



### Latest News

#### Swiss TPH Spring Symposium 2017

The Swiss TPH is pleased to announce its Spring Symposium 2017, “Evidence Meets Decision Makers: Better Use of Evidence for Better Health”. Public health experts, policy makers, statisticians, and students are invited to review and discuss the use of data and evidence by decision makers and how it can be improved in the health sector. The event takes place on 6 April in Basel, Switzerland.

For more information and registration please visit the event website:

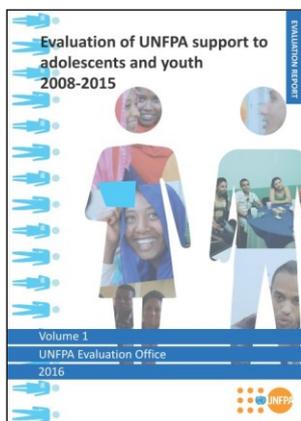
<http://www.swisstph.ch/news-events/symposia/spring-symposium-2017.html>



*Workshop in Côte d'Ivoire, PHISICC project (Swiss TPH)*

#### Swiss TPH evaluation approved by UNFPA

The UNFPA Executive Board approved the comprehensive evaluation report of its adolescent and youth programming from 2008 to 2015 conducted by the Swiss Centre for International Health (SCIH) of the Swiss TPH. Results of this evaluation inform the UNFPA Strategic Plan 2018-2021 with the aim of helping countries reach the Sustainable Development Goals for adolescents and youth.



The report concludes that UNFPA has significantly increased its priority, policy and programmatic focus of its support to adolescents and youth. Recommendations include further strategic positioning, strengthening efforts to reach vulnerable groups, improving the quality and sustainability of sexual and reproductive health services, and strengthening of monitoring and evaluation.

The exercise was conducted from 2014 to 2016 by the UNFPA Evaluation Office in collaboration with external evaluators and thematic experts from the Swiss TPH. The evaluation report and its recommendations received [positive feedback](#) by UNFPA management.

UNFPA's adolescent and youth programmes operate in over 120 countries, emphasising youth-friendly health services, comprehensive sexuality education, data generation and dissemination, participation and leadership, and policy and programming to advance the sexual and reproductive health and human rights of adolescents and youth. [Download the report](#)

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#### Clinical decision support for improved child health in Nigeria

In close partnership with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), SCIH successfully introduced a new methodology and computerised decision support system (CDSS) in health care facilities in Adamawa state, Nigeria. The CDSS builds on WHO's 'Integrated Management of Childhood Illness' (IMCI) concept but goes beyond the static paper version, including specific conditions such as eye or skin infections. Tablet computers run the application and provide real time diagnostic and therapeutic support to health care staff. The new approach and application was introduced in December 2016 by Dr Fatima, State Minister of



Health, and other senior officials from the Adamawa health care agency (see picture). Early results are promising: Antibiotic prescription was reduced substantially and preventive measures according to guidelines were implemented more thoroughly. [Read more](#)

## CLIMANDES-2: Developing user-tailored climate services in Peru

On-going changes in climate patterns are expected to put further strain on livelihoods in climate-vulnerable regions hindering global efforts for boosting poverty reduction, food security and the reduction of environmental liabilities as stipulated in the Agenda 2030. Against this background, the project [CLIMANDES-2](#), funded by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), aims at developing user-tailored climate services such as weather forecasts and early warning systems for the agricultural sector in the Andean region of Peru. Improved availability of and access to climate services for vulnerable populations is a key component for increasing climate resilience and, thus, strengthening agricultural production and food security. In December 2016, SCIH supported the Peruvian National Meteorological Service in the implementation of a socio-economic vulnerability assessment in the region of Puno through the design and coordination of a large-scale field survey. Results will inform decision-makers at different levels of the implementation process in order to improve the interface between climate service provision and its utilization.



*Data collection in the region of Puno, Peru (Swiss TPH)*

## International conference on integrated care held in Pristina

The Swiss TPH held a conference on “Moving towards integrated care” in Pristina, Kosovo on 16 February. It was organized in the frame of the “Accessible Quality Healthcare (AQH)” project that aims at improving performance of the primary healthcare system across 12 municipalities in Kosovo.

