



*This issue of the Network Public Health Program (NPHP) e-Newsletter highlights our work during the months of August, September, and October 2005, and includes upcoming events in November, December, and January. We encourage information sharing to explore potential linkages and receive feedback. Suggestions and input are welcome. Contact Ellen Liu at [eliu@sorosny.org](mailto:eliu@sorosny.org). Please visit the NPHP website at [www.soros.org/health](http://www.soros.org/health)*

### **Advocacy on Our Issues:**

#### **OSI and AOSI Sue USAID Over Dangerous Public Health Policy**

On September 23, OSI and affiliate Alliance for an Open Society International (AOSI) filed a lawsuit against USAID to challenge its unconstitutional and dangerous policy of requiring grantees to sign a pledge opposing prostitution. Failure to endorse this loyalty oath means health workers across the world striving to stop the spread of HIV/AIDS could lose funding and be forced to abandon life-saving programs. The lawsuit provides an important lynchpin for related education, community organizing and advocacy efforts around sex workers' health and rights. Moreover, the lawsuit is a clear demonstration of how U.S. domestic and international policies on HIV/AIDS increasingly favor conservative ideology over evidence-based public health policy. Contact: Sue Simon, [ssimon@sorosny.org](mailto:ssimon@sorosny.org)

#### **Global Fund Grants Support Treatment Options for Russian and Ukrainian Drug Users**

Global Fund grants brought new possibilities to drug users in Russia and Ukraine this fall, including ARV and substitution treatment. Using a model developed with technical assistance from IHRD, the Open Health Institute in Russia began in October to provide the first ARV treatment supported by the Global Fund. Unlike previous treatment efforts in the country, the protocol does not declare drug users ineligible, but rather seeks to build in support to make their treatment successful. In Ukraine, the Global Fund—again with technical support from IHRD—began in October to provide its first substitution treatment with buprenorphine, a medication that blocks cravings for opiates and reduces injection and other risk behavior. Contact: Daniel Wolfe, [dwolfe@sorosny.org](mailto:dwolfe@sorosny.org)

#### **Progress on Harm Reduction Programs in Prisons**

IHRD sponsored a November 2 conference in Kiev that brought senior Ukrainian officials, WHO representatives, and experts from the ministries of health, justice or prison systems of Mongolia, Georgia, Belarus and Lithuania together to build support for harm reduction programs in prisons. IHRD, supported by a grant from the Canadian International Development Agency, and working with the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network and the International Renaissance Foundation-Ukraine, this year secured concrete agreements from the Ukrainian government to begin needle exchange in two prisons. With drug-related arrests accounting for an increasing share of those imprisoned in Ukraine, it is hoped that the program will soon expand to more penal institutions. Contact: Daniel Wolfe, [dwolfe@sorosny.org](mailto:dwolfe@sorosny.org)

#### **Pediatric Palliative Care for Children Living with HIV/AIDS**

International Palliative Care Initiative (IPCI) is co-funding three pediatric palliative care grants in Africa with the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund and the Diana, Princess of Wales Memorial Fund. In the midst of an exploding AIDS epidemic throughout Africa, there is little attention or funding focused on improving the pain and suffering of children living with HIV/AIDS. This joint pediatric palliative care initiative will serve as the foundation for scaling up palliative care for children throughout Africa by developing trained pediatric palliative care staff capable of training others in this special area. Contact: Mary Callaway, [mcallaway@sorosny.org](mailto:mcallaway@sorosny.org)

#### **Incorporating Palliative Care into National Cancer Care**

In September, IPCI hosted a conference, "Palliative Care in Cancer," in Budapest bringing together leading oncologists from 12 countries and numerous international organizations ranging from the International Atomic Energy Commission to the American Society of Clinical Oncology to discuss the challenges of integrating palliative care into cancer care programs nationally. As a result of the dialogue, IPCI will announce a new program in 2006 to support an inpatient palliative care team in cancer centers within these countries. Contact: Mary Callaway, [mcallaway@sorosny.org](mailto:mcallaway@sorosny.org)

