



This issue of the **Public Health Program (PHP)** e-Newsletter highlights our work during the months of March, April, May, and June 2007, with upcoming events this fall. 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:

Incarceration, Mandatory Institutionalization, and HIV Briefing at the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

In March, the International Harm Reduction Development Program (IHRD) held a briefing on incarceration, mandatory institutionalization, and HIV at the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) meeting in Vienna. Over 75 people from across the political spectrum including official representatives from 21 governments, high ranking health and drug control officials, and NGOs attended, marking it the largest session ever convened by IHRD at the CND. Anya Sarang, an activist from the Russian Harm Reduction Network, presented on drug use in Russian prisons; Mary Barr, a prison educator and former prisoner discussed women, incarceration and addiction treatment in the United States; Ted Hammett, an HIV/AIDS researcher spoke about compulsory drug treatment in Vietnam; and Juana Tomas-Rosello, UN Office on Drugs and Crime advisor, highlighted community-based alternatives to incarceration. Contact: Sophie Pinkham, spinkham@sorosny.org

Sex Worker Rights Advocates Launch *Taking the Pledge* Video and Speakers' Tour

In June, the Network of Sex Work Projects and the Sex Workers Project at the Urban Justice Center launched a speaking tour featuring *Taking the Pledge*, a 13-minute film about how the American government's anti-prostitution pledge policy has hampered education and outreach efforts for sex workers around the world. Sex worker rights activists Meena Seshu of SANGRAM in India and Hazera Bagum of Durjoy Nari Shongho in Bangladesh participated in the panels held in New York, Washington DC and Atlanta. The film and an audio taped forum are online: http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/sharp/events/pledge_2007 Contact: Sue Simon, ssimon@sorosny.org

LAHI and OSIEA Launch Operations in East Africa

In April, the Law and Health Initiative (LAHI) and the Open Society Initiative for East Africa (OSIEA) launched a joint initiative to expand access to legal services for people living with and affected by HIV and AIDS in East Africa. The press conference in Nairobi announcing the initiative drew over 100 activists, donors, and journalists and was widely covered in the Kenyan and international press. An accompanying report highlighted rampant human rights abuses fueling Kenya's HIV epidemic and urged the Kenyan government to make legal services a centerpiece of its AIDS response. The report, *Ensuring Justice for Vulnerable Communities in Kenya: A Review of HIV and AIDS-Related Legal Services*, was co-authored by LAHI director Jonathan Cohen and consultant Kristin Kalla. LAHI and OSIEA also welcomed a new program officer, Anne Gathumbi, who will oversee a diverse portfolio of grants and advocacy on HIV/AIDS and human rights. Anne is based in Nairobi and can be reached at agathumbi@osiea.org

Serbian Roma Activists Testify Before UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women

In May, the European Roma Rights Centre in partnership with Serbian NGOs Bibija, Eureka, and Women's Space, testified before the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) on violations of Romani women's rights in Serbia. Prior to the testimony in March, the NGOs submitted a parallel report to CEDAW highlighting violations of Roma women's rights in education, health care, and employment, as well as incidents of domestic violence and racially motivated abuse. To download report and materials, see:

http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/roma/events/documenting_20070515

Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu

Six African Countries Tackle Barriers on Availability of Essential Pain Medication at Regional Meeting

Country teams from Cameroon, Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia presented analyses of barriers contained in their country's laws and regulations governing essential pain medication at the second regional African conference on drug availability, held May 9 to 11 in Ghana. Comprised of representatives from ministries of health, pharmaceutical control, cancer, AIDS and geriatric departments, each country team developed follow-up action plans to address barriers and to advocate on the availability of opioid analgesics to patients in their countries. The International Palliative Care Initiative co-funded the meeting, "Advocacy for Palliative Care in Africa: A focus on essential pain medication accessibility in Western Africa."

