

Summary of NIH International Highlights

November 2003 – January 2004

Dr. Elias Zerhouni, Director, NIH, met with a range of foreign groups between November and January, including a senior delegation from the Chinese Ministry of Education, the Secretary of Health and Director of the Medical Research Council of India, and the Israeli Ambassador to the United States.

Dr. Raynard Kington, Deputy Director, NIH, and Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, Acting Director, FIC, met with Canada's Minister of State for Public Health, Dr. Carolyn Bennett, on January 27 to discuss issues related to Canada's reorganization of its health agencies. Among her new duties, Dr. Bennett now oversees the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Drs. Kington and Hrynkow also met in late January with Dr. Anthony Mbewu, Executive Director for Research for the South African Medical Research Council.

Fogarty International Center (FIC)

On November 12, Dr. Gerald Keusch announced his resignation as FIC Director and NIH Associate Director for International Research to take on two new roles, Assistant Provost for Global Health at the Boston University Medical School and Associate Dean for Global Health at Boston University School of Public Health. Dr. Keusch joined NIH in October 1998 and led the Center into a range of new activities, while strengthening existing programs and relationships, all to the benefit of global health. NIH Director Dr. Elias Zerhouni has asked Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, FIC's Deputy Director, to serve as the FIC Acting Director until a new Director is named to continue the progress in advancing global health.

On November 19-21, Sir David Weatherall of Oxford University – in his capacity as a Fogarty Scholar – convened a conference on “New Directions for Sickle Cell Therapy in the Genome Era”. FIC co-hosted this conference with NHGRI, NHLBI, NIDDK, the NIH Office of Rare Diseases and the Foundation for the National Institutes of Health. Over 120 individuals from the United States and abroad attended the conference. Several sickle cell disease research priorities emerged including the need for an innovative, multidisciplinary approach. There was also much interest in enhancing international collaborations on this topic that could be of benefit to those in regions of the world where SCD occurs as well as to populations within the United States.

In December, FIC and NIEHS signed a second agreement to collaborate on a range of issues in FY 04, including support for a International Training in Environmental and Occupational Health (ITREOH) regional meeting in Latin America, development of environmental health faculty and a School of Public Health curriculum linking Russia and the Baltic countries, support for visiting fellows at NIH, grants writing workshops for developing country scientists, workshops for women in the Environmental Sciences, and in other areas.

On December 16, FIC and NICHD convened a Roundtable discussion on the Management and Monitoring of Grants in the Developing World. The purpose of the meeting was to bring together representatives from those ICs that support research activities in the developing world to discuss issues and solutions associated with research funding in countries with limited resources. Specifically, the discussions focused on problems and barriers as well as successes and best practices encountered in the administrative processes for funding and monitoring international research projects in developing countries. Dr. Karen Hofman, and Dr. Danuta Krotoski, Office of the Director, NICHD, led this effort, working closely with Bruce Butrum, FIC's Senior Grants Management Officer, IC International Representatives, and NIH program staff.

Mr. Robert Eiss, Senior Advisor for Strategic Initiatives is playing a lead role in the preparation of a WHO report on health research systems. The report, expected to be complete by October, will examine how countries develop knowledge and translate it into practice.

On January 5, FIC welcomed Mr. Richard Millstein, who will serve at FIC's Acting Deputy Director during the transition phase until a new FIC Director is named.

On November 26 – December 8, Dr. Keusch, Dr. Karen Hofman, Dr. Mark Miller and Mr. Rob Eiss participated in the Global Forum 7 on Health Research in Geneva. Dr. Keusch chaired the meeting of the Committee on Interested Parties, Center of Management of Intellectual Property Management, in addressing health development challenges.

On December 11, Dr. Keusch, Dr. George Rupp, President, Columbia University, and Dr. Hrynkow, FIC convened the second consultation on the role of the university in promoting global health. The meeting included senior academic administrators and technology transfer directors from a dozen large research universities. Discussion focused on the impact of the academic research environment and technology management policies on international health research, and how the academic sector might enhance its contribution to the development of technologies with primary application in the developing world. Ms. Nalini Anand is the point of contact for more information (496-1491).

On December 12, Drs. Keusch and Hrynkow led a consultation with external consultants to discuss FIC strategic directions and activities.