### **Sexual Health and Rights Program (SHARP) Counters the Conservative Agenda**

In collaboration with the Urban Justice Center, Alliance for Open Society International, and the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, SHARP convened a diverse group of advocates, academics, policy experts, service providers, and sex workers to discuss and strategize on a common agenda to combat the negative effects of regressive U.S. policies on the health of sex workers globally. The meeting resulted in the formulation of a working group to outline concrete policy objectives and a media strategy. Contact: Sue Simon, [ssimon@sorosny.org](mailto:ssimon@sorosny.org)

### **Monitoring and Accountability:**

#### **Engaging with Governments on National HIV/AIDS Progress Reports**

Public Health Watch is working with its HIV/AIDS monitoring project researchers in Senegal, Nicaragua, Ukraine, the United States, Vietnam, and Zambia to submit preliminary findings and recommendations to their respective governments for input into the national progress reports, due to UNAIDS by December 31. The 2005 UNAIDS *Guidelines on Construction of Core Indicators* for the UNGASS progress report stipulates that national governments seek input from, and consult civil society organizations in drafting and disseminating the national progress reports. In addition, Public Health Watch will be documenting the successes and challenges researchers face in engaging with national governments and with UNAIDS on the UNGASS reporting process. Contact: Helena Choi, [hchoi@sorosny.org](mailto:hchoi@sorosny.org)

#### **Tracking Global Health Initiatives**

OSI is supporting a three-year initiative through the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to track aid harmonization and the district-level impact of global health initiatives on vulnerable groups. Ukraine and Zambia are the two countries proposed for the study. The Karolinska Institute will conduct a similar monitoring project in Tanzania and Vietnam with funding from the Swedish International Development Agency. Additional country studies may be funded by the Danish International Development Agency and Irish Aid. Contact: Noah Simmons, [nsimmons@sorosny.org](mailto:nsimmons@sorosny.org)

#### **Public Health Watch Presents at the 36<sup>th</sup> Union World Conference on Lung Health**

Public Health Watch organized two well-attended symposia for the 36th Union World Conference on Lung Health of the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease (IUATLD) in Paris from Oct 19 to 22. In the symposium, “Civil Society Monitoring of National TB Policies,” the TB Monitoring Project featured presentations from the project’s five country researchers, detailing their preliminary findings and recommendations regarding government TB policies in Bangladesh, Brazil, Nigeria, Tanzania, and Thailand. Copies of the presentations are available upon request. Contact: Emily Bell, [ebell@sorosny.org](mailto:ebell@sorosny.org)

### **Cross-Cutting Issues:**

#### **Collaboration Among Roma and Harm Reduction Advocates**

Advocates for Roma communities and harm reduction programs from nine countries joined forces on October 27 in Budapest. Jointly convened by IHRD and the Roma Health program, the meeting explored how these groups might best work together, particularly in countries of the former Soviet Union, to address issues of drug use, stigma, and vulnerability to HIV infection among Roma. Contact: Monica Ciupagea, [ciupagea@osi.hu](mailto:ciupagea@osi.hu)

#### **Integrating TB and HIV Policy Advocacy**

The TB/HIV Small Grants Project organized a symposium—“Bringing Policy Advocacy from HIV to TB”—in conjunction with the Treatment Action Group (TAG). Five of the project’s 31 grantees—community-based organizations engaged in social mobilization and advocacy efforts to promote the implementation of integrated TB/HIV policies in countries burdened by the dual epidemic—shared their experiences. Copies of the presentations are available upon request. After two successful initial rounds of grantmaking, the TB/HIV Small Grants Project will be integrated as a new project of Public Health Watch in 2006. Contact: Eleonora Jimenez, [ejimenez@sorosny.org](mailto:ejimenez@sorosny.org)

