

## Successful Pilot Project in Eastern Africa

### Seminar Organised in Co-operation between the GPHF and *Impact on Health* in Kenya / Training for Pharmacists from four Countries

„Drug Supply Management in Eastern Africa“: this was the title of the first-ever health-care project jointly organised by the German Pharma Health Fund and the development-aid organisation *Impact on Health* in Eastern Africa in March of this year. During a one-week seminar, 28 pharmacists from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and Sudan were trained in the field of drug-supply management. The objective of this training course was to provide them with state-of-the-art management methods in line with practical and local requirements, thus enabling local and regional drug-supply structures to be strengthened. One of the sponsors of this project was the Kenyan Ministry of Health.



Dr. Jähnke presented the certificates to the participants of the seminar. In the middle, Dr. Baya, Chief Pharmacist in the Kenyan Ministry of Health

This seminar, which took place in the Kenyan capital Nairobi, was subdivided into the three main modules drug quality and drug safety, supply and logistics, and management and health-care economics. 21 individual lectures dealt with all major sub-fields of drug-supply management in developing countries, from the definition of requirements through drug supply as part of public tenders to the appropriate disposal of drugs.

Further topical focuses were the growing problems resulting from drug counterfeits, the appropriate use of drug donations, and the various methods of financing drug supplies, with the presentation of practical examples being a top priority. Lecturers

included representatives of the *African Medical and*

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*Research Foundation* (AMREF), the relief organisation *Pharmacists with Frontiers* and the Kenyan Ministry of Health.

### Cross-border Exchange of Experience

For the participants, most of whom work in pharmacies operated by national health-care authorities, this seminar also represented an excellent opportunity to exchange professional experience with colleagues from other countries. In particular, the participants from Uganda gave a very positive feedback of the decentralised organisational structure of drug supply, driven by local requirements, which has been set up in their country.

Back in Germany, Dr Richard Jähnke, the GPHF pharmacist, who was the architect of the seminar concept and one of the lecturers in Kenya, was very confident that this kind of further-training seminar can make a valuable contribution to the improvement of drug supply in developing countries. “The important thing is not only to provide the developing countries with sufficient quantities of high-quality drugs but also to strengthen the pharmacists’ position within the health-care system of these countries. After all, it is the pharmacist who, in his capacity as an expert, is best able to judge the quality of the drugs supplied and to ensure an appropriate drug supply. By organising such seminars we can make a sustainable contribution to this.”

The GPHF is confident that similar seminars for the further training of pharmacists in developing countries will in future be organised with the support of local partners.



28 Pharmacists from four countries participated in the GPHF and Impact on Health seminar held in Kenya

## GPHF Seminar in Germany Scheduled for September

From September 19 through 24, 2004, the GPHF will organise the third seminar entitled "Management of Drug Supply in Developing Countries" in the Evangelische Akademie Arnoldshain im Taunus. This seminar particularly addresses pharmaceutical students from developing countries who are studying in Germany. Participation in this seminar which ends with a final examination is free of charge. Further details are available from the GPHF office directly (See details on last page).

## Members Decide on the Future GPHF Project Work

**Focus on the quality of drug supply in developing countries / Dr Jürgen Knackmuß (Merck) and Gerd Krüger (Schering) appointed as new members of the board of directors**

On the occasion of its Annual General Meeting, the GPHF defined the focal points of this year's project work. The central theme will be the improvement of the quality of drug supply in developing countries. The members agreed on the further development of the GPHF-Minilab® - designed to identify drug counterfeits, the continued co-ordination of drug donations by the GPHF initiative entitled "Co-ordination of drug donations in urgent humanitarian emergency situations", and the organisation of further-training seminars for pharmacists from developing countries. In addition, the GPHF will continue its long-standing project partnership with the World Health Organisation involving two health-care projects in Myanmar and Bhutan. The GPHF Annual General Meeting honoured the organisation's successful project work realised in 2003, and unanimously discharged the Board of Directors chaired by Dr Gabriele Küsters (Aventis).

Having presented new test methods for six antiretroviral agents at the end of last year, the GPHF-Minilab® project will focus this year on the development of identity tests for three additional anti-malaria agents (primaquine, amodiaquine and the combination of lumefantrine and artemether). These new tests are likely to be available during the second half of the year. This mobile and tropics-compatible laboratory will then be capable of identifying a total of 39 drug agents

In addition, the GPHF will continue the co-ordination of drug donations in urgent and large-

scale humanitarian emergency situations. Ministries and relief organisations involved in relief activities can thus submit a list of the drugs required to the GPHF which will then specifically inquire among its member companies whether they are in a position to donate the appropriate drugs. In order to match supply and demand for such drug donations, dedicated forms are available on the GPHF website so that quick, case-specific action will be ensured.

The training of pharmacists and/or pharmaceutical students from developing countries is the objective of the seminars the GPHF has been organising for two years now on the subject of management of drug supply in developing countries. During these one-week training courses, held both in developing countries and in Germany, experts from the fields of development aid, pharmaceutical industry and general industry present case studies and practice-oriented solutions for improving the quality of drug supply.



New in the GPHF board of directors: Dr. Jürgen Knackmuß, spokesman of Merck KGaA.

In co-operation with the World Health Organisation and the national health-care authorities, the GPHF will this year continue two projects initiated in Bhu-

tan and Myanmar. The objective of both projects is the diagnosis and therapy of parasitic infections, whilst at the same time further developing the infrastructure of the health-care systems in rural areas.

