

IANPHI WORLD

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Meeting with WHO Director-General Margaret Chan (center) were from left, front: IANPHI Secretary-General Pekka Jousilahti, IANPHI-USA Director Courtenay Dusenbury, Institute Pasteur du Maroc Director Mohammed Hassar, WHO focal point Ramesh Shademani, China CDC Director Yu Wang; back row: Norwegian Institute of Public Health Director Geir Stene-Larsen, IANPHI President Jeffrey Koplan, and WHO Assistant Director-General Timothy Evans. Not pictured: Ian Smith, advisor to the WHO director-general.

WHO Director Advocating for NPHI Creation

WHO Director-General Margaret Chan intends to be actively engaged in promoting IANPHI's projects to create national public health institutes, which she views as a much-needed way to develop sustainable public health systems over the long term. Meeting with IANPHI Executive Board members in early April at WHO Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland, Dr. Chan discussed next steps for their ongoing partnership. She noted that NPHIs are necessary in every country to provide a central focus for the infrastructure and human resources required to resolve public health challenges: disease outbreaks, disaster response, risk assessment, health education and programs to address diabetes, obesity, tobacco, injury and other threats.

Moving forward, she will join IANPHI in encouraging governments to consider creating NPHIs as a way to strengthen their capacity and to promote evidence-based policy development. IANPHI and WHO signed a Memorandum of Understanding in October 2009 that includes a focus on NPHI development projects and a framework for NPHIs.

IANPHI Awards Seven New Grants

IANPHI has approved more than \$276,000 (USD) in funding for new research seed grants and short-term projects designed to strengthen public health research, public health systems, and evidence-based decision-making in five member institutes. Grants announced at the April Executive Board meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, include four short-term grants of \$25,000 each to the following:

Guinea-Bissau National Public Health Institute (INASA) for an intensive course on monitoring and controlling malaria. This will contribute significantly to establishing a nationwide mosquito surveillance system to assess the impact of large-scale malaria vector control interventions being implemented throughout Guinea Bissau. Public health authorities in Guinea Bissau will be trained by Portugal's National Institute of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Portugal's National Institute of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to help Guinea-Bissau's INASA build financial management capacity. Establishing a strong financial department at INASA is crucial as the new institute becomes responsible for implementing and monitoring national public health programs financed by both national and international partners. Through this one-year grant the Portugal institute will provide financial management training for INASA health professionals.

Thailand National Institute of Health (Thai NIH) for External Quality Assurance (EQA) training. The Thai NIH will implement an EQA program for molecular testing of human pathogens in order to minimize false or erroneous test results. After the training provided by Australia's National Reference Laboratory, NIH wants to develop sustainable EQA programs for laboratories in Thailand and in neighboring countries.

New grants address pressing health concerns, from Buruli ulcers in Ghana, cholera in Thailand, and malaria in Guinea-Bissau to NCDs in Nigeria.

Uganda Virus Research Institute (UVRI) for capacity-strengthening.

An NPHI team from the region will provide grant management and accounting software training for key administrative staff in order to develop a Research Support Office and increase UVRI's capacity to manage new and large projects in coordination with UVRI's worldwide partners.

Also approved were research seed grants of approximately \$60,000 over two years:

Ghana Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research for early detection and treatment of Buruli ulcers (BU). Funding will help Ghana reduce BU morbidity in the Asante-Akim district. The project aims to implement strategies to promote active community participation in early case detection and to support health centers that confirm and treat BU.

Nigeria Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) for noncommunicable disease research and prevention methods in Lagos. With a \$56,000 (USD) IANPHI grant, NIMR will lead a multidisciplinary research team in a study of lifestyle factors that contribute to noncommunicable diseases, a rapidly emerging public health challenge in the Nigerian urban slum population. Results of the study of three Lagos slums will give policy makers a reliable knowledge base on which to make informed health policy decisions.

Thailand National Institute of Health for scaling up cholera research in Thailand and Laos. This two-year project will strengthen laboratory capacity to assess the prevalence of cholera in patients with severe diarrhea. Research to determine the virulence-associated genes of cholera also will help shape and support cholera prevention programs and control policies.

For more information about these grants, visit the IANPHI website or contact Project Manager [Katja Heikkiläinen](#) at IANPHI's Finnish Secretariat.



Public health leaders endorse collaboration across borders.

Lima Conference Creates New South American Network

Public health decision makers from nine countries and several representatives from high-level public health organizations have begun outlining a plan to create a [South American Network of National Institutes of Health](#) that will not only strengthen each NPHI but will also improve the public health capacity of the region. Meeting in March, in Lima, Peru, NPHI directors from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela signed the Lima Declaration on the National Institutes of Health as a first step toward creation of the new network. Next steps will include creating the Quinquennial Plan of Cooperation 2010–2015 among South American NHIs.

“Information sharing and collaboration among NPHIs leads to faster responses and more informed decisions in times of crisis—one of the essential functions of a national public health institute,” says Dr. Paulo Buss, representative of Brazil’s Fiocruz and one of the signers of the declaration. Dr. Buss, an IANPHI Executive Board member, helped open and close the event and presented the IANPHI [Framework](#) for building NPHIs. The next meeting of the network will be in October 2010 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. For more information, contact [Dr. Anibal Velásquez](#), director of the NHI of Peru.