Contact: Kiera Hepford, khepford@sorosny.org

Monitoring and Accountability:

Public Health Watch Launches Report on National AIDS Plan in the United States

On May 1, Public Health Watch (PHW) released the report, *Improving Outcomes: Blueprint for a National AIDS Plan for the United States*, authored by Chris Collins, which outlines concrete recommendations for a more strategic approach to HIV/AIDS programming and policy to decrease HIV infection rates in the US, increase access to AIDS-related care, and eliminate racial disparities. The United States does not have a comprehensive national plan to guide strategic use of over \$16 billion AIDS-related dollars for its domestic epidemic. Moreover, African Americans suffer most for this failure, accounting for half of all new infections. The report follows from the May 2006 PHW report, *HIV/AIDS Policy in the United States*, also authored by Chris Collins, which provided a comprehensive assessment of U.S. domestic AIDS policy. To download the report, see: www.publichealthwatch.info Contact: Helena Choi, hchoi@sorosny.org

Public Health Watch Launches report *Civil Society Perspectives on HIV/AIDS Policy*

On June 26, Public Health Watch launched *Civil Society Perspectives on HIV/AIDS Policy*, a five country report documenting various forms of stigma and discrimination against marginalized groups in Nicaragua, Senegal, Ukraine, the United States, and Vietnam. Public Health Watch researchers engaged in two years of on-the-ground monitoring to assess their country's progress in making HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, and care services more widely and equitably available. The report was released at the UNAIDS programme coordinating board meeting in Geneva. Two Public Health Watch researchers, Daouda Diouf of Senegal and Oanh Khuat of Vietnam, spoke at the event on the need for governments and international agencies to collaborate more effectively with marginalized groups in the design, implementation and evaluation of national and international HIV/AIDS policies and programs. To download the report, see: www.publichealthwatch.info Full country reports are forthcoming and will be available on the website. Contact: Helena Choi, hchoi@sorosny.org

Brazil Workshop Stimulates Community Participation in TB and HIV/AIDS Research

In May, Public Health Watch TB researcher, Ezio T. Santos Filho, hosted an international workshop in Rio de Janeiro to identify barriers and opportunities for community participation in research on TB and HIV/AIDS. Brazilian and US-based TB and HIV/AIDS activists as well as representatives from key research institutions in Brazil attended the workshop, co-sponsored by OSI. As a result of the seminar, two of the most important Community Advisory Boards in Rio de Janeiro, the CREATE consortium and IPEC (Research Institute Evandro Chagas) at Fiocruz, reported greater interest from community members in their activities. Community member participation in TB/HIV initiatives has also increased, particularly around a new Global Fund TB project in Brazil. Contact: Emily Bell, ebell@sorosny.org

Joint Initiatives:

Equal Partners: Health and Human Rights 2007

The first jointly-sponsored conference of the OSI Public Health Program and the Human Rights and Governance Grants Program was held in collaboration with the Open Society Justice Initiative from June 3 to 8 in Cape Town. The centerpiece of the meeting was a three-day health and human rights training, which provided the opportunity to mobilize collaborative advocacy and grantmaking activities between the two programs and more broadly across the OSI network. Conference highlights included: a keynote address on health and human rights successes in South Africa by Khosi Xaba, a leading women's health and rights advocate, and Mark Heywood, Director of the AIDS Law Project; and a panel discussion of judges and advocates on the right to health, featuring Geoff Budlender, Advocate of the High Court of South Africa, Iain Byrne, Commonwealth Law Officer, International Center for the Legal Protection of Human Rights (Interights), Colm O'Connell, Senior Lecturer in Laws, Faculty of Laws, University College London and the European Committee of Social Rights, and Catherine Mumma, former commissioner, Kenya National Commission of Human Rights, moderated by Françoise Girard, Director, OSI Public Health Program. Participants also engaged in a full day of site visits to prominent South African NGOs working at the intersection of health and human rights and participated in a poster exhibition of health and human rights case studies. To download meeting materials, see the conference website: <http://www.equalpartners.info/> (username: *equal*, password: *partners*). To view the daily updates of the workshop, presentations, photographs, podcasts, and webcasts, see the workshop blog: <http://equalpartners2007.blogspot.com/> Contact: Ellen Liu, eliu@sorosny.org

