

## 2011 World Health Day – Network activities



### 1. World Health Day 2011

The WHD commemorates the start-up of the World Health Organization. Every year, the World Health Day is a day for creating awareness about a particular health issue, in every country in the world. This year's theme was combating drug resistance, a serious worldwide health concern also affecting Kenya.

### 2. EPN activities in Kenya

Given that EPN has been running a campaign on public awareness about antimicrobial resistance since 2009, we took this opportunity to spread our messages wider and join forces with national partners. EPN joined the national committee in Kenya that was in charge of the activities organized in the capital Nairobi.

The committee brought together representatives from the Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, Ministry of Medical Services, Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kenya Medical Training College, Pharmacy and Poisons Board, World Health Organization, International Organization of Migration, Save the Children, Kenya Red Cross, GSK, Cosmos, and Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network. The committee set up the activities held in Nairobi, developed messages and IEC materials, as well as promotional materials.

A joint press release was sent out by the main partners: Ministry of Public Health and Sanitation, International Organization for Migration, World Health Organization and Ecumenical Pharmaceutical Network. During the 3 days preceding the event, a radio message was broadcast on a local radio station and several representatives of the committee discussed the topic on radio and TV talk-shows.

On April 7<sup>th</sup>, a public awareness event was held at a health centre in Nairobi. The programme included speeches from the invited guests and entertainment relating to the topic. The activities were held between 9am and 1pm on April 7<sup>th</sup> and were open to all. Free health services such as testing for HIV, testing for malaria and treatment were carried out at the venue.



**The invited guests**

It is estimated that over 250 members of the public attended the day, along with about 80 invited guests such as the Director of Public Health and Sanitation, the WHO Country Representative and representatives from the Ministry of Medical Services and other government ministries, NGOs and civil society organizations. Although several media personnel attended the event, it was unfortunately not covered in the local news of the day, due to the high media attention for events at the ICC in The Hague, involving several Kenyan politicians.



### Impressions of the day

To increase awareness on the day's theme, promotional T-shirts, caps and banners were developed with messages on Fighting Drug Resistance. Brochures, fact sheets and folders were also developed and distributed during the function. EPN was involved in the preparation of all these materials. Independent from the national committee, EPN

also produced and distributed a comic strips booklet focusing on community action towards tackling antimicrobial resistance. The 16-page booklet consisted of 11 pages of comic strips, of which 6 were newly developed and 5 had been developed in 2009. During the development of this booklet, care was taken to bring across the messages in a clear and easy way, targeting the general public. About 400 copies were distributed.



**The entertainment group with promotional T-shirts**

During the event, it was clear that EPN's contribution to the day made a remarkable difference. Although the committee had prepared promotional materials and IEC materials, there were limited funds for production and most of these items were distributed only to health workers. The comic strips booklet that had been produced in sufficient numbers, was the only product that was being distributed to all members of the public attending the event. Many people in all age brackets were seen attentively reading their copy.





**A cross-section of the public reading the comic strips booklet**

For EPN, being part of this national organizing committee was a big step as it allowed us to increase our visibility through the event and gave us the opportunity to strengthen our partnerships with several departments of the local government and other relevant organizations. We are hopeful for more collaborations in the future.

### 3. Activities by CHAZ in Zambia



On April 7<sup>th</sup>, Christian Health Association of Zambia organized a big event to raise awareness about the threat, the causes and ways of combating antimicrobial resistance. In collaboration with EPN, CHAZ distributed many AMR materials during the event. Among those materials were the 10 comic strips on AMR, developed by EPN in 2009. CHAZ observed that women were more attracted to the AMR poster than men. The comic strips were extremely popular. In addition, Executive Director Karen Sichinga was interviewed by local TV and newspapers.

#### 4. Activities by CBC hospital in Cameroon

In April 2011, Baptist Hospital Banyo organized continuous education sessions on antimicrobial resistance to antibiotics. The hospital is an institution of the Cameroon Baptist Convention Health Board. Trainer Nshanji Emmanuel Nfor used the fact sheet developed by EPN and rated the training as very successful. The sessions also included theatre on some of the causes of antibiotic resistance.



**A play on prescribing practices**