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Note from the Editor

The Ethics and Health Unit is keen to relay information about ethics activities that occur at WHO and elsewhere, on a bi-annual basis, and encourages newsletter submissions from partners.

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Public Health Ethics



A TB patient at World TB Day celebrations in Ghana (2004). Photographer: Pierre Virot

TB Taskforce Formed

Tuberculosis (TB) prevention, care and control raise important ethical and policy issues that need to be adequately addressed. These concerns have been accentuated by the problem of Multi-Drug Resistant TB (MDR-TB) and, most recently, by the emergence and spread of Extensively Drug Resistant TB (XDR-TB), which is especially difficult to detect and treat.

The Ethics and Health Unit and the Stop TB Department established a taskforce that will begin to address a full range of topics: diagnosis and treatment, public health measures, collaborative research and roles of health care workers, with a particular focus on XDR-TB. The taskforce will gather this December in Toronto for a three day meeting hosted by the Joint Centre for Bioethics at the University of Toronto, a WHO collaborating centre. Draft documents will be presented at several relevant meetings in the spring of 2009 in order to help finalize a guidance document. In addition, training materials for ethics and TB will be developed for use in workshops for program managers and other stakeholders in order to build capacity at the local level. Collaborating Centre Information:

[http:// www.jointcentreforbioethics.ca/](http://www.jointcentreforbioethics.ca/)

Pandemic Influenza Planning

WHO's Ethics and Health team has been working on a project to address the wide range of challenging ethical issues raised by a potential influenza pandemic. **In December 2007, the WHO guidance document "Ethical considerations in developing a public health response to pandemic influenza" was published.** Available at:

http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/WHO_CDS_EPR_GIP_2007_2c.pdf

Now the four discussion papers, which laid the foundation of this guidance document, have been finalized and are in the process of being published (expected publication date: November 2008).

In 2008, the focus of work in this area has been on capacity-building and training activities. **Two regional workshops on pandemic influenza preparedness, including ethical aspects, were held in Kampala, Uganda, in May and June 2008.** These two workshops, organized by WHO-AFRO, were part

of the series of capacity building activities on rapid containment that started in December 2006.

A workshop on *Public health ethics and pandemic influenza detection and control in Africa* was held in Kampala, Uganda, in August 2008. Organized by the African Field Epidemiology Network and sponsored by US-CDC, it brought together approximately 50 participants from 15 African countries. The WHO guidance document, *Ethical considerations in developing a public health response to pandemic influenza* and WHO case studies were used as reference materials for the workshop. Further information on activities regarding ethics and pandemic preparedness can be found at http://www.who.int/ethics/influenza_project/en/index.html.

Medical Tourism

The **WHO Department of Ethics, Equity, Trade and Human Rights is collaborating with the WHO Centre for Health Development in Kobe, Japan, on a project titled, *The movement of patients across international borders: Emerging challenges and opportunities for health care systems***. A workshop will be held in late February 2009 in Kobe, Japan, structured around 8 papers commissioned from international experts in various aspects of this issue, including WHO staff. One of these papers will focus on the ethical aspects of medical travel. The results of this workshop—including commissioned papers, frameworks for assessment, and country studies—will be subject to follow-up peer review and dissemination. Previous work of the WHO Department of Ethics, Equity, Trade and Human Rights on trade in health and health services can be found at <http://www.who.int/trade/resource/tradewp/en/index.html>.

Ethics of Research

9th Global Forum on Bioethics in Research

The Ethics and Health Unit is part of the steering committee of the **Global Forum on Bioethics in Research**. The 9th forum took place 3-5 December 2008 in Auckland, New Zealand. The Health Research Council of New Zealand hosted this forum and the theme was *Ethics of research involving indige-*

nous peoples and vulnerable populations. More information at:

<http://www.gfbronline.com>

<http://gfbr9.hrc.govt.nz/index.php/home>

<http://www.hrc.govt.nz/>



GLOBAL FORUM
On Bioethics in Research
www.gfbronline.com



The Fale Pasifika complex is a centre of excellence for Pacific research at the University of Auckland, NZ, and a GFBR venue in 2008.

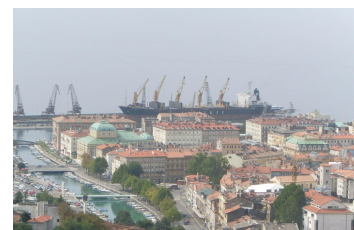
Source: <http://www.auckland.ac.nz>

Eastern Mediterranean and Arab Forum on Bioethics in Research

The first meeting of the **Eastern Mediterranean and Arab Forum on Bioethics in Research** took place in Cairo, Egypt, on 12-14 August 2008. The forum was co-organized by the Eastern Mediterranean Regional Office (EMRO) of the World Health Organization, UNESCO Cairo Office, the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) and the Middle East Research Ethics Training Initiative (MERETI), University of Maryland, Baltimore (UMB), USA. The focus of the first meeting was: *Challenges to Ethical Considerations in Research in the East Mediterranean and Arab Region: Research Subjects, Researchers and Research Ethics Committees (REC) Perspectives*. Additionally, a satellite meeting was organized with the World Medical Association (WMA) to discuss the new version of the Declaration of Helsinki (DoH)*, allowing participants from REC's to express comments and suggestions. More information at: http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/meetings/forum_rh/en/ *For additional DoH revision activity see *DoH Workshop in Helsinki, Finland, p. 3*.