On November 19, Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, joined by Ms. Gayle Bernabe and representatives from NIAID and NCI, met with Taiwan's Minister of Health, CHEN Chien-Jen. The purpose of this meeting was to strengthen the collaboration between Taiwan's National Health Research Institutes (Taiwan's NIH) and NIH, particularly with respect to TB, SARS, cancer, asthma, and diabetes, and to discuss training opportunities for Taiwan scientists.

On November 26, Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, joined by Mr. Bruce Butrum, FIC's Chief Grants Management Officer, and Ms. Bernabe, met with representatives from the Embassy of Japan to follow up on discussions held in September 2003 with Dr. Zerhouni and Mr. Hosada, former Minister of Science and Technology Policy, regarding the GOJ's interest in developing a training program at NIH for Japanese program officers. A follow-on visit took place on December 10, between a delegation from the Japanese Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Technology (MEXT) and Dr. Hrynkow, Mr. Butrum, and Dr. Anthony Demsey, NIH/OD, to discuss the continued Japanese interest to develop a program officer training program at NIH

On January 8, Dr. Sharon Hrynkow convened a trans-NIH discussion to follow up the recent NIH/DHHS visit to Iceland. Representatives from NCI, NHLBI, NIAMS, OSP, OIR, NINDS, NIMH, NIA and others identified next steps, including a workshop in Iceland to explore expansion of existing activities on gene and environment interactions.

On December 5, Dr. Hrynkow met with the Chinese Vice-Minister of Health Professor Huang Jiefu, and his delegation. The discussions focused on SARS, HIV/AIDS, and other emerging infectious diseases, as well as an overview of NIH's broader research agenda with China. In addition, Vice-Minister Huang Jiefu met with NIH scientists from China to discuss the reorganization of China's biomedical research system.

On December 4, Dr. Pierce Gardner gave a presentation on "Funding and Training Opportunities" at the regional workshop to the Global Center of the United Negro College Fund in Washington, D.C.

Dr. Gardner attended the Director's Forum of the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars on December 11 in Washington, D.C., to hear a presentation provided by Ambassador Randall L. Tobias, U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator on "The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief: Stepping Up to the Global Challenge".

On December 12 Dr. Roderic Pettigrew, Director of NIBIB, and Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, met with Yoshiro Miki, Executive Director of the National Institutes of Radiological Sciences (NIRS), to discuss shared interests in bioimaging programs, the NIH priority and FIC training and research programs.

On December 15, Dr. Norka Ruiz Bravo, Deputy Director for Extramural Research, Dr. Tony Demsey, Senior Advisor for Policy, OER, and Mark Pineda, Program Officer for Western Europe, met with Dr. Ramon Marimon, Chair of the expert panel charged with conducting the mid-term review of the Sixth Framework Programme, the research program sponsored by the European Union. The meeting provided an opportunity to exchange views on approaches to funding of research.

On December 16 representatives from the Japanese International Science and Technology Exchange Center (JISTEC) met with Dr. Philip Chen, NIH OD, joined by Ms. Bernabe, to discuss foreign scientists' participation in the NIH's intramural labs.

Bilateral Activities

Africa

On November 17, Ms. Judy Levin, Program Officer for Africa and the Middle East, provided an overview of FIC research and training programs and funding opportunities to a delegation of health officials representing eight African countries and other regions working in the area of infectious diseases. Colleagues from NIAID, who provided an overview of NIAID's international activities and projects, joined Ms. Levin. The State Department's International Visitors Program sponsored the group's visit to NIH.

Nigeria

Also in November, Ms. Levin met with Prof. Gabriel Ogunmola, President of the Nigerian Academy of Science, to exchange ideas on how the Nigerian Academy might be able to assist Nigerian scientists seeking funding opportunities at NIH. Dr. Ogunmola's visit to NIH was also sponsored by the State Department.

The Americas

On December 17, Ms. Minerva Rojo, Director of FIC's Division of International Relations (DIR), met with Dr. Hugo Lujan, currently a visiting scientist at NIAID, to discuss Argentina's continuing interest in collaborating more closely with NIH. As a result of the discussion, Dr. Lujan volunteered to serve as the point of contact for Argentinian researchers interested in exploring training opportunities at NIH as well as for those returning home after completing their training in NIH's intramural labs.

