexico City, 3-8 August 2008. will cover three main programme areas: the Scientific Programme, the Community Programme and the Leadership Programme.

The International AIDS Conference organized by IAS is the world's largest and most important HIV/AIDS forum, with over 20,000 participants, including 2,500 journalists. As the first International AIDS Conference to be held in Latin America, [AIDS 2008](#) is expected to increase awareness of the disease and its impact throughout the region.

IFMSA Annual Congress

Will be held 7-13 August 2008 in Ocho Rios, Jamaica.

World Cancer Congress UICC 08, 27-31 August 2008, Geneva – Towards true cancer control

Cancer is a global issue; it respects no borders and affects us all, directly or indirectly. The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) forecasts that by 2020 three out of every five new cancer cases will occur in resource-constrained countries. The Congress program will focus on public health, prevention, cancer and tobacco control, palliative care and patient advocacy as they apply to high and resource-constrained countries alike. The rapid progress in treatment will be the centre of many symposia.

61st DPI/NGO Conference on the theme “Reaffirming Human Rights For All

The Universal Declaration at 60” will be held 3-5 September at UNESCO in Paris, France

7th Global Conference on Health Promotion, Nairobi, Kenya, August 2009

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NGO Advisory Group on Health Promotion
