



Latest News

Cross-cultural exchange on health system performance

Well-functioning health systems are fundamental for providing sustainable healthcare to populations in low- and middle-income countries. Performance assessment and monitoring in particular provide an important basis for analysing the impact of programmes on health systems strengthening. The Systems Performance and Monitoring Unit (SPMU) at Swiss TPH concentrates their efforts in these areas, with a focus on their role as Local Fund Agents (LFA) on behalf of the Global Fund. A workshop was held on 16 to 20 July in Basel, Switzerland, bringing together over 60 Swiss TPH employees including 37 from 14 countries in West and Central Africa and the Middle East. [Read more](#)



(Photo: Joachim Pelikan/Swiss TPH)

Improving adolescent health in the Great Lakes Region

A Regional Practitioners Conference on adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) was held in Kigali, Rwanda from 28 to 29 June to foster dialogue and reinforce partnership on SRHR of adolescents in the African Great Lakes region. The event was co-hosted by Swiss TPH, who presented their project Jeune S3. Young people comprise the majority of the population in the Great Lakes region (Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Burundi and Rwanda), yet they face barriers in accessing basic health services, information and other commodities related to sexual and reproductive health and rights. [Read more](#)



(Photo: Cordaid for Next Generation)

PHISICC - Redesigning health information systems to improve health outcomes

Earlier in June (4-8) PHISICC, a research project focused on supporting improved decision making at the primary healthcare level through better design paper-based health information system tools, ran a co-creation design workshop in Maputo, Mozambique under the leadership of Dr A Muloliwa (University of Lúrio) and Dr Graça Matsinhe (Ministry of Health). Co-creation is about designing together. Our collaborators from Côte d'Ivoire, Mozambique and Nigeria were all there; learning fast and exploring new design possibilities.

PHISICC mixes two very different disciplines – public health and design. This is challenging because everything is different, the approach, the thinking, and being a part of a creative process. To help navigate this new path, human-centred design experts from Sonder Design led this workshop and will continue to teach and guide the group as they progress through the next design iterations. [Read more](#)

Swiss TPH Spring Symposium on digital health

New technologies are progressively transforming health care delivery. The specific challenges of low and middle income countries with regards to digital health were discussed during the Spring Symposium that took place on 25 April in Basel. The event focused on benefits and challenges of information technologies to support better decisions in clinical practice and in the



Speakers Lise Beck, Luis Segura and Abdullahi Belel (Photos: Roland Schmid)

management of health systems. A total of 120 participants from various European and African countries discussed current trends, specific eHealth applications and the challenges of securing a sustainable operation and development of informatics applications in health services provision. The presentations of the ten speakers and further information material are all available online: <https://www.swisstph.ch/en/about/events/spring-symposium-2018/>

Completion of a large scale household survey on water quality in Niger

Niger is heavily affected by child malnutrition and associated morbidity and mortality. An important causative factor is water quality, sanitation and hygiene behaviour. The World Bank mandated SCIH together with its partner institution RISEAL-Niger to conduct a comprehensive investigation on water quality at source and household level, child diarrhoea and water-related household characteristics. The data will serve as the baseline for the evaluation of a World Bank-supported intervention promoting chlorination of drinking water. The survey consisted of a household questionnaire, and water testing in the field. More than 3,000 water samples were analysed for their E. coli and coliform contamination, and their chloride and nitrate content, showing that about 50% of all samples were contaminated with E. coli. Less than 1% of all samples at household level contained chlorine, despite 28% of the respondents reporting to know this water treatment method, and 15% reporting to apply it. [Link to project](#)



(Photo: Helena Greter/Swiss TPH)

Janssen mandate to explore future acceptance and uptake of the heterologous prime-boost vaccination regimen

SCIH's Health Systems Support Unit has been selected by the pharmaceutical company Janssen to assess stakeholders' acceptance and perceptions in relation to heterologous prime-boost regimens for vaccinations. This refers to the use of two different antigens in a specific sequence and dosage to induce improved immunogenicity and protection. The two antigens in a heterologous prime-boost combination may use different delivery systems or vectors thus minimising the chances of inhibition of the response to a second dose of the same vaccine, due to neutralizing antibodies against the first one.



The approach to the acceptance and perception assessment included a literature review, followed by exploratory interviews with a small number of key informants. Based on the insights obtained, an online survey and structured interviews among key stakeholders were carried out, with respondents mainly located in six purposively selected countries, namely USA, UK, Germany, Chile, South Africa and Tanzania. Main findings were presented at the 5th International One Health Congress in Canada in June by our collaborator Peter Steinmann.