The 9th World Congress of Bioethics

Members of the Ethics and Health Unit, including two interns, attended and presented at the **9th World Congress of Bioethics** held 3-8 September 2008, in Rijeka/Opatija, Croatia. The theme of this Congress was *The Challenge of Cross-Cultural Bioethics in the 21st Century*. It was held in conjunction with a range of satellite conferences—Feminist Approaches to Bioethics, 4th South-East European Bioethical Forum, Media and Bioethics, 4th International Conference on Clinical Ethics and Consultation, Bioethics in Nursing, and Ethics of Clinical Drug Trials. The next Congress will be held in Singapore in 2010. More information at: <http://www.bioethics2008rijeka.info/>



Rijeka, Croatia: A host city for the World Congress of Bioethics in 2008.

Photographer: Jennifer S Brown

Declaration of Helsinki (DoH) 2008 Helsinki Workshop

The World Medical Association (WMA) invited **members of the Ethics and Health Unit** to participate in the **Declaration of Helsinki (DoH) 2008 Workshop**. This event, hosted by the Finish Medical Association (FMA), took place at the FMA House in Helsinki, Finland, 10-11 March 2008. Constituent members of the WMA and invited guests attended this important workshop with the goal of discussing suggested revisions to the DoH. The workshop's schedule included presentations and open discussion on the proposed revisions as well as some newly suggested revisions. This meeting led to another round of deliberations and comments. A final decision on suggested revisions was reached in October 2008. More information at: <http://www.wma.net/e/>

Ministerial Forum on Research for Health

WHO worked with UNESCO and COHRED on the preparation of a session dedicated to research ethics for the **Ministerial Forum on Research for Health** which took place in **Bamako, Mali**, 17-19 November 2008. More information at: <http://www.bamako2008.org/>

Ethics Toolkit

In 2007, **based on the agreement established with Program for Appropriate Technology in Health (PATH), the Ethics and Health Unit organized a training workshop on ethical review of research involving human participants**. The meeting took place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, with participants from seven African countries and facilitators from Africa, Canada and Europe. Following the meeting a research ethics training manual was prepared. **This document, published in both French and English, will serve as a basic introduction to research ethics committee formation and strengthening**. More information at: <http://www.path.org/index.php>

Meetings and Workshops

Forum on Bioethics

In **February 2008, the Unit participated in the Forum on Bioethics organized by the UNESCO in Dakar, Senegal**. A number of African and European institutions were represented to continue the exchange of views and experiences initiated some years ago in the sub-region in particular in the field of research ethics. Remarkable progress was done in the sub-region in establishing research ethics committees and developing local regulations. Training activities have been implemented in different countries. However the need to strengthen capacity is still important.

Working Session of the UN Inter-Agency Committee on Bioethics

A Working Session of the UN Inter-Agency Committee on Bioethics was organized by the Ethics and Health Unit and held 19-20 June 2008 at WHO in Geneva. This important session was an opportunity for participants to discuss the status of the Committee, its denomination, and terms of reference and composition with a view to clarifying and better defining its action and activities in the future. Participants reported the details of their respective organizations' or institutions' activities in areas related to research ethics. Additionally, coordination of activities in the field of research ethics was discussed.

The 7th Global Summit of National Bioethics Advisory Bodies

The 7th Global Summit, hosted by the French National Consultative Ethics Committee for Health and Life Sciences, was held in Paris from 1-2 September 2008. The Summit consisted of sessions on 10 different topics including ethics and cultural diversity, transplantation of organs and tissue, digital health records, ethics committees and public policy. **Representatives from 33 participating countries made presentations** on the work of their committees, followed by a plenary discussion. At the end of the Summit several participants expressed a desire to exchange ideas on a more regular basis and set up mechanisms, such as a shared database, to facilitate such exchange. Discussions led to a greater appreciation of the different challenges faced by committees due to diversity in committee structure, cultural context and health system development. More information at: <http://www.who.int/ethics/globalsummit/en/>

Francophone meeting on Bioethics

This year, the **3rd Francophone meeting on Bioethics took place in October, in Quebec, Canada**. The meeting focused on the relation between bioethics and good governance in the Francophone countries with an emphasis on the role of ethics committees. More information at: <http://www.ethique.gouv.qc.ca/III-emes-Rencontres.html>

WHO/UNAIDS/AAVP pilot workshops

UNAIDS, WHO (IVR and ETH), African AIDS Vaccine Programme (AAVP), and the WHO Research Ethics Review Committee (REC) Secretariat are working together to support and enhance the ethical conduct of current and future vaccine and HIV-related biomedical trials by holding two workshops in Africa. Following the recent publication of the revised and updated *Ethical considerations in biomedical HIV prevention trials* (WHO/UNAIDS) and *Good participatory practice guidelines for biomedical HIV prevention trials* (UNAIDS/AVAC), two 3-day workshops (Senegal in January 2009 and South Africa in March 2009) are being planned to pilot this introduction to the documents. The goal is to raise awareness of the new documents and to strengthen capacity to work with this guidance in light of local challenges.