#### **Exploring the Intersection of Tuberculosis and Tobacco**

In effort to integrate tobacco control within broader public health advocacy communities, the Tobacco Control Policy program supported the Yale School of Public Health in developing an integrated evidence-based approach to the management of TB patients who smoke. Yale conducted a mapping study to measure the prevalence of tobacco

consumption and exposure among TB patients in the former Soviet Union, Asia, and Africa, and to investigate the level of tobacco control education and access to cessation services. The results will be presented to UN agencies focused on TB and tobacco control in Geneva in February 2006. Contact: Sai Jahann, [sjahann@sorosny.org](mailto:sjahann@sorosny.org)

### Capacity Building:

#### **Training African Nurses in Palliative Care for Cancer Patients**

Recognizing the critical role that nurses play in palliative care in cancer patients, the IPCI funded a workshop on “Palliative Care for African Oncology Nurses” at the African Organisation for Research and Training in Cancer (AORTIC) conference in Dakar. This is the first time that a workshop at AORTIC focused on the education and development of nurses in palliative care for cancer patients. Nurses trained in this workshop will serve as both role models and trainers for nurses in their home institutions. Contact: Mary Callaway, [mcallaway@sorosny.org](mailto:mcallaway@sorosny.org)

#### **Collaborating with African and Middle Eastern Schools of Public Health**

In September, NPHP funded 50 deans of schools of public health from Eastern Europe, Central Eurasia, Africa, and the Middle East to attend the Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER) in Yerevan, Armenia. As an outcome, NPHP is currently considering plans to collaborate with African and Middle Eastern schools of public health on OSI health issues. Contact: Noah Simmons, [nsimmons@sorosny.org](mailto:nsimmons@sorosny.org)

#### **Training East African Tobacco Control Advocates**

With support from NPHP, the Framework Convention Alliance (FCA) held a tobacco control training and strategy-planning meeting for the countries of the East African Community – Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda – in early November 2005. The workshop helped advocates understand and communicate the main scientific and economic rationales behind the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (FCTC), develop strategic skills, and identify priorities for joint advocacy efforts. Contact: Sai Jahann, [sjahann@sorosny.org](mailto:sjahann@sorosny.org)

#### **Chinese and Nigerian Health Media Fellows Share Views on HIV/AIDS and Media**

Two Chinese and two Nigerian journalists receiving OSI-sponsored public health journalism fellowships in the United States visited OSI-NY and shared perspectives on the state of HIV/AIDS and media in their respective countries. Olayinka Oyegbile (*Daily Independent*, Lagos, Nigeria) and Zongtao Li (*Xinmin Weekly*, Shanghai, China) undertook a three-month study tour at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA. Halima Balarabe (*Federal Radio Corp.*, Kaduna, Nigeria) and Hu Yan (*Shanghai Star* and *China Daily*, Shanghai, China), received four months of training at U.S. media organizations. All four fellows will receive two months’ support for health-related investigative reporting in their home countries. Contact: Sai Jahann, [sjahann@sorosny.org](mailto:sjahann@sorosny.org)

### Other News:

#### **SHARP’s Strategic Focus on Central Asia and Western Africa**

In August, SHARP engaged strategic partners in Central Asia and Western Africa in conducting needs assessments to finalize its funding strategy for 2006 and beyond. Collaboration with the Soros Foundation–Kyrgyzstan resulted in an analysis of the sexual health and rights needs for marginalized populations in two regions of Kyrgyzstan. Follow up included a roundtable of major donors gathered to define the needs of populations at high-risk for HIV–sex workers, prisoners, and the LGBT community. In October, anticipated activities in Western Africa brought SHARP and OSIWA together for a discussion with leading experts and advocates on sexual health and rights for marginalized populations in Western Africa. The report, *Western African Assessment on Sexual Health and Rights*, was commissioned as part of the process to launch informed dialogue. Contact: Heather Doyle, [hdoyle@sorosny.org](mailto:hdoyle@sorosny.org)

