

GPHF NEWS

News of the German Pharma Health Fund e.V. (GPHF)



02/2005

The German Pharma Health Fund Celebrates its 20th Anniversary

Since 1985, the initiative of the research-based pharmaceutical companies has been launching and sponsoring a wealth of health-care projects in developing countries

In its capacity as a non-profit organisation, the GPHF association, which was founded in December 1985 in Frankfurt am Main, is unique insofar as it is a powerful alliance of pharmaceutical companies that have been striving for twenty years now to upgrade the health-care systems in developing countries by making generous donations. In Africa, Asia and Latin America, the German Pharma Health Fund - the GPHF - has been implementing a broad range of health-care projects in close and successful co-operation with numerous renowned national and international partners. In many cases, the special know-how of the GPHF members was directly drawn on for resolving health-care problems in developing countries.

The GPHF Minilab® trademark

An exemplary model for this approach is the GPHF Minilab®. This mobile and tropics-compatible compact laboratory, which was specifically developed by the GPHF for deployment in developing countries, has the capacity to quickly and reliably identify counterfeit drugs thanks to its dedicated test routine. This is particularly valuable in countries where unscrupulous profiteers can uninhibitedly counterfeit drugs because a country-wide drug-monitoring system is, at best, at its very beginning. Today, this miniature laboratory, supplied in two containers of the size of standard suitcases, is able to check as many as 40 drug agents. Currently, roughly 200 minilabs are operated in more than forty countries.

Long-standing co-operation with the WHO

Since 1987, the GPHF has been successfully co-operating with the World Health Organisation (WHO). The first-ever pilot project realised on Pemba island was followed by additional joint projects for diagnosing and treating parasitic tropical diseases in Tanzania, on the Seychelles islands, in Laos, Myanmar and in Bhutan. These projects primarily focussed on children who are particularly hit by infectious diseases. Apart from directly combating such diseases, these joint projects permanently aimed at developing an efficient health-care infrastructure for the fight against additional diseases, with a special focus on sustainability.

This successful partnership is clearly manifested in the "Official Relations" status that was bestowed by the WHO on the GPHF and which is granted to extremely few development-aid organisations.



For 20 years the GPHF has made valuable contributions to improving the health-care systems of developing countries.

Co-ordination of drug donations

Another exemplary model is the "co-ordination of drug donations in urgent humanitarian emergency situations" created by the GPHF in 2000. In urgent humanitarian emergency situations such as earthquakes or flood disasters, this initiative provides for the quick and reliable co-ordination of drug demand from catastrophe-hit regions and for drug donations from pharmaceutical companies. In frequent cases, urgently needed drugs were thus made available to the population affected by natural disasters at short notice.

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Co-operation with renowned development-aid organisations

In the course of the past two decades, the GPHF has been bundling its forces with numerous renowned development-aid organisations. Examples of this are the African Medical and Research Foundation (AMREF), the Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevölkerung (World Population Foundation of Germany), and the SOS-Kinderdörfer (SOS Children's Villages).

Training in drug management

In the past few years, a particular emphasis in the activities of the GPHF has been on the training seminars addressing pharmacology students which have been organised since 2002 under the auspices of the Federal Ministry of Health. These five-day events enjoying additional support by the University of Mainz and the Zentrallaboratorium Deutscher Apotheker (Central Laboratory of German Pharmacists) deal with the management of drug supply in the special context of developing countries.

Funding of the GPHF projects by its members' donations

All and any projects the GPHF has implemented so far have been exclusively funded by generous donations made by its members. The GPHF members include the following pharmaceutical companies: ALTANA Pharma AG, AstraZeneca GmbH, Bayer HealthCare AG, Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH, Fatol Arzneimittel GmbH, Grünenthal GmbH, Input GmbH, Janssen-Cilag GmbH, Madaus AG, Merck KGaA, Sanavita AG & Co., Sanofi-Aventis

Deutschland GmbH, Schering AG, and Schwarz Pharma AG, as well as the Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller e.V. (VFA, Association of Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies).