The conference, chaired by Manfred Zahorka, Head of SCIH’s Sexual and Reproductive Health Unit, discussed the concepts of integrated and people-centred care with national and local stakeholders including municipal authorities and Primary Health Care institutions in Kosovo. [Read more](#)



## OpenMEDIS mobile requests

In the frame of the SDC funded Health Promotion and System Strengthening (HPSS) project, a new mobile application was developed for improved management of clinical equipment. This new mobile feature complements the existing system for medical equipment management (openMEDIS). The mobile application was introduced to 144 health facility employees in the 7 districts of Dodoma region, Tanzania. The application allows clinical, administrative and technical staff to generate a request from their smartphones to signal the need of a repair, installation, maintenance or calibration for a given piece of medical equipment. This request is notified by email to their respective district technician who can then consult the request within openMEDIS for action.



*OpenMEDIS training in Tanzania (Swiss TPH)*

This process aims at saving time in raising requests, and also at centralising the flow of requests which will give valuable information to the Health Technology Management decision makers about what the beneficiaries need and when.

## Malaria trends in the Democratic Republic of Congo

SCIH conducted a large-scale assessment of trends in malaria morbidity in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) from 2005 to 2015 together with the National Malaria Control Program of Congo DRC, the Department of Health Information Systems and the Kinshasa School of Public Health.

Analysing routine data from health facilities in 90 sites across the country, the study observed a sharp increase of confirmed malaria cases after the introduction of rapid diagnostic tests which detect evidence of malaria parasites in human blood. Population coverage across DRC was improved through mass distribution of long-lasting insecticide treated bed nets. Presumptive malaria cases that were treated could



*Patient's record in a health centre in DRC (Swiss TPH)*

be reduced but malaria positivity rate revealed no declining tendency. SCIH therefore recommends continuing to support key interventions especially in provinces with limited coverage. [Read more](#)

## Publications

### Accountability in maternal and neonatal health (MNH)

In the framework of the DFID funded *Evidence for Action (E4A)* programme, SCIH led the publication of a recent journal series on the theme of accountability in maternal and neonatal health for the International Journal of Obstetrics and Gynecology (IJGO). The objective of this series was to clarify the complex terminology of accountability and its mechanisms. Although there is a heightened attention to accountability for the delivery of quality services, there is a lack of systematic study of the various types of accountability in MNH, how they have been operationalized in Sub-Saharan Africa, and the effects of applying different accountability mechanisms in a range of contexts.

All articles are available in open access, as well as the series [editorial](#) by Judith A Fortney. To read the articles, see section 'Evidence for Action' on the following [link](#).

### Household survey on drug prescribing patterns in Tajikistan

The Government of Tajikistan is reforming its health system to make access more equitable. Nonetheless, out-of-pocket expenditures remain a key modality for purchasing health care. Drugs remain a major driver of household expenditures for health. A household survey was conducted to investigate drug prescribing patterns at primary health care level as well as the related OPE. Please refer to: Donadel M, Karimova G, Nabiev R, Wyss K. 2016. Drug prescribing patterns at primary health care level and related out-of-pocket expenditures in Tajikistan. BMC Health Services Research, 16:556. <https://bmchealthservres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12913-016-1799-2>

### Knowledge diffusion, endogenous growth, and the costs of global climate policy

The role of knowledge diffusion for economic growth and for the costs of environmental regulation has received so far rather limited attention. This paper develops a multi-sector multi-region endogenous growth model to study the effects of knowledge accumulation and diffusion for growth and the costs of global climate policy. Please refer to: Bretschger L, Lechthaler F, Rausch S, Zhang L (2016). Knowledge Diffusion, Endogenous Growth, and the Costs of Global Climate Policy. European Economic Review. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.euroecorev.2016.11.012>