#### **New Strategies for Integrating Palliative Care Globally**

In October, the IPCI convened its first International Technical Advisory Committee meeting to discuss new strategies for integrating palliative care globally. The strategy includes monitoring Global Fund support for palliative care; transferring technical assistance on funding from regional palliative care associations to grassroots organizations; professional development supporting the development of national palliative care leaders; and advocacy activities focused on increasing funding for palliative care development through national and international funding mechanisms. Contact: Mary Callaway, [mcallaway@sorosny.org](mailto:mcallaway@sorosny.org)

### **Sex Work, HIV/AIDS, and Human Rights: What Can be Done?**

In October, SHARP presented “Sex Work, HIV/AIDS, and Human Rights: What Can be Done?” a program focused on steps to improve the health and rights of sex workers in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Raminta Stuikyte, co-author of the report, presented with Galina Karmonova, the Chief of Party at the Drug Demand Reduction Program in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and the Ferghana Valley region of Kyrgyzstan.

Contact: Danielle Elleman, [delleman@sorosny.org](mailto:delleman@sorosny.org)

### ***Upcoming Events:***

A **Law and Health** OSI Seminar, “Global Governance of Health,” to take place in Salzburg from December 5-9, will convene thinkers and leaders from around the world to discuss the state of health governance, institutions, and governance networks. The meeting will explore opportunities for global health governance reform and how to develop international policy dialogue to mobilize resources for global health and improve resource management and program implementation. The meeting will also examine how to increase alignment, democracy and accountability in the institutions responsible for global health governance. For conference agenda and details, see [www.healthgov.net](http://www.healthgov.net)

Contact: Ellen Liu, [eliu@sorosny.org](mailto:eliu@sorosny.org)

In November and December, researchers from Tanzania, Thailand, and Bangladesh will be hosting in-country roundtable meetings to present the first drafts of **Public Health Watch** TB monitoring reports to key stakeholders, including representatives from the National Tuberculosis Program, HIV/AIDS programs, journalists, and international donor agencies. The reports include assessments of national TB policies, including TB/HIV integration, as well as policy recommendations for government, civil society, and the international community.

Contact: Emily Bell, [ebell@sorosny.org](mailto:ebell@sorosny.org)

The **Roma Health** program will convene an OSI Seminar, “Past and Future Projects and Policies: How to Impact Roma Health Most Effectively?” in cooperation with the National Agency for Roma in Bucharest on December 12-13. Health ministry representatives, governmental officials, NGO representatives, and experts on health and Roma issues from the eight countries of the Decade of Roma Inclusion and countries with Roma populations will gather to identify concrete steps on the implementation of the Decade of Roma Inclusion National Action Plans on health. Results and conclusions from the OSI-sponsored study on Roma Health Mediator programs in Bulgaria, Finland, and Romania will be presented at the conference. For conference agenda, see <http://health.osf.lt/en/seminars/>.

Contact: Cristi Mihalache, [cmihalache@osi.hu](mailto:cmihalache@osi.hu)

**SHARP** will support the ASTRA Network conference, “Women and HIV/AIDS in Central and Eastern Europe” on November 11-12 in Warsaw. A diverse group of women’s rights, sex worker, and AIDS activists, as well as reproductive health service providers will gather to discuss better approaches for the rights and needs of women in HIV-health policy and service responses. **SHARP** will also co-fund the “International Dialogue on Gender, Sexuality, HIV/AIDS, and Human Rights,” on November 24-27 in Seoul. The meeting aims to promote capacity building, development of international standards, and generation of strategic priorities for NGOs working with women, LGBT, and people living with HIV/AIDS. Contact: Heather Doyle, [hdoyle@sorosny.org](mailto:hdoyle@sorosny.org)

In January, the **Tobacco Control Policy** program will hold a series of strategy development meetings in New York. Harm reduction and tobacco control advocates will gather to establish common ground and next steps for tobacco harm reduction activities. A second technical advisory committee meeting will follow and work to refine a global tobacco control strategy. Finally, an international gathering of bilateral and multilateral tobacco control donor organizations will explore ways to coordinate activity and catalyze additional funding for tobacco control.

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