



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

Advocacy on Our Issues:

IHRD to Manage New FOSI/CIDA Health and Human Rights Project

In November 2006, the Foundation Open Society Institute (FOSI) signed an agreement with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for a C\$3 million, three-year project to promote the health and human rights of drug users in Georgia, Russia, and Ukraine. The International Harm Reduction Development Program (IHRD) will manage the project, which will focus on access to high-quality treatment for drug dependence; access to HIV prevention and treatment services for women who use drugs; community-based advocacy; and prison-based harm reduction policy and service development. The new agreement builds on IHRD's management of a previous C\$1 million CIDA/FOSI agreement to support a variety of harm reduction advocacy efforts in Georgia, Russia, Tajikistan, and Ukraine. Contact: Sophie Pinkham, spinkham@sorosny.org

IHRD and Partners Help Increase Methadone Availability in Ukraine

In November 2006, the Ukrainian deputy minister of health agreed to register methadone in tablet formulation for the first time in the country. The development occurred partly as a result of concerted efforts by the International Harm Reduction Development Program, the International Renaissance Foundation, and many other partners, including the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, the Clinton Foundation, WHO, and the All Ukrainian Network of People Living with HIV. The tablets, manufactured by PharmaScience, will be available in 2007. Plans call for pilot programs in 10 regions of Ukraine, with a total of 3,000 patients receiving methadone by October 2007. Contact: Sophie Pinkham, spinkham@sorosny.org

SHARP Supports Establishment of New Advocacy Network for Sex Workers' Rights

The Sexual Health and Rights Project (SHARP) supported the Hungarian Civil Liberties Union's establishment of a regional network of contacts working on sex worker advocacy and policy issues in Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. A total of 16 organizations were chosen from 15 countries to be national focal points (NFPs) for the new network, the Sex Workers' Rights Advocacy Network (SWAN). The network's advocacy and policy efforts in 2007 will focus on providing continued training for NFPs on human rights, media, and advocacy issues; influencing public and government debates about decriminalization of prostitution; reducing police harassment and violence against sex workers; expanding the participation of sex workers themselves in the network's advocacy efforts; and organizing common advocacy efforts at the network level. Contact: Rachel Thomas, rthomas@sorosny.org

SHARP Chairs Panel on Legal Advocacy Strategies at Donors' Conference

In October 2006, the Sexual Health and Rights Project (SHARP), organized and chaired a panel focused on legal advocacy strategies to promote policy change in the United States and abroad at the annual conference of the Funders Network for Reproductive and Sexual Health. The presentation highlighted the lawsuits filed by the Open Society Institute and DKT International

against USAID's requirement that public health aid recipients sign a pledge explicitly opposing prostitution and the "promotion" of prostitution. To attract donor interest around funding for sex worker health and rights, SHARP also presented, "Sex Worker Health and Rights: Where is the Funding?" a publication that maps the funding landscape around sex worker issues and serves as a resource guide for support of sex worker health and rights. To download a copy of the publication, please see:

http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/sharp/articles_publications/publications/where_2006_0719

Contact: Sue Simon, ssimon@sorosny.org

SHARP Supports Sex Workers' Representation at 2007 Harm Reduction Conference

Throughout 2006, the Sexual Health and Rights Project (SHARP) has supported a group of sex worker advocates in their efforts to ensure strong representation of sex worker issues and voices at the International Harm Reduction Association (IHRA) conference in May 2007. The global group consists of volunteers from sex worker organizations who have united to discuss conference-related issues such as the impact of harm reduction approaches on sex worker health and rights. The group has encouraged sex workers to submit abstracts to IHRA and has also provided IHRA with names of individuals from the sex worker community whom they hope will be invited to serve as reviewers for abstracts submitted by the broader harm reduction community. Contact: Aubrey Brennan, abrennan@sorosny.org

