



Areas of Interest

Education of primary care providers and strengthening of healthcare management in Ukraine

The *Medical Education Development in Ukraine* project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has started on 1 January 2019 and is to improve the quality of the medical education system for primary healthcare staff (doctors and nurses) and to strengthen professional competences of healthcare managers. The objective is to improve the overall primary healthcare services provision in Ukraine and to have a positive impact on the health status of the population.

In March 2019, the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) between Swiss TPH, the Minister of Health Ulana Suprun and the head of the Swiss Collaboration Office Holder Tausch (see photo) completed the final stages prior to implementation. Further, MoUs between our partner medical universities and nursing schools and the project were signed. Swiss TPH has now a fully dedicated Ukrainian expert team in place to implement activities. [Read more about the project](#) and visit its [Facebook page](#).



Improving the learning environment for student nurses in Tajikistan: end of phase evaluation

Swiss TPH has been implementing SDC's Medical Education Reform project in Tajikistan, which supports the Government among else in its efforts to modernise nurse education. To assess the nursing student's perceptions of their learning environment, Swiss TPH applied the Dundee Ready Education Environment Measure (DREEM) instrument as a baseline in two nursing colleges in 2015 (629 participants: 72.8% female/27.2% male). Since then the nursing curriculum has been reformed to have a greater emphasis on clinical and communication skills as well as earlier patient exposure. Moreover, in collaboration with the Basel Institute of Nursing Science, the capacity of clinical tutors and the wider faculty has been built, and steps taken to institutionalise improvements in learning management, and other systems at the colleges. The DREEM was reapplied in late 2018 (609 participants: 80.9% female/19.1% male) to assess the change in perceptions over time. The results overall showed a positive evolution regarding the emphasis on practical learning, teachers' pedagogical skills, examination practices, the infrastructure, and support systems for stressed students. They also gave insight into which areas still needed more attention, notably, that there is still much emphasis on factual learning, while around a quarter of students continue to experience stress during their studies, and almost half of them experience feelings of loneliness and isolation. [Further information on the project](#)



Events

Joint Fundraising for ALMANACH with International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

The 'ALMANACH' (Algorithms for the MANagement of Acute Childhood illness) is an electronic version of the integrated diagnostic and treatment algorithms that focus on the well-being of the child by reducing illness, disability and mortality and promoting better thriving (Integrated Management of Childhood Illness) and is

now available on smartphones and tablets. Swiss TPH and ICRC joined forces 4 years ago to implement this tool in Adamawa State, Nigeria. The inception phase was a great accomplishment and the project is currently being scaled up to reach state-wide coverage by the end of 2020 (403 health facilities). Furthermore, ALMANACH has a great potential to be replicated in other regions. Due to this success, ICRC and Swiss TPH held a joint funding raising event with key donors in March, introducing them to the projects achievements and future planning. This approach with donors was a first for Swiss TPH. The event being well-attended and arousing considerable interest with the donors not only in this project but also in the work of Swiss TPH in general opens up the possibility of further such events being held in the future. [Learn more about ALMANACH](#)

International Foundation for Integrated Care Conference, April 2019.

SDC projects in Moldova, Romania and Kosovo implemented by Swiss TPH, presented their findings on promoting integrated people-centred approaches at the 2019 Conference in Spain. More than 1,400 renowned experts on Integrated Care attended this important annual event, which seeks to improve access to primary health and social care in rural areas.

The Romanian experience showed that public authority driven platforms for health and social care involving community nursing, social work and home based care can significantly improve the experience of patients and care providers as well as saving costs due to reduced need for emergency care services.

The “Healthy Life” project in Moldova explored the role of community medical and social assistance in managing chronic disease at community levels. Case management approaches are used for child protection and have a large potential to be adapted to people living with chronic conditions and elderly care. The project showed that better professional profiles do delineate a clearer role for community interventions for disease management and primary and secondary prevention.

The Kosovo “Accessible Quality Health” project presented its experience with piloting an integrated care programme for people over 65 years of age with Type 2 Diabetes. A key success factor has been the establishment of a municipality-level multi-sectoral working group, with representatives from Health Sector, Social Services, local Non-Government Organisations, the Patients' Rights Association, and the Association of Retirees. The development of a geriatric assessment tool and joint assessment in the patients' home by a nurse and social worker team lead to the use of individualised patient care plans and a monitoring and evaluation framework supported by a multi-sectoral primary health care team.

Conference presentations and materials will become available [here](#).

Newly Awarded Projects

Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance: Monitoring reviews in Chad and Mali

Gavi has been allocating funds to the Government of Chad's vaccination programme and the Government of Mali since 2010 and 2001 respectively. A programme capacity assessment undertaken in 2016 in both countries by Swiss TPH showed achievements and some bottlenecks in the implementation of this vaccine programme. This recently awarded monitoring review will assess the progress since 2016 by looking specifically at how the use and disbursement of Gavi funds is ensuring a cost effective programme.

Global Fund: Data Quality Review, DR Congo

As pre-qualified supplier for the implementation of the Global Fund's programmatic quality assurance and improvement approach since 2016, Swiss TPH has been awarded the Quality Assurance services provision for the Data Quality Review implemented by the Ministry of Health in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Unitaid: External Verification Agent for Coalition Plus HIV/Hepatitis C Virus (HCV)

Unitaid has been supporting the international collation of over 100 Community Based Organisations (Coalition Plus) working against AIDS and viral hepatitis in 40 countries since 2014. As part of the community approach, Coalition Plus advocates for people who are infected, affected or particularly vulnerable to HIV, and HCV to be systematically involved in the decision-making, implementation and evaluation of their health programmes. Swiss TPH will carry out quality financial project management audits, including controlling and checking mechanisms, and assess the risks that the project has been facing over the past years.