Also in December, Ms. Rojo and colleagues from FIC's Division of International Training and Research (DITR) held discussions with representatives of Mexico's National Council for Science and Technology (CONACYT) to begin implementing last year's agreement between FIC and CONACYT to collaborate in funding eligible Mexican scientists participating in FIC's research and training programs, including the Health, Environment, and Economic Development (HEED) program, the Fogarty International Research Collaboration Award (FIRCA), the Global Health Research Initiative Program for New Foreign Investigators (GRIP), and the Brain Disorders program.

In November, Ms. Rojo, Mr. Kevin Bialy, and Ms. Sonja Madera of DIR held discussions with the State Department to begin preparations for the upcoming meeting of the U.S.-Chile Joint Commission for the Science and Technology (S&T) Agreement, scheduled to be hosted by State on January 20. The meeting is expected to focus on negotiations for renewing the current S&T agreement that expires in June 2004.

Asia and the Pacific

Korea

On November 13, Ms. Gayle Bernabe, NIAID/FIC fellow, staff from ORWH and NHLBI met with a group of Korean government officials to discuss women's health and policy issues and the Women's Health Initiative.

On December 8, Ms. Bernabe coordinated and participated in a meeting with representatives from CSR and a delegation from the Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare to discuss the scientific peer review system and the grants process.

Mongolia

On November 18, Ms. Minerva Rojo and Ms. Bernabe held very productive discussions with a Mongolian delegation of university presidents who were interested to learn more about opportunities to collaborate with NIH. Ms. Rojo provided the delegation with an overview of NIH and its budget process, FIC's research and training programs, and various grant/funding mechanisms available through the various ICs.

China

On November 25, Ms. Bernabe and colleagues from the Office of Technology Transfer, NIH, met with the National Academy of Educational Administration (NAEA), Chinese Ministry of Education, to discuss university research development and technology transfer.

Ms. Bernabe coordinated and participated in a meeting on December 15 between representatives from NIAID and the Chinese Ministry of Health. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss immunization programs and to learn more about NIAID's role in vaccine discovery, development, and evaluation.

Thailand

On December 10, Mark Pineda, Program Officer for Europe and South Asia, Ms. Gayle Bernabe, NIAID/FIC fellow, Dr. Tony Demsey, OER, and Dr. Jack Spiegel, OTT, met with representatives from the Thailand Research Fund to provide an overview of NIH research policy and programs, including the grants management process and technology transfer policies.

Middle East

Ms. Judy Levin, Program Officer for Africa and the Middle East, represented NIH at an interagency meeting on December 10 convened by the State Department (DOS) to debrief USG agencies on the visit of a DOS-led assessment team to Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria in October, 2003. The State Department advised the group that it is in the process of drafting bilateral S&T agreements to help facilitate future collaboration between U.S. scientists and their counterparts in each of the three countries.

Multilateral Activities

George Herrfurth, FIC/DIR Program Office for Multilateral Cooperation, along with colleagues from NICHD, represented NIH at a briefing arranged by the Department's Office of Global Health Affairs (OGHA) on November 10 for Dr. Gina Tambini, the new director of the Pan-American Health Organization's (PAHO) Division on Family and Community Health, to explore possible areas for further collaboration between PAHO and HHS agencies.

On January 8, Mr. Herrfurth, together with staff from NIAID, participated in a State Department-hosted meeting on interagency collaboration related to USG preparedness and response to the newest SARS outbreak in Asia to ensure that adequate/appropriate safeguards are in place for U.S. citizens who may be affected overseas.

Program Notes

FIC will support the establishment of chapters of the NIH alumni association in four sites: Brazil, Mexico, South Africa and India. FIC is working closely with the NIH Visiting Fellows Committee to launch this effort. It is expected that these associations will serve multiple purposes, including by providing support and networking opportunities for returning fellows back home.

Drs. Hrynkow and Bridbord, Director, Division of International Training and Research, FIC, along with NIAID and NICHD counterparts, participated in the DHHS effort to frame and review activities related to the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief.