Brochure celebrating the "20th anniversary of the GPHF"



On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the GPHF has summarised all its projects realised during the past twenty years in a dedicated brochure. Ranging from the first-ever pilot projects implemented in Africa through the GPHF Minilab® and the co-ordination of drug donations, to the long-standing co-

operation with the World Health Organisation, all the activities of the past 20 years are presented in this brochure. This synopsis is complemented by statements from numerous project partners describing the co-operation with the GPHF from their point of view. This brochure can be requested free of charge from the GPHF office and can also be downloaded from the GPHF website at www.gphf.org.

Two new projects launched on the occasion of the GPHF anniversary

Support to the Komitee Ärzte für die Dritte Welt (Physicians for the Third World Committee) in India and to an Ethiopian hospital managed by an ecclesiastical organisation

On the occasion of its 20th anniversary, the GPHF board has resolved to sponsor two new relief projects. Both of them focus on direct medical help for destitute inhabitants of developing countries. The realisation of both projects is attributable to the GPHF members' and the VFA's (Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller, Association of Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies) willingness to make generous donations on the occasion of the GPHF's 20th anniversary.

For many years now, the Physicians for the Third World Committee has been providing free of charge valuable medical help in various countries of Africa, Asia and Central America. This humanitarian commitment is based on a simple yet exemplary idea: physicians from Germany volunteer to spend their holidays in regions stricken by natural disasters and poverty to provide medical help to the local population. A major focus of the committee's

work are the slums of the Indian metropolis of Calcutta, where the German relief organisation has been providing help to deprived population groups for many years now, i.e. to persons who otherwise would have no access at all to any health-care system whatsoever. Part of this valuable project is the so-called "Rolling Clinic Calcutta", a mobile health-care centre providing medical help to people living in the rural outskirts of the city.

Mobile Clinic helps the poorest of the poor

The Rolling Clinic Calcutta is staffed by two German physicians and a team of six local employees comprising nurses, translators and drivers. The financial support granted by the GPHF ensures the continuous operation of the rolling clinic, i.e. for purchasing drugs, for realising laboratory checks and for funding hospital stays, as well as for financing the salaries of the local project staff. A particular focus is on the medical treatment of children stricken with tuberculosis.

A hospital for 500,000 people

Similar problems to those in the slums of Calcutta also prevail in the Ethiopian Attat hospital located at a distance of 180 km in the Southwest of the capital Addis Ababa. The medical help provided by this hospital, which is managed by missionary nuns, focuses on the rural populace that has to travel a long way in order to receive medical treatment.

The hospital provides medical care for over 500,000 inhabitants of the region and is equipped with 73 beds, a maternity ward and a special division for patients stricken with malnutrition. In addition, the hospital provides medical care for people suffering from tuberculosis and leprosy. The support provided by the GPHF is to ensure the medical care of mothers and ne-



The well-known actress Maria Furtwängler is not only a qualified doctor of medicine but is also highly committed to a broad spectrum of relief activities in her capacity as the Chairwoman of the Komitee Ärzte für die Dritte Welt e.V. (Physicians for the Third World Committee). Here, she is examining a child in the slums of Calcutta.

wborn babies and the further implementation of a basic health-care programme provided by the hospital. In addition, the further training of the hospital employees is to be intensified. A further focus is the upgrading of the drinking water supply, to be achieved by the purchase of hand pumps. For the implementation of this project, the GPHF has teamed up with the Bischöfliche Hilfswerk Misereor and the Verein BILD hilft e.V.

Drug counterfeits

GPHF-Minilab[®]: Worldwide demand unabated

Over 30 compact laboratories supplied in 2005 / Training course organised in Australia

The worldwide demand for the GPHF Minilab[®] continues unabated. In 2005 alone, 34 orders were recorded by the GPHF. Worldwide, roughly 200 of these mobile laboratory units are operational now. The Minilab is an efficient means of quickly and reliably checking the quality of 40 drug agents that are most frequently used in developing countries.