Young innovators tackle Sustainable Development Goals

Anne Christine Heerdegen, PhD Candidate at Swiss TPH, was selected to attend the 2018 UNLEASH Innovation Lab in Singapore. 1,000 creative individuals from around the globe came together from 30 May to 6 June to explore real life challenges and create scalable solutions to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). [Read more](#)

Achieving Universal Health Coverage in Chad

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) is crucial to ensure no one is left behind in terms of accessing health services. In collaboration with other donors, the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation implements the PADS project in Chad to support the Ministry of Public Health in its ambition to make UHC a reality. Swiss TPH, a partner of the project, participated at a workshop in N'Djamena from 2 to 4 May to share experiences specifically on intersectoral synergies to help achieve UHC. [Read more](#)



Publications

The development of a global Midwifery Education Accreditation Programme

Many countries are responding to the global shortage of midwives by increasing the student intake to their midwifery schools. At the same time, attention must be paid to the quality of the education being provided. The methods used to assure quality of education include accreditation schemes, but capacity to implement such schemes is weak in many countries. Swiss TPH substantially contributed to an article that describes the process of developing and pilot testing the International Confederation of Midwives' Midwifery Education Accreditation Programme (ICM MEAP), based on global standards for midwifery education, and discusses the potential contribution it can make to building capacity and improving quality of care for mothers and their newborns. Nove A, Pairman S, Bohle L, Garg S, Moyo N, Michel-Schuldt M, Hoffmann A, Castro G, 2018. The development of a global Midwifery Education Accreditation Programme, *Global Health Action*, 11(1), <https://doi.org/10.1080/16549716.2018.1489604>

Association between overweight/obesity and anemia in early childhood in Tajikistan

Malnutrition in Tajikistan is still widespread and related to poor diets. A dietary diversity study in Tajikistan (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations [2015](#)) showed that current diets are high in sugars and saturated fats, and poor in mineral-rich fruits and vegetables, resulting in an increasing prevalence of diet-related problems such as obesity, hypertension, heart disease, and persistent under-nutrition. The aim of this study was to investigate the association between overweight/obesity and anaemia. Crivelli M, Wyss K, Grize L, Matthys B, Aebi T, Zemp E, 2018. Are overweight and obesity in children risk factors for anemia in early childhood? Results from a national nutrition survey in Tajikistan. *International Journal of Public Health*, 63 (4):491-499

Leprosy control in routine settings: a practical guide

In leprosy control there is a renewed interest in active case finding, which is increasingly being combined with chemoprophylactic interventions to try and reduce *M. leprae* transmission. The Leprosy Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (LPEP) programme, currently on-going in eight endemic countries, pilots the provision of single-dose rifampicin (SDR) to eligible contacts of leprosy patients. This practical guide aims to identify the minimal set of data required to appropriately document contact tracing activities and SDR administration for leprosy control in a routine setting. Richardus JH, Kasang C, Mieras L, Anand S, Bonenberger M, Ignotti E, Barth-Jaeggi T, Greter H, Tiwari A, Cavaliero A, Steinmann P, 2018. Minimal essential data to document contact tracing and single dose rifampicin (SDR) for leprosy control in routine settings: a practical guide. [Leprosy Review](#), 89:2-12.

Bottlenecks in the provision of antenatal care in Chad

Maternal health is a global concern for securing future economic and social development: worldwide, around 210 million women become pregnant. The study assesses antenatal care (ANC) coverage and analyses constraining factors for service delivery to rural settled and mobile populations in two districts in Chad to gain knowledge of the bottlenecks responsible for gaps in maternal health service delivery. Lechthaler F, Abakar M, Schelling E, Hattendorf J, Ouedrago B, Moto D, Zinsstag J, 2018. Bottlenecks in the provision of antenatal care: rural settled and mobile pastoralist communities in Chad. *TMIH*, 23(7) <https://doi.org/10.1111/tmi.13120>

Newly Awarded Projects

Medical education reform in Ukraine

Switzerland supports the reform of Ukraine's medical education with a new long term partnership initiative. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation entrusted the inception and the implementation of the four years project to Swiss TPH. The initiative started in April with a planning workshops and consultations at the Ministry of Health. The project had been designed in a way to directly support the reform of the primary care system. The main professional



groups targeted are family medicine physicians, nurses and health care managers. The wide range of topic area include the revision of curricula, accreditation and certification systems and innovative areas such as eLearning systems and the introduction of simulation based training centres.

UNITAID capacity assessment

SCIH has been awarded a one-year framework contract to support UNITAID at the stage of Grant Agreement Development and throughout grant implementation as and when required through capacity assessment of grantees.

Baseline survey on KABP relating to WASH amongst Rohingya refugees in Bangladesh

SCIH was mandated by UNICEF to conduct a baseline survey to determine the current status of knowledge, attitude, behaviours and practices (KABP) relating to water supply, sanitation services and hygiene amongst Rohingya refugees in Ukhiya and Teknaf upazilas of Cox's Bazar district in Bangladesh. The survey will include a large qualitative study and a household survey.

Evaluation of UNICEF intervention within the framework of the policy of free care in Niger

UNICEF assigned SCIH to evaluate UNICEF's intervention (mainly medicines donations) in support of the national policy of free healthcare. The evaluation will focus on i) the medical injections UNICEF has made in the health system and their traceability to the end user, and ii) on the strategic/programmatic choice operated by UNICEF by supporting the free of charge intervention instead of another or a mix of other interventions.

Joining the SCIH

Marie-Marthe Bulambo and **Rose Sifaroza** joined SCIH's Sexual and Reproductive Health Unit (SRHU) in April as technical assistants based in Bukavu, DRC under the Cordaid project Jeune S3.

Mahi Tall joined SCIH's Systems Performance and Monitoring Unit (SPMU) in April as senior finance expert based in Senegal under the Global Fund LFA mandate.

Dragos Dobre joined SCIH's Health Technology and Telemedicine Unit (HTTU) in May as IT systems architect.

Bruno Akpakpo joined the SPMU in July as Monitoring & Evaluation expert based in Benin under the Global Fund LFA mandate.

Please join us in welcoming our new colleagues.

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