LAHI and IHRD Convene Regional Gathering of Harm Reduction Lawyers

In May, 48 legal professionals from 13 countries attended a two-day meeting on harm reduction legal services convened by the Law and Health Initiative and International Harm Reduction Development Program in Warsaw. The meeting was the largest-ever gathering of lawyers dedicated to providing legal defense to people who use drugs. Highlights included a keynote address by Hana Gajdosikova, an attorney with the Center for Addictology at Charles University in Prague, and an account by Russian human rights lawyer Ksenia Kostromina of a recent victory on behalf of a drug user before the European Court of Human Rights. The meeting aimed to promote greater networking among lawyers working with drug users, and to survey the existing state of national and regional jurisprudence on issues related to drug users' rights. For the conference agenda and materials, see: <http://health.osf.lt/en/seminars/index.php?id=6682&no=0&gid=> Contact: Jonathan Cohen, jcohen@sorosny.org.

***Transitions Online* Features Two Articles on HIV in Roma Communities**

Transitions Online, a leading online magazine covering Central and Eastern Europe, the Balkans, and the former Soviet Union, published two investigative journalism articles on HIV in Roma

communities. The first article, *Time Bomb for Roma*, looks at the issue of Roma and HIV in the Czech Republic and attempts to address the impending crisis. The second, *Legacy of Shame*, addresses the topic of HIV infections in Roma communities in Romania, government policies, and the challenges of discrimination. Both articles were produced through a grant co-funded by the OSI Roma Health Project and the Network Media Program. For full texts, see: http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/roma/articles_publications/sub_listing Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu

Roma Health Media Co-Production Fund Announces Grant Recipients

The Roma Health Project, in collaboration with OSI's Media Program and Medienhilfe, a media NGO supporting independent journalism, announced six grant recipients of the Roma Media Health Co-Production Fund. Co-productions aim to strengthen cooperation between Roma and mainstream media, positively impact attitudes towards Roma inclusion and access to health care, and reinforce the media's informative role in social inclusion and health. Funding supports Roma and non-Roma media co-production projects for television and radio in Bulgaria, Macedonia, Romania, and Serbia. For a list of grant recipients, see: http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/roma/news/competition_20070405. Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu

Capacity Building:

IHRD Co-sponsors Training on HIV/AIDS in Prison Settings

On May 13, the International Harm Reduction Development Program held a satellite training session on HIV/AIDS in prisons at the 18th International Conference on the Reduction of Drug-Related Harm in Warsaw. Over 100 participants participated from 42 countries of Eastern and Western Europe, Asia, Africa, North America, the Caribbean, and Australia, including government representatives from 14 countries. Topics discussed included: a model law to address HIV/AIDS in prisons; care and treatment in prison and on release; and drug treatment and HIV prevention. Best practices from Moldova and Iran were also presented. The training was held in collaboration with the AIDS Foundation East-West, the Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network, the European Network on Drugs and Infections Prevention in Prison, and the International Centre for Advancement of Addiction Treatment. <http://www.harmreduction2007.org/content/blogcategory/90/97/> Contact: Sophie Pinkham, spinkham@sorosny.org

Case Management Training for Russian Harm Reduction Service Providers

In response to the needs of local partners in Russia, the International Harm Reduction Development Program convened a two-day training seminar in Moscow on case management for Russian harm reduction service providers in April. David Rosenthal, PhD, head of New York-based Lower East Harm Reduction Center, led the training, which covered a range of topics including case management techniques, work with "difficult" cases, and evaluation of case management programs. The training was attended by 20 social workers, peer counselors, and outreach workers from Moscow, St. Petersburg, Kazan, and Krasnoyarsk, and represented harm reduction groups that have begun case management services and provide expanded services for IDUs. Contact: Sophie Pinkham, spinkham@sorosny.org