United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) : Supply Chain Tool Assessment

For more than a decade, UNICEF and WHO have jointly supported the necessary tools for monitoring at both central, district and regional levels for the immunisation supply chain and logistics hub that underpins the Expanded Programs on Immunisation (EPI). Swiss TPH has been mandated to review the current tools and make recommendations for new management tools.

Health promotion in Switzerland

Public Health Services and cantonal authorities in St. Gallen, Graubünden, Bern and Jura will implement a 4-year project on fall prevention. Chronically ill, especially people with multiple morbidities are at increased risk of falling. Through this project, multipliers from the entire supply chain of the cantons will be enabled to recognise, clarify and adequately treat fall risk patients and provide appropriate preventive measures. Health Promotion Switzerland (Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz) funds the project. Swiss TPH will be collaborating with the University of Basel to provide the process, outcome and impact evaluation during the entire project duration 2019-2022.

Better healthcare management of refugees using digital health technology tool (SysRef)

A new project (SysRef) was conceived and further elaborated with the Stanley Thomas Johnson Foundation to enhance the health of refugees in camps in Southern Chad, responding to the Foundation’s goal “to improve people’s quality of life”. SysRef will develop and pilot a digital clinical decision tool combined with an epidemiological surveillance system for improving the diagnosis and treatment of commonly found conditions such as upper respiratory tract infections, acute diarrheal diseases, malnutrition, malaria as well as mental illnesses such as post-traumatic stress syndrome. Close collaboration with UNHCR and the Ministry of Health in Chad started at the beginning of 2019 to introduce innovative and well-adapted new approaches for improved healthcare. It is anticipated that this development and research work will once validated be rolled out to other humanitarian settings.



Women and children waiting for consultation in a refugee camp in South Sudan (Photo: Barbara Matthys, Swiss TPH)

Evaluation: ‘Preventing the consequences of psychosocial stress among somatic patients in a hospital setting of Basel-Stadt’ (SomPsyNet)

Health Promotion Switzerland (“Gesundheitsförderung Schweiz”) mandated Swiss TPH with a process, outcome and impact evaluation over 4 years for the project ‘Preventing the consequences of psychosocial stress among somatic patients in a hospital setting of Basel-Stadt’ (SomPsyNet). The ultimate goal of the project is to improve the care and health of patients in the hospital settings in Basel and hence reduce treatment costs through targeted and better coordinated care. The SomPsyNet project is supported by the Canton of Basel-Stadt, the University Hospital Basel (project sponsor) and Health Promotion Switzerland. Swiss TPH will be monitoring and

assessing, through a formative process evaluation, enabling and disabling factors of identifying and treating somatic patients with psychosocial stress. Using the outcomes from the evaluation, Swiss TPH in collaboration with the University of Basel will examine the costs and benefits of coordinated care models, assess the impact on health and quality of life using patient treatment and insurance data. A result will be whether coordinated care models for somatic patients with psychosocial problems could be used in other settings in Switzerland.

Looking Forward

Value of Health Insurance Data from a Public Health Perspective: iHEA Congress July in Basel.

Swiss TPH will be hosting a pre-congress session at the international Health Economics Association (iHEA 13 to 17 July) with the aim to capture analytics requirements for the [openIMIS Initiative](#). openIMIS is an open source software that manages beneficiary, provider and payer data and is supported by a global Initiative established by the Swiss and German Development agencies. Health financing mechanisms (such as insurance systems) capture a wealth of data on individuals, their families, treatment plans and associated health care costs, prescribing behaviour and cost of service provision. The session will explore how health insurance data can be used to provide insights for public health system improvements, stimulate discussions around the quality and quantity of data captured, as well as data security issues and the challenges faced in sharing data for public health research. The results will contribute towards the development of an analytics module for the openIMIS software. Those interested are encouraged to sign up and join us in Basel at this congress. [Further information](#)



Publications

Improving the quality of primary healthcare through the reform of medical education in Tajikistan

Tajikistan inherited a highly centralized, hospital-centred health system from the Soviet Union. Following its collapse and the ensuing civil war, a poverty reduction programme was launched, which included a major health-sector reform (HSR). The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been supporting the Government of Tajikistan in its development of the health sector for over 20 years. This manuscript shares insights from the more specific task of reforming medical education, to create well-trained family doctors and nurses to deliver quality primary health care (PHC).

Prytherch H, Djamalova M, Rakhmatova N, Kasymova Z, Ross G, Yarbaeva S, Wyss K, 2018. Improving the quality of Primary Health Care through the reform of Medical Education in Tajikistan, http://www.euro.who.int/__data/assets/pdf_file/0006/389643/php-4-4-cs-lf2-eng.pdf?ua=1

Qualitative case study evaluations in South Sudan and Haiti

Fragility can have a negative effect on health systems and people's health, and poses considerable challenges for actors implementing health programmes. However, how such programmes, in turn, affect the overall fragility of a context is rarely considered. The Swiss Red Cross has been active in South Sudan and Haiti since 2008 and 2011, respectively, and commissioned a scoping study to shed new light on this issue within the frame of a learning process launched in 2015. Swiss TPH, swisspeace and Swiss Red Cross undertook this qualitative study design and data collection.

Erismann S, Gürlér S, Wieland V, Prytherch H, Künzli N, Utzinger J, Peterhans B, 2019. Addressing fragility through community-based health programmes: insights from two qualitative case study evaluations in South Sudan and Haiti, *Health Research Policy and Systems* 17:20, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0420-7>

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