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Malawi Taking Steps to Create NPHI

On the heels of a measles outbreak that has sickened more than 70,000 Malawians this year, along with widespread malaria and one of the highest rates of maternal mortality in the world, **Malawi is stepping up its efforts** to systematically combat health threats. A multidisciplinary task force representing key stakeholders from the Malawian government, the donor community, and IANPHI is outlining the key functions of a proposed national public health institute. IANPHI's Courtenay Dusenbury and Kathy Cahill learned more about the concept in August during a visit to the country where they discussed plans for moving forward in partnership with the Malawian government.



Ben Chilema, deputy director for laboratories, CHSU, shows recent improvements to the lab funded in partnership with U.S. CDC.

“With stronger disease detection and outbreak control systems, Malawi will be able to better combat disease outbreaks, such as the current measles outbreak.”

*- Courtenay Dusenbury
Director, IANPHI U.S. Secretariat*



Storm Kabaluzi, director of Preventive Health Services, Malawi Ministry of Health, is a task force member who participated in IANPHI meetings in Beijing (2007) and South Africa (2009). He and others are developing a vision for a strong national public health system in Malawi.

The task force comprises key stakeholders in Malawi, including representatives from the Ministry of Health, National AIDS Commission, School of Medicine and Nursing, National Health Sciences Research Committee, the U.S. CDC, and departments of the Ministry of Health including planning, research, and permanent secretary. In the short term, IANPHI will help the task force and key leaders in the country develop a strategic outline for the new institute (including its functions and relationships to other government agencies); a strategic plan that includes future needs for human resources, equipment, and facilities; and a program of work that outlines specific budgetary and programmatic priorities. Many of these will be included in the country's Sector-Wide Approach Program (SWAp) or will be funded by existing partners.

“IANPHI's partnership in Malawi will allow the country to develop a vision and a template for its public health system that will ensure that the significant donor resources dedicated to the country are applied in a manner that meets mutual long-term strategic goals through a horizontal, systems-strengthening approach,” Dusenbury says. “With stronger disease detection and outbreak control systems and the ability to systematically plan for and ensure that government and donor resources are dedicated to major infectious disease threats, Malawi will be able to better combat disease outbreaks such as the current measles outbreak.”



Addressing the opening session at IANPHI's 2010 Annual Meeting will be U.S. CDC Director Tom Frieden and the CDC's Director of the Center for Global Health Kevin DeCock.

Preparing for Disaster Is Timely Topic at Annual Meeting

Devastating monsoons in Pakistan. Earthquakes in Haiti, China, and Chile. Volcanic eruptions in Iceland. Record-setting heat and fires in Russia. While disasters often give no warning, an essential function of national public health institutes is to be prepared to respond to their aftermath.

Many IANPHI members have or are developing emergency response systems to protect lives and futures of people in the wake of devastating natural events. IANPHI members will get a primer this fall on *Disaster Preparedness and Response* at the 2010 Annual Meeting of IANPHI in Atlanta. U.S. CDC experts will lead the session. A concurrent technical session on Nov. 1 will address *Risk Factor and Behavioral Surveillance*.

To read more about the program or register by the September 1 deadline, visit the IANPHI website at www.ianphi.org.



Dr. Pekka Jousilahti will concentrate on NCDs and injury prevention and control in Mongolia.

Secretary-General of IANPHI Resigns

IANPHI bids farewell this month to IANPHI Secretary-General Pekka Jousilahti, who has resigned his position as of the end of August to work as senior expert on noncommunicable diseases and injury prevention and control in Mongolia, a project of Finland's National Institute of Health and Welfare (THL) and the German consulting company EPOS. The project is funded by the U.S. Millennium Challenge Corporation.

Dr. Jousilahti participated in IANPHI's earliest gatherings in Bellagio and Helsinki and was a founding organizer of the group. As IANPHI's first secretary-general, he oversaw the IANPHI Secretariat in Finland and coordinated communications and meetings for the Executive Board.

"During my four years here, I have seen the building and growth of our IANPHI network from fewer than 40 members at our first meeting to more than 70 members and have enjoyed working with the top public health experts of the world," he says. "And we can all be proud of IANPHI's role in creating NPHIs in low-resource countries such as Guinea-Bissau and Mozambique." Jousilahti also played a major role in developing the IANPHI Summer School/Visitors Week program at THL. Funded by IANPHI, it brought together public health leaders from around the world to learn from the experiences of THL experts.

IANPHI wishes Dr. Jousilahti much future success and thanks him for his many contributions to IANPHI.

Conference Round Up

Health Protection 2010

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

Securing Global Health: Second International Health Regulations implementation course

September 27, 2010–February 18, 2011

4th Africa Nutritional Epidemiology Conference

October 4–8, 2010, Nairobi, Kenya

IANPHI 2010 Annual Meeting hosted by the U.S. CDC

October 31- November 2, 2010, Atlanta, USA

IANPHI Regional Meeting for Africa

November 3, 2010, Atlanta, USA

The American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) 59th Annual Meeting

November 3-7, 2010, Atlanta, USA

European NPHI Directors Meeting

November 28-29, 2010, Brussels, Belgium

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