The main operational areas of the Minilab are the countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, i.e. the regions that are most affected by drug counterfeits. For instance, many of these miniature laboratories are deployed in India, Vietnam, Nigeria, Ghana and Bolivia. Tanzania, a country equipped with 24 Minilabs, can even boast a country-wide drug-quality monitoring system. In addition, the Minilab is also an integral part of various projects realised by the World Health Organisation (WHO), such as the international Roll Back Malaria Programme.

Specialists from ten countries trained

The unabated demand for Minilab training courses clearly shows that drug counterfeits continue to be a pressing problem worldwide. Following the courses organised in the second half

of 2005 in Southeast Asia, the GPHF project manager Dr Richard Jähnke recently provided a Minilab training session in Australia. The participants included 16 representatives of drug-monitoring authorities of Asian-Pacific countries such as Papua New-Guinea, Samoa and Tonga.

This training was motivated by the Australian health-care authorities' strategy to establish an efficient early-warning system in the Western archipelago of the Pacific Ocean with the help of the Minilab. This system is to detect counterfeited drugs put on the region's markets which will then be further tested and thoroughly analysed in Australia's central drug laboratory. This programme is further evidence of the GPHF Minilab's[®] capacity for making valuable contributions to drug safety anywhere in the world.

GPHF continues its co-operation with the WHO in Bhutan

The pilot project addressing schoolchildren will be granted further support in 2006

In 2006, the GPHF will carry on its co-operation with the World Health Organisation (WHO) initiated in 1987. This decision was recently taken by the GPHF board.

The GPHF has been supporting the WHO in the fight against parasitic infections for almost fifteen years now. Following various projects in Tanzania, on the Seychelles island, in Laos and in Myanmar, both organisations are currently joining forces in successfully implementing a project in Bhutan that will continue until 2007. This programme focuses on medical help for schoolchildren that are particularly stricken by infections and are therefore significantly hampered in their physical and intellectual development.

In close co-operation with the national health-care authorities, the programme, scheduled to run until 2007, will address up to 180,000 children from 5 to 15 years of age. On the basis of epidemiological surveys, elementary schools will be the key com-

ponent and the heart of the programme since it is only there that children can be directly and constantly reached. At school, they will not only be informed and sensitised but they will also receive medical treatment. To this end, the initial project stage consisted of a thorough training of the teachers. Under the auspices of the national health-care authorities, they are now to hand out drugs to their pupils and make sure they are taken properly. In subsequent stages, this programme will be implemented on a country-wide level during the next two years.

Siegfried Knecht Appointed GPHF Chairman

Succeeding Michael Ostermann (Sanavita AG), Siegfried Knecht has been elected as the new managing board member of the GPHF. Knecht, who has been a GPHF board member since 2004, is the head of the International Relations and Country Co-ordination division of the Berlin-based Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller e.V.

The GPHF would like to thank the following companies for their generous support of its project work in its 25th year:

- ALTANA Pharma AG
- Bayer HealthCare AG
- Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH
- Fatol Arzneimittel GmbH
- GlaxoSmithKline GmbH & Co. KG
- Hoffmann-La Roche AG
- Janssen-Cilag GmbH
- Lilly Deutschland GmbH
- Merck KGaA
- MSD Sharpe & Dohme GmbH
- Procter & Gamble Pharmaceutical Germany GmbH
- Sanofi-Aventis Deutschland GmbH
- Sanavita AG
- Schering AG
- Schwarz Pharma AG
- Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller e.V.
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The current GPHF board (from left to right): Dr Jürgen Knackmuss (Merck KGaA), Michael Schoettler (Bayer HealthCare AG), Dr Thomas Weber (Sanofi-Aventis Deutschland GmbH), Dr Carola Fink-Anthe (Boehringer Ingelheim GmbH), Gerd Krüger (Schering AG) and Siegfried Knecht (Verband Forschender Arzneimittelhersteller e.V.)