First Global Fund Central Asia Regional Meeting

In Global Fund proposals and reports for Central Asia, civil society participation in country coordinating mechanisms (CCMs) and grant development is well documented but in reality, barely exists. The first Global Fund regional meeting in Central Asia, held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan from November 14 to 16, 2006, presented civil society organizations the opportunity to engage more substantially in the Global Fund process. Participants included representatives from Global Fund principal recipients in Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan as well as from governments, civil society organizations, and regional and international donors. NGO coalitions released statements highlighting existing challenges and made recommendations to enhance involvement in CCMs, proposal development processes, and grant implementation. Discussions centered on how to implement grants more rapidly and efficiently; performance-based funding of programs; strengthening civil society involvement in program implementation; and improving donor coordination. Contact: Shannon Kowalski-Morton, skowalski@sorosny.org

Monitoring and Accountability:

Public Health Watch's TB Monitoring Project Launches Report on Five Countries

On November 1, 2006, at the annual World Conference on Lung Health in Paris, Public Health Watch's TB Monitoring Project launched the report, *Civil Society Perspectives on TB Control in Bangladesh, Brazil, Nigeria, Tanzania and Thailand*. The five project researchers briefed George Soros on the report's findings and recommendations prior to three hours of interviews with journalists from news outlets such as Voice of America, Bloomberg, the Health and Development Network, and the Science and Development Network. Featured speakers at a dinner event following the meeting included the five researchers, George Soros, and the director of the World Health Organization's Stop TB Department, Mario Raviglione. Contact: Emily Bell, ebell@sorosny.org

Public Health Watch Co-Hosts HIV/AIDS Roundtable Meeting in Vietnam

On November 1, 2006, Public Health Watch co-hosted a roundtable meeting with its local partner, the Institute for Social Development Studies, to invite discussion and feedback on a draft report assessing HIV/AIDS policy in Vietnam. Participants included government officials and

provincial AIDS authorities, representatives of local and international NGOs, representatives of bilateral and multilateral donor agencies, people living with HIV, and academics. The monitoring report will be finalized and published in 2007. Contact: Rachel Guglielmo, rguglielmo@sorosny.org

Capacity Building:

Law and Health Initiative Sponsors Health and Human Rights Activists from Nigeria and Russia

AIDS activists from Nigeria and Russia participated in the 2006 Human Rights Advocates Program at Columbia University with support from the Law and Health Initiative. Maria (Masha) Ovchinnikova directs the St. Petersburg chapter of the FrontAIDS Alliance, and has advocated for access to essential medicines and the human rights of people living with HIV and hepatitis C in Russia. Chukwumanya Igboekwu, MD, is a program associate with Physicians for Social Justice in Nigeria and an advocate for access to essential medicines for HIV and increasing Nigeria's pool of health professionals. Through the Columbia program, both Masha and Muanya developed their skills at using human rights tools and standards in their health advocacy work. Contact: Jonathan Cohen, jcohen@sorosny.org

IHRD Assists in Development of New WHO Europe HIV/AIDS Treatment Protocol

On December 1, 2006, WHO's Regional Office for Europe released its new protocol on HIV/AIDS treatment and care for injecting drug users. The protocol was written in consultation with Kasia Malinowska-Sempruch, director of the International Harm Reduction Development Program (IHRD), and an IHRD consultant, Konstantin Lezhentsev. The new guidelines draw on IHRD's 2004 publication, *Breaking Down Barriers: Lessons on Providing HIV Treatment to Injecting Drug Users*. Contact: Sophie Pinkham, spinkham@sorosny.org

Public Health Watch Co-Hosts Orientation Workshop for TB/HIV Grantees

In September 2006, Public Health Watch and the Treatment Action Group hosted an orientation workshop for the 12 newly selected grantees of the TB/HIV Monitoring & Advocacy Project. At the workshop, participants discussed the principles and processes related to community-led monitoring and advocacy; reviewed and provided input on the project framework and tools; and learned about the latest issues concerning TB/HIV coinfection. Contact: Eleonora Jimenez, ejimenez@sorosny.org

Public Health Watch Co-Chairs Symposium at World Lung Health Conference

On November 4, 2006, Public Health Watch and the Treatment Action Group chaired a symposium at the World Lung Health Conference in Paris. The event, "The Role of Community Advocacy in Improving TB-HIV Programs and Policies," highlighted ways in which community advocates play a critical role in fostering leadership, improving TB/HIV policies, and expanding government capacity to offer effective TB control services. The symposium featured community activists from Armenia, Georgia, Mexico, Pakistan, and Uganda. Contact: Eleonora Jimenez, ejimenez@sorosny.org