Roma Health Scholarships Announced

In June at the Soros foundations network Roma "Jamboree" held in Sofia, Bulgaria, George Soros announced his support for a joint initiative of the Roma Health Project and the Roma Memorial University Scholarship Fund to provide scholarships for Roma medical and nursing students in four countries of Eastern Europe. A pilot project is being developed in Romania for a launch in

September 2008. Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu and Nino Chelidze, nchelidze@osieurope.org

TB/HIV Grantees Hone Advocacy Skills

Public Health Watch and the Treatment Action Group co-hosted an advocacy workshop for TB/HIV grantees from June 1 to 3 in Cape Town. Community based organizations from Bangladesh, Cameroon, El Salvador, Georgia, India, Kenya, Lithuania, Swaziland, Tanzania, Ukraine, and Zambia received skills training on advocacy campaign development and discussed strategic ways to highlight TB/HIV at upcoming events and conferences. The workshop provided an opportunity for grantees to work intensively with project staff and advisors, including UNAIDS HIV/TB Adviser Alasdair Reid, on finalizing country-level advocacy plans. The TB/HIV grantees represent small community-based organizations conducting monitoring of TB/HIV policy implementation using the World Health Organization TB/HIV Policy. Contact: Helena Choi, hchoi@sorosny.org and Emily Bell, ebell@sorosny.org

Grant Competition to Build Local Capacity on Access to Medicines Issues

In June, the Public Health Program, in collaboration with the OSI Information Program, issued a request for proposals for institutional funding to organizations with a mandate and demonstrated capacity to advance policy and civil society engagement related to access to medicines. Grants for up to \$75,000, renewable for up to three years, will be awarded to locally registered NGOs in Brazil, India, Kenya, Malaysia, South Africa, and Thailand. Technical assistance as needed will be provided to the grantees. Proposal guidelines can be found at:

http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/news/access_20070608 Contact: Jane Li, jli@sorosny.org

Chinese Journalists Participate in Intensive Training Program on HIV/AIDS Reporting

To improve HIV/AIDS reporting in China, OSI supported the Wuhan University School of Journalism and Communication to conduct a month-long training program for 20 mid-career Chinese journalists. From May 14 to June 8, reporters and editors from Chinese print, TV, and radio were trained by Chinese and international HIV/AIDS experts, researchers, and activists, including Daniel Wolfe, Deputy Director of IHRD, as well as experienced public health journalists. Course topics ranged from research methods of public health journalism to the ethics of HIV/AIDS reporting. The program included a week-long field assignment where reporters investigated stories in neighboring provinces and produced articles and broadcast pieces on HIV/AIDS issues. Contact: Lila Elman, leman@sorosny.org.

Awards, Announcements, and Other News:

George Soros Receives EAPC Award for Commitment to Global Development of Palliative Care

On June 7, the European Association for Palliative Care (EAPC) awarded George Soros the EAPC Award for his leadership and commitment to supporting the global development of palliative care. Dr. Kathleen M. Foley, Medical Director of the International Palliative Care Initiative, accepted the award on behalf of Mr. Soros at the 10th Congress of the EAPC, in Budapest. Over 300 palliative care professionals from Central Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union attended the Congress, which was held for the first time in an Eastern European Country, demonstrating the tremendous growth and progress of palliative care development in the region. See: <http://www.eapcnet.org/budapest2007/welcome.html> Contact: Kiera Hepford, khepford@sorosny.org

IPCI Partners Receive Awards at 10th Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care

Three International Palliative Care Initiative (IPCI) partners received awards at the 10th Congress of the European Association for Palliative Care. Professor Jacek Luczak, director of IPCI's Palliative Care Resource Training Center in Poland, received the prestigious Floriani Award for his contribution to the development of palliative care in Eastern Europe. Dr. Daniela Mosoiu, director of IPCI's Palliative Care Resource Training Center in Romania, received first prize for her poster presentation highlighting the lack of access to palliative care in the Roma community. Julia Downing, PhD, deputy director of the African Palliative Care Association, was awarded second place for her poster describing the burden of palliative care provision on nurses who have no formal palliative care training. Contact: Kiera Hepford, khepford@sorosny.org