Announcements

In March 2008 an **Internal Technical Working Group was established with an aim to ensure that WHO achieves coherence in its policies and programmes related to ethics and health**. The group works on issues related to public health ethics as well as research ethics and serves as forum for information exchange and collaboration across the Organization, providing input into Organization policies, strategies, governing documents, statements and briefings.

The **University of Miami Ethics Programs** was designated as a **WHO Collaborating Center in Ethics and Global Health Policy**. More information at: <http://www.miami.edu/ethics/>

Espace Ethique AP-HP in Paris, France, was designated as a **WHO Collaborating Center for Bioethics** on 1 September 2008. More information at: <http://www.espace-ethique.org/index.php>

Intern and Volunteer Program



The Ethics and Health Unit coordinates a very active internship programme at WHO's Headquarters in Geneva, Switzerland. The Unit welcomes applications from graduate students from a wide range of disciplines as well as researchers, national civil servants, and other professionals. So far more than 70 highly-qualified volunteers and interns have participated in ongoing work in the Unit and were able to expand their knowledge and understanding of WHO's goals, policies, and activities. Additionally, there are several established programs that facilitate the ability of exceptional students to intern at the Ethics and Health Unit.

Monash University's Centre for Human Bioethics, Melbourne, Australia, and the **Department of Ethics, Equity, Trade and Human Rights at the World Health Organization**, have established an annual Fellowship to allow one Monash Master of Bioethics student per year to undertake a 2 or 3 month internship in

Geneva.

<http://www.arts.monash.edu/>

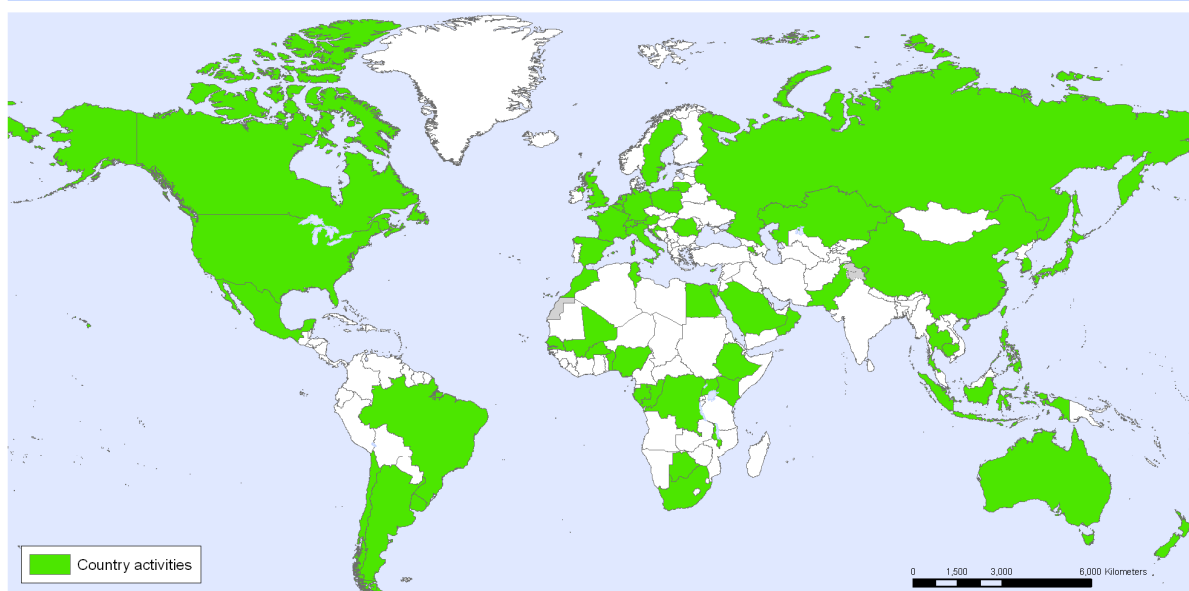
International Institute of Research in Ethics and Biomedicine (IIREB), Montreal, Canada, provides a special scholarship, open to postdoctoral students who will undertake projects that are directly related to research-priority area of the IIREB. Successful candidates upon selection by the Ethics and Health Unit can spend 8 weeks at the World Health Organization.

<http://www.iireb.org/en/index.cfm?pageid=concoursbourses>

The Carlo Schmid Programme, Bonn, Germany, provides highly-qualified applicants the opportunity to learn about the workings of an international administration. The Ethics and Health Unit are pleased to offer successful Carlo Schmid scholarship applicants the opportunity to intern at WHO.

<http://www.studienstiftung.de/carlo-schmid.html?&L=1>

Ethics and Health Unit engaging the world
Country activities, 2003 -2008



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the World Health Organization concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries. Dotted lines on maps represent approximate border lines for which there may not yet be full agreement.

Data Source: Ethics and Health Unit (ETH)
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World Health Organization



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