IPCI Organizes Training Course for Pain Policy Fellows

In October 2006, the International Palliative Care Initiative (IPCI) sponsored a week-long training course at the University of Wisconsin's Comprehensive Cancer Center for eight International Pain Policy Fellows from Argentina, Colombia, Nigeria, Panama, Sierra Leone, Serbia, Uganda, and Vietnam. The fellows were joined by a newly created group of international pain and palliative care experts who will serve as mentors during the fellowships. Experts advised the fellows on how to develop and implement strategies for improving the availability of opioid

analgesics for pain management. Over the next two years, the fellows will work on implementing these action plans into national health care policies. Contact: Kiera Hepford, khepford@sorosny.org

IPCI Hosts Course for Physicians on Palliative Care in Geriatrics

In November 2006, the International Palliative Care Initiative (IPCI) held the first palliative care in geriatrics course for physicians from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in Salzburg, Austria. A total of 39 participants from 15 countries attended the week-long course with palliative care faculty from Weill Medical College of Cornell University, Brown University, and the University of Pennsylvania. The course provided an opportunity for physicians from countries with either non-existent or underdeveloped programs in both geriatrics and palliative care to learn how to provide care for older patients suffering from life-limiting illnesses. Contact: Kiera Hepford, khepford@sorosny.org

Health Media and Design Internships for Advocacy Campaigns

OSI's Health Media Project is collaborating with the Parsons Communication Design and Technology department to send graduate students to work with Public Health Program grantees to develop media/communication strategies. In summer 2007, Parsons students will spend one month in-country training health NGOs on the use of information design for advocacy campaigns. Students will continue to provide on-going offsite support for four months after the internship. For further information about this OSI-Parsons partnership, please contact Lila Elman, lelman@sorosny.org

Cross-Cutting Issues:

IPCI and LAHI Meetings in South Africa Focus on Human Rights and Palliative Care

Together with the Open Society Foundation for South Africa, the International Palliative Care Initiative (IPCI) and the Law and Health Initiative organized two meetings in South Africa in October 2006 focused on integrating legal and human rights advocacy into OSI-funded palliative care initiatives. The first meeting, with the Hospice and Palliative Care Association of South Africa, included a discussion of how the organization could use human rights norms and procedures in its work when advocating for universal access to palliative care, pain control, and antiretroviral treatment for people living with HIV. The second meeting brought together legal and human rights advocates with palliative care providers to discuss ideas for joint work, including placing paralegals in hospices, developing a legal manual for palliative care providers to advocate for their clients, and pursuing litigation on issues such as access to morphine and funeral benefits. Contact: Tamar Ezer, tezer@sorosny.org, and Kiera Hepford, khepford@sorosny.org

Resources on Sex Workers' Health and Human Rights and Global Sex Work Regulation

Resource documents on sex worker health and rights developed for the Sexual Health and Rights Project and the Law and Health Initiative meeting in June, "Fostering Enabling Legal and Policy Environments for Sex Workers' Health and Human Rights," are now available via email request or for download at:

www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/sharp/articles_publications/sub_listing. The materials include a report highlighting the key issues covered at the meeting; a series of eight case studies examining the intersections of sex work law, policy, rights, and health; a CD-Rom containing over 75 key resources on protecting the rights of sex workers; and a discussion paper on the various frameworks used by individuals and organizations working with sex workers. Contact: Rachel Thomas, rthomas@sorosny.org

Roma Health Program Launches Romani Women's Health Initiative

In November 2006, the Roma Health Program launched a new initiative, the Romani Women's Health Initiative, by giving general support grants to six organizations with a demonstrated history or clear intention of working to improve Romani women's health. Organizations in Bulgaria, Romania, and Serbia were funded to carry out a range of research, training, monitoring, and advocacy activities. The initiative, which will be extended to organizations in Macedonia in 2007, will also provide a program of institutional support training, skills enhancement, and networking opportunities for grantees. Contact: Heather Doyle, hdoyle@sorosny.org