## Newly Awarded Projects

### PERFORM2scale

A major objective in global health is to achieve Universal Health Care (UHC) by 2030. The health workforce is critical element in achieving UHC. Within the Horizon 2020 funding scheme of the European Commission, the PERFORM2scale programme started in January 2017. Based on a highly successful predecessor programme, the initiative is implemented by a consortium of four European and three African members under the lead of the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine and includes the SCIH. The initiative is addressing health workforce performance improvement over the coming five years through enhanced management practices close to front-line workers. PERFORM2scale develops and evaluates a sustainable approach to scaling up a district level management strengthening intervention in different and changing contexts namely Ghana, Malawi and Uganda. Kaspar Wyss, Helen Prytherch and Filippo Lechthaler are managing the activities from SCIH's side. [Read more](#)



### Health Facility Assessments for the Global Fund

Programme and data quality should be evaluated through various methods. One key element of a sound monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy is a Health Facility Assessment (HFA). An HFA provides information for national and sub-regional planning, programme improvement, assurance purposes and validation of routine systems. Done systematically, an HFA can also show trends over time for key indicators. WHO guidance recommends countries to conduct an HFA every two years. SCIH has been awarded a



three-year Indefinite Quantity Contract with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria for the period from April 2016 to April 2019 for the implementation of the Global Fund's programme and data quality assurance and improvement approaches.

Within that long term agreement, SCIH has been selected to perform three HFAs in Vietnam, Congo and Côte d'Ivoire as well as a Special Study related to the identification of factors that contribute to favourable MDR-TB treatment outcomes in Eastern Europe/Central Asia (EECA). For the HFA more specifically, SCIH is working with our local partners, namely the Hanoi School of Public Health in Vietnam, the Institut Supérieur de Gestion in Congo Brazzaville and the National Public Health Institute in Côte d'Ivoire.

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## Development of a global midwifery accreditation programme

The UNFPA State of the World's Midwifery Report (2011) estimated a shortage of 350'000 midwives globally. To improve maternal and newborn health, more midwives are needed according to WHO, and their education has to be of highest quality to meet international standards. The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) has developed a series of internationally guiding key documents for the education, practice and regulation of midwifery care, constituting a very valuable and highly frequented source for midwifery education institutions, regulatory bodies and international organisations among others.

ICM is taking the initiative to support the development of an accreditation system to serve as a guideline for midwifery education programmes, aiming to meet international standards. An interdisciplinary team at the Swiss TPH (Axel Hoffmann, Leah F. Bohle, Goncalo Castro; complemented by an external midwifery expert) was awarded to carry out the assignment. The deliverables include the development of accreditation criteria, an accreditation scheme and an online platform. Experts from ICM will be trained on the accreditation process and the process will be tested in several countries prior to finalization of the accreditation package.



*Inception meeting in Basel in February with members of the ICM and Swiss TPH team*

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## Joining the SCIH

**Ingrid Mason** joined the SCIH as business development manager in October.

**Coline Koog** joined SCIH's Systems Performance and Monitoring Unit (SPMU) as junior procurement and supply manager based in Benin under the Global Fund LFA mandate in October.

**Lise Beck**, public health expert, joined the SCIH as project officer in the SPMU in October.

**Luis Segura**, senior public health specialist, joined the SCIH as project leader in the SPMU in October.

**Christelle Hostettler** joined the SCIH as administrative specialist in November.

**Hamadou Traoré** joined the SPMU as senior finance expert based in Burkina Faso under the Global Fund LFA mandate in January.

**Sandiakou Sissoko**, finance expert, and **Moustapha Traoré**, administrative and finance assistant, joined the SPMU under the Global Fund LFA mandate in January. Both are based in Mali.

**Greta Ross**, medical education expert, joined the Health Systems Support Unit (SYSU) as technical advisor in the framework of the Medical Education Project (MEP) in Tajikistan in February.

**Helena Greter** joined the SCIH as project associate in SYSU in February.

**Abdulqawi Ali Hassan Al-Harazi**, programmatic and M&E expert, and **Mohammed Ali Saeed Mohammed**, finance specialist, joined the SPMU under the Global Fund LFA mandate for Middle East Response (MER) in February. Both are based in Yemen.

Please join us in welcoming our new colleagues.

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