### Two New Board Members

The Annual General Meeting appointed two new members to the board of directors, Dr Jürgen Knackmuß, Group Spokesman of the Darmstadt-based Merck KgaA, and Gerd Krüger, Head of Central Sales of Schering AG in Berlin. The board membership of Michael Ostermann (Sanavita AG) who continues as an executive board member, was confirmed. Bernd Maehliß, the long-standing Treasurer of the GPHF, has retired from the board. His successor is Michael Schöttler (Bayer Health-Care AG) who has been a member of the board since last year.

Apart from the Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller (VFA, Association of Research-Based

Pharmaceutical Companies), the following companies are currently members of the GPHF: Altana Pharma, Astra Zeneca, Aventis, Bayer Health Care, Boehringer Ingelheim, Fatol Arzneimittel, Grünenthal, Input, Janssen Cilag, Madaus, Merck, Sanavita, Schering, Schwarz Pharma and Wyeth Pharma. With their regular donations, they help implement the project work of this non-profit association founded in 1985 (and thus celebrating its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary next year).



Gerd Krüger, head of Central Sales at Schering AG, is also a new member of the GPHF board of directors.



## GPHF Project in Bhutan: Survey on the Spreading of Worm Infections Concluded

### WHO recommends further measures to curb worm infections

Since last year, the GPHF has been supporting a project initiated by the World Health Organisation (WHO) in the Kingdom of Bhutan aimed at the diagnosis and the therapy of infections caused by parasites. A survey recently conducted in this Himalayan state covering the prevalence of worm infections in school-children showed that additional measures are urgently needed to cope with this serious health problem. Worm infections negatively affect in particular the intellectual development of children.

In Bhutan, especially children are affected by the widespread worm diseases

More than two billion people worldwide suffer from worm infections, and most of them live in developing countries. According to expert estimates, 800 million school-children alone are affected by this kind of disorder. Every year, over 130,000 people die of the consequences of these infections which thus constitute a serious problem for the health-care systems of the countries affected.

Previous surveys showed for Bhutan a prevalence of worm infections totalling 70 per cent. For approximately 15 years, a medical deworming therapy has been administered to all children up to 14 years as part of a national programme. The objective of the current survey covering a total of 266 school-children from five schools was the evalua-

tion of the efficiency of the measures implemented so far and the definition of recommendations for continuing this programme.

### Prevalence Continues to be High

The children examined still show relatively high prevalence rates of over 16 per cent, although in two of the five schools covered by the survey the deworming programme has been recently realised. In the opinion of the WHO experts, this means that the re-infection rate must be relatively high, and that in quite a number of cases, the drug had not been correctly administered. Accordingly, the prevalence in children whose treatment during the past months could be proven was only 4.8 per cent, whilst the children who had not received the treatment showed a prevalence of 24 per cent. A further, rather unexpected, result of this survey

was the high spreading of tapeworms in this age group totalling almost 7 per cent.

### **Six-Point Plan Set up by the WHO**

On the basis of the results of this survey, the WHO has defined a programme for Bhutan consisting of six points:

1. Continuing and intensifying the previous efforts with a view to further reducing infection rates.
2. Setting up a control and evaluation system for standardising the drug administration and the registration of the children already treated as well as the new-infection rate.
3. Further surveys concerning the infection rate of pregnant women with a view to possibly implementing a dedicated programme for this risk group.
4. Initiating measures to increase awareness of the benefits of hygiene and to improve the sanitary situation in order to prevent new and re-infections.
5. Conducting a dedicated survey on the spreading of tapeworm infections.
6. Curbing tapeworm infections by treating infected persons, improving the hygiene standards in pig breeding, more rigorously monitoring the slaughterhouse activities and sensitising the population on the dangers of eating improperly cooked beef and pork.

### **Thanks to Donors**

This year's request for donations has met with a very positive response. The GPHF would like to thank the following companies for their generous support of its project work:

- Altana Pharma
- Bayer HealthCare
- Boehringer Ingelheim
- Fatol Arzneimittel
- Janssen Cilag
- Merck
- Schering
- Schwarz Pharma
- Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller

The GPHF's special thanks go to Chiron Vaccines, Lilly Pharma, MSD and Serono: although not members of the GPHF, these companies are supporting this year's project work with a donation.

On the basis of the success of the previous years, the measures suggested represent, in the opinion of the WHO experts, an appropriate strategy for further reducing the prevalence of worm infections in Bhutan. This would make a valuable contribution for improving the health and the living standards of the population of the Kingdom. For this reason, the GPHF will continue to sponsor this projects in future, too.

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### **Six New Minilabs in Operation**

The new test methods for antiretroviral agents have further increased the demand for the GPHF-Minilab®. In the first few months of this year, the GPHF has shipped six additional minilabs for identifying counterfeit or substandard drugs to Indonesia, Myanmar and Nigeria. In total, approximately 140 of those mobile laboratory units are now in operation in over 30 countries worldwide. A further five minilabs are likely to be committed in Latin America at short notice.

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### **6,000 Visitors Within five Days**

In the space of only five days, approximately 6,000 visitors were recorded at the GPHF exhibition "Health Promotes Development". This exhibition, presenting the GPHF projects on a total of twelve information panels, was shown in the offices of Bayer AG in Leverkusen. Any companies/persons interested in hosting this exhibition are kindly requested to contact the GPHF office.

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