Other News and Announcements:

OSI to Provide \$3 Million over Two Years for New TB/HIV Initiative in Africa

In November 2006, OSI announced a new \$3 million initiative to support the development of new guidelines for treatment of multi-drug resistant or extremely drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR/XDR-TB) and HIV coinfection. The Public Health Program and George Soros' "Chairman's Fund" are jointly funding the two-year initiative. The grant will also support an emergency response to MDR/XDR-TB in Lesotho, a country with high HIV and TB prevalence, and elsewhere in southern Africa more generally. Partners in Health will implement the project in coordination with the World Health Organization's Stop TB Department and the Lesotho government. Additional donors are being sought to support the initiative, which has an overall budget of \$15 million. OSI previously supported Partners in Health in developing guidelines for treating TB and preventing MDR-TB in Russian prisons. Contact: Françoise Girard, fgirard@sorosny.org

Law and Health Initiative Convenes First Global Strategy Meeting

Legal experts from Kenya, South Africa, Hungary, Ukraine, the United States, and Canada gathered in New York in September to provide input into the first global strategy for the recently formed Law and Health Initiative (LAHI). Major initiatives on integrating legal services into OSI-funded health programs, supporting human rights organizations working on HIV and AIDS, and developing human rights principles for patient care will follow from the recommendations of the LAHI advisory team. A full report from the meeting will be distributed in December 2006. Contact: Jonathan Cohen, jcohen@sorosny.org

OSI Participates in Global Fund Board Meeting

As part of the private foundations delegation, OSI participated in the Global Fund's 4th Board Meeting, October 31 - November 3 in Guatemala City, Guatemala, to provide recommendations and input on funding decisions of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. At the meeting, the Board approved funding for the sixth round of grant proposals and adopted the first elements of a four-year strategic framework designed to guide the Fund over the upcoming years. Board members also decided to re-open the search for a new executive director after none of the five candidates received sufficient support. Contact: Shannon Kowalski-Morton, skowalski@sorosny.org

Tamar Ezer joins PHP as Law and Health Program Officer

The Public Health Program welcomes Tamar Ezer as program officer for the Law and Health Initiative and general Public Health Program initiatives. Tamar joins OSI following a two-year teaching fellowship with the Georgetown University International Women's Human Rights Clinic. At Georgetown, she supervised human rights litigation and fact-finding in a variety of African and Asian countries and authored numerous articles on the rights of women and children. Tamar is a graduate of Stanford University and Harvard Law School, where she was editor-in-chief of the *Harvard Human Rights Journal*. She has held positions with the American

Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, Human Rights First, and the law firm Simpson, Thacher and Bartlett, and has served as a law clerk for the Southern District of New York and the Supreme Court of Israel. Contact: Tamar Ezer, tezer@sorosny.org

Upcoming Events:

Roma Health Project to Co-Host Seminar on TB and Social Exclusion in Europe

The Roma Health Project is collaborating with the World Lung Foundation, the International Union against TB and Lung Disease, and the World Health Organization to organize a regional seminar on TB and social exclusion in Eastern Europe. The goal of the meeting, to be held February 5 - 6, 2007 in Salzburg, Austria, is to increase the capacity of TB policymakers and selected NGOs to address the role of social exclusion in TB control. The seminar will examine the theoretical basis of social exclusion and its impact on TB epidemiology in addition to current data, policy frameworks, and program opportunities. The emphasis of the seminar will be on identifying possible programs and strategies, particularly for marginalized populations such as Roma. Contact: Heather Doyle, hdoyle@sorosny.org

First Salzburg Seminar on Law and Health to Convene in February 2007

The Law and Health Initiative will offer the first Salzburg Seminar on Law and Health on February 11-17, 2007. The seminar will address a widely identified gap in human rights education among medical professionals in former Soviet countries, as well as a lack of training in health law in the region. Country teams from Armenia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, and Ukraine will gather for one week of training in law and health including a workshop on designing law and health curricula for use in their home countries. For more information please contact Tamar Ezer at tezer@sorosny.org