Duke University Hosts “Enabling Innovation for Global Health”

In May, the Program on Global Health and Technology at Duke University brought together strategic partners and experts at the “Enabling Innovation for Global Health” conference. Participants shared expertise on alternative approaches to innovation and intellectual property rights, novel approaches to drug discovery and development, and humanitarian licensing for health technologies. Drawing from participants' recommendations, the Public Health Program will support developing country and civil society engagement in the WHO Intergovernmental Working Group on Public Health, Innovation, and Intellectual Property. Other avenues that will be explored include patent databases and new models of drug development. Contact: Jane Li, jli@sorosny.org

LAHI Investigates Funding Needs around Women and HIV/AIDS

The Law and Health Initiative is currently exploring opportunities to support work on women and HIV/AIDS. While the devastating effect of HIV/AIDS on women is widely acknowledged as a major global challenge, there is a lack of donor support for effective legal interventions to address human rights abuses that render women more susceptible to HIV/AIDS and impede the treatment of HIV-positive women. This project commenced with an information-gathering trip to Kenya, Uganda, South Africa, and Swaziland, looking at the current status of legal and human rights work on women and HIV/AIDS, effective projects, key networks and resources, gaps, and needs. Contact: Tamar Ezer, tezer@sorosny.org.

LAHI Presents Lessons from Africa on Domestic Violence in the Context of HIV/AIDS

The Law and Health Initiative participated in a panel presentation at the 25th anniversary celebration of American University Washington College of Law's International Legal Studies Program. The panel focused on domestic violence in the context of HIV/AIDS in Africa. Oftentimes referred to as the “twin pandemics,” domestic violence and HIV/AIDS overlap in many ways. Domestic violence can be an indicator of higher HIV risk among women (including married women), a consequence of disclosure of HIV status to a spouse or intimate partner, and a barrier to HIV testing, diagnosis, and treatment. LAHI's presentation highlighted the potential of holistic interventions and integrating legal services into economic empowerment and health programs to help address the multiple dimensions of this issue. Contact: Tamar Ezer, tezer@sorosny.org.

Police Repression of Sex Workers Chosen by SWAN as 2007-2008 Advocacy Focus

The Sex Worker Rights Advocacy Network (SWAN), comprised of civil society organizations in 15 countries across CEE and fSU, held its second annual meeting in Kiev from April 26 to 30. Among the themes identified as regional priorities were: opposition to criminalization of clients (end demand legislation); obligatory HIV testing and registration of sex workers; police repression of sex workers (raids, arrests, violence, anti-prostitution measures); and reporting and representation of sex worker issues in the media. Members chose police repression as SWAN's advocacy campaign focus for 2007-2008 and selected a working group to move plans forward.

SWAN's most recent newsletter is available at: <http://www.swannet.org/en/newsletter> Contact: Rachel Thomas, rthomas@sorosny.org

Roma Health Project Grantees Highlight Challenges of Roma Health in the EU

In April, Roma Health Project grantees from Romani C.R.I.S.S. in Romania, Initiative for Health Foundation in Bulgaria, and Equal Opportunities for Women and Children in Romania, participated in a panel discussion at the European Public Health Alliance 2007 annual conference, "*Health in the Enlarged European Union.*" The session explored how the public health community and healthcare professionals can contribute towards reducing barriers in access to health services and EU policies to ensure that Roma health rights are respected. See: <http://www.conference2007.epha.org/-Left-out-Access-of-Roma-to-Health-> Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu

A Global Gaze: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex Grantmaking in the Global South and East

Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues (FLGI) is launching the first report on the health and rights needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) communities. The report examines the state of LGBTI grantmaking and organizations in the global South and East, and aims to develop more effective donor strategies for movement building. A summary of the report was presented by Robert Espinoza from FLGI at a forum hosted at OSI–New York on June 21. Joo-Hyun Kang of the Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice described challenges and achievements in empowering LGBTI persons to claim their rights. Audio of this forum and the report summary are available at: http://www.soros.org/initiatives/health/focus/sharp/events/lgbtfunders_20070621

The full report will be available in August at: www.lgbtfunders.org Contact: Sue Simon, ssimon@sorosny.org

Health and Human Rights Resources:

New Communications Toolkit Breaks Down Common Prejudices and Stereotypes Around Sex Work

In June, the Sex Workers Project (SWP) of the Urban Justice Center released a tool kit for journalists, allies, adversaries, and people who are unfamiliar with sex work issues. Developed through a workgroup process, the resource helps people to understand sex worker health and rights issues by breaking down common prejudices and stereotypes. The messages and principles conveyed in the toolkit are adaptable for various uses including letters to the editor, op-ed pieces, advocacy documents, and interviews with the media. SWP will disseminate the resource to sex worker rights advocates and their allies around the world. The materials will also be made available in Russian, Thai and French. The toolkit will be available soon at: <http://www.urbanjustice.org/ujc/projects/sex.html> To request copies, please contact Rachel Thomas, rthomas@sorosny.org

Health and Human Rights: A Resource Guide for the Open Society Institute and Soros Foundations Network This six-chapter Resource Guide provides a practical tool for advocates working at the intersection of health and human rights. It includes fact sheets, program descriptions, jurisprudence, case studies, bibliographies, and glossary definitions for six areas of health and human rights: patient care; HIV/AIDS; harm reduction; palliative care; sexual health; and minority health. It also contains thirteen foundational human rights documents containing health-related provisions. Prepared by OSI and Equitas staff for a 2007 global OSI meeting on health and human rights, the Guide has broader application for anyone dedicated to the pursuit of health and human rights. To obtain a copy, please email: lawandhealth@sorosny.org.

Equal Partners: Health and Human Rights 2007 – Workshop Manual

Prepared for a 2007 global OSI meeting on health and human rights, this workshop manual contains four modules designed to build the capacity of public health and legal staff throughout the Soros foundations network to collaborate on health and human rights funding and advocacy. The modules include exercises such as: mapping issues at the intersection of health and human rights; analyzing regional and international health and human rights mechanisms; exploring controversial “hot topics” in health and human rights; and integrating health and human rights programming into foundation strategies. To obtain a copy, please email: lawandhealth@sorosny.org

Equal Partners: Health and Human Rights 2007 – Workshop Blog

This online blog summarizes the proceedings of a one-week global OSI meeting on health and human rights held in Cape Town, South Africa, from June 3 to 8. It contains daily updates and commentary, photographs, podcasts and webcasts of key workshop presentations, PDF links to poster presentations, and a summary agenda of the workshop. See: <http://equalpartners2007.blogspot.com/>

Upcoming Events:

Drug Use and Roma: A Regional Conversation (November 7 to 8, Bucharest, Romania)

In collaboration with the International Harm Reduction Development Program and ARAS Romanian Association Against AIDS in Bucharest, the Roma Health Project is organizing the seminar, *Drug Use and Roma: A Regional Conversation*, as an opportunity for Roma activists and health service providers to learn about and share views on public health and human rights approaches to addressing drug use in Roma communities. Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu

Social Inclusion and Health: Crossing the Borders (September 27 to 29, Sofia, Bulgaria)

The Roma Health Project (RHP) will award four scholarships to Roma activists and civil society members to attend the Social Inclusion and Health conference organized by the Correlation Network, a European network linking initiatives to fight marginalization and exclusion of vulnerable populations. The conference will address the issue of limited access to health and social services for marginalized groups and a RHP organized panel discussion will address increasing access to health care for Roma. Further information about the conference is available at: http://www.correlation-net.org/sofia_conference/index.html Contact: Eva Foldes, efoldes@osi.hu