IANPHI Seeking Peer Technical Assistance for Ethiopia

The Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI) is moving nearer to fulfilling mandates for public health emergency management and health systems research. The long-term transformative project funded by IANPHI will create a comprehensive NPHI with enhanced capacity to identify and respond to public health emergencies and assess population health status, including noncommunicable conditions. In March, an IANPHI team visited EHNRI to help develop plans and priorities for years two and three of the project and worked with EHNRI leadership—Director General Tsehaynesh Messele and deputy directors general Amha Kebede and Daddi Jima—as well as a EHNRI researchers in environmental health and health systems research. The priority is getting the new Emergency Operations Center fully operational.

IANPHI is now looking for peer technical assistance to help EHNRI develop functions in environmental health, health systems research, and public health emergency management. In early May, EHNRI will convene a stakeholder meeting of government officials, universities, regional health bureaus, IANPHI, WHO, and other NPHIs (such as the U.S. CDC, the Norwegian Institute of Public Health, and the Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment) to advocate for EHNRI's strategic plan.



Morocco's Mohammed Hassar visited a village outside of Lomé, Togo.

Togo Committed to Improving Health Outcomes

Despite many challenges—including dramatic declines in the economy and living standards since the early 1990s, minimal donor presence, poorly equipped labs, inadequate staff training, and limited finances—the leadership and staff of Togo's Institut National d'Hygiène (INH) are resolutely committed to making positive changes in Togo's capacity to address public health challenges and improve health outcomes in the country. As an initial step, an IANPHI team visited Togo in March and recommended some immediate actions to improve and modernize the INH laboratory infrastructure and lay the foundation for later development into an NPHI. The Institute Pasteur of Morocco (IPM) will be an active partner, providing technical assistance on site as well as training opportunities in Morocco.

The visit was prompted by the participation of Dr. Dogbe Koku Sika, Togo's director general for health, at IANPHI's annual meeting in Johannesburg last year, where he was introduced to our mission, programs, and opportunities for grant funding to develop and strengthen NPHIs in low-resource countries. This information was particularly timely because Togo's Ministry of Health is in the process of an organizational audit that includes plans to develop INH into a comprehensive NPHI.

During the IANPHI visit, IPM Director Mohammed Hassar (an IANPHI Executive Board member) and IANPHI-Atlanta Project Manager Allison Greenspan assessed the possibility of expanding the functions and capacity of the Togo IPH to be consistent with those of an NPHI. The IANPHI team met with ministry and INH leadership, staff, and potential partners and supporters, and visited a regional hospital and schools of medical and allied health sciences and associated labs.



Registration Open Soon for Fifth Annual Meeting

IANPHI members and other invitees are encouraged to register for [IANPHI's Fifth Annual Meeting](#)—this year set for October 31–November 2 in Atlanta, USA. Invitations to the yearly gathering will be sent in May to directors of national public health institutes from more than 65 countries, plus representatives from partner organizations including the World Health Organization (WHO) and The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

The U.S. CDC and IANPHI will host the 2010 meeting, during which members will review progress, renew acquaintances, and discuss common issues and plans in support of public health goals. The Annual Meeting will be held at the [Emory Conference Center Hotel](#), located just across from CDC's main campus. One evening reception will be held at the CDC Visitors' Center, location of the [Global Health Odyssey Museum](#).

A regional session for members from African nations is planned for the afternoon of November 3.

Because international visitors require pre-approval for access to the CDC campus well in advance of their visit, please submit detailed security information through the meeting registration form no later than July 1, 2010. To learn more, visit www.ianphi.org.

Disaster response online forum open for comments

One of IANPHI's goals is to help members share experiences and expertise in order to better prepare to deal with issues such as the health aftermath of disasters. Through IANPHI's new [online forum](#), you can discuss with other members your institute's role in disaster response. For example, how did your institute respond to the earthquakes in Chile, Haiti, or China or other recent disasters? What have been the biggest challenges? What have your institutes learned, and how will you apply that to your own disaster response planning?

Members visiting the [online forum](#) on IANPHI website's message board will be prompted to create a password to gain access to this members-only site. With your permission, IANPHI may share your institute's experiences in future communications and during a proposed panel discussion on disaster response at the Fifth Annual Meeting this fall. Thank you for your participation.



Dr. Marc Sprenger

Marc Sprenger to Head ECDC

The European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control has named [Dr. Marc Sprenger](#) to become its new director as of May 1, 2010. He is currently director-general (CEO) of the Netherlands National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) and has served on the Executive Board (EB) of IANPHI since 2008, serving as a co-author of IANPHI's [Framework](#) for public health institutes. While he has resigned from the IANPHI board, he plans to continue playing an active role in IANPHI. During his tenure on the EB, RIVM hosted IANPHI's Third Annual Meeting in Bilthoven. "IANPHI is most grateful for the time and effort Dr. Sprenger has given to IANPHI," says Courtenay Dusenbury, director of the U.S. Secretariat of IANPHI. "We wish Dr. Sprenger well in his new position with ECDC, which is fortunate to have his expertise and knowledge to guide them in their future efforts."

Conference Round Up

5th National Conference on HIV/AIDS in Nigeria

Hosted by the Nigerian Institute of Medical Research

May 2–5, 2010, Abuja, Nigeria

IANPHI Summer School

June 7–11, 2010 in Helsinki, Finland

International Public Health Workshop on HPV

July 3–8, 2010, in Montreal, Canada

International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases

July 11–14, 2010, in Atlanta, USA

HPA pandemic influenza conference H1N1: The world responds to a 21st century pandemic

September 14–15, 2010, University of Warwick, UK

4th Africa Nutritional Epidemiology Conference

October 4–8, 2010, Nairobi, Kenya

Find out about other upcoming events at www.ianphi.org.

SAVE THE DATE

IANPHI's Fifth Annual Meeting

October 31–November 3, 2010

Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Host: U.S. CDC

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