On December 3-4, FIC co-hosted a joint network meeting of Maternal and Child Health and Population and Health training programs in Washington, DC. These programs are supported by FIC, NICHD and NIA. They support short-term and long-term training for developing country scientists. The joint network meeting was the first of its kind for these programs and succeeded in establishing closer links between the grantees in these related fields. Two special features of the meeting were a presentation from Robert Groves of Michigan about the recent IOM Report on Protection of Human Subjects in Social Science and Behavioral Research and a joint presentation from Barry Popkin and Burt Lumey about causes of obesity, including fetal antecedents and dietary patterns.

On December 16-17, FIC convened a group of 55 new and continuing investigators of the International Cooperative Biodiversity Groups and outside experts in intellectual property to present and analyze experiences and prototypes of consortium agreements that treat discovery, development and benefit sharing from biodiversity based drug discovery.

AIDS International Training and Research Program (AITRP) - Phase I Feasibility Study - The AITRP Feasibility Study has been finished and the final report is being written. Through preliminary interviews and web searches, we learned that AITRP PIs are prominent and established researchers primarily based in schools of public health or at medical schools, as are the AITRPs themselves. Trainees have come from over 75

countries, and represent most countries hit by the AIDS crisis. Prominent non-participants include Burkina Faso, Sierra Leone, Democratic Republic of Congo, Namibia, and Angola-war-torn African countries with high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Review of documents suggests that long-term trainees--that comprise half the trainee population--arrive in the US with high qualifications, generally receive master's degrees, and are productive researchers during their AITRP tenure. The AITRPs seem intensely focused on preventing "brain drain" and have developed unique training approaches and strategies to ensure that trainees return to their countries following their AITRP participation. Based on the collective opinion of a small number of respondents, it appears that AITRP is making a difference in the professional standing of the returning trainees. Project Lead: Dr. Linda Kupfer

International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) - FIC in partnership with NIEHS is reviewing the value of the collaboration between NIEHS and the IARC. The review will utilize a panel of experts and the FIC "Framework for Evaluation" to look at this collaboration.

Trainee Tracking: FIC is beginning Phase I of designing and piloting a web based trainee tracking and evaluation system for its international training programs. The system will be based on the USAID international trainee tracking system, "TraiNet", currently in use in 300 stations around the world.

Recent FIC Seminars and Talks

- November 14 – Mr. Donald Olson, Center for Neurobiology and Behavior, Columbia University, gave a presentation on "The Herald Wave of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic: Characterizing the Timing and Impact from Historical New York City Mortality"
- December 9 – Dr. Harold H. Schmitz, Director of Science at Mars, Inc., and Dr. Norman K. Hollenberg, Director of Radiology at Brigham and Women's Hospital, made a joint presentation on "Cocoa: Modern Science Investigates an Ancient Medicine"

Upcoming Events

- February 10 – FIC Advisory Board Meeting – POC Irene Edwards (x 62075)
- The next NIH IC International Representatives meeting is Tuesday, March 9, at 1:00 pm in the Stone House.
- Career Fair for Foreign Fellows at NIH. To be sponsored by NCI, NIEHS, FIC and others. Date TBD. POC Sonja Madera (6-4784)
- March 17, 10:00 to 12:00 in the Stone House, FIC will cosponsor a Roundtable with women scientists from the Middle East during Women's History Month. The Roundtable will give the NIH community the opportunity to learn about the unique experiences and challenges faced by Middle Eastern women scientists working at NIH.
- Stay tuned! FIC is updating its website.
- FIC is revising its extremely popular CD on grant writing. For comments on the CD or to receive copies, contact Bruce Butrum (x 61670)

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)

Bi-Monthly Update of International Activities

November 2003 – January 2004

India

On January 14, Drs. Stephen Straus and Jack Killen, and Karen Kun will meet with Shri JVR Rao, Secretary of Health, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India and Professor NK Ganguly, Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research concerning issues related to the scientific study of Indian systems of medicine/traditional medicine. Mark Pineda, FIC's program officer for South Asia and Western Europe, will also participate in the meeting.

MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATIONS

World Health Organization (WHO), Kobe Centre

Dr. Jack Killen and Karen Kun contributed a segment on structural indicators to the U.S. chapter of the WHO Global Atlas on Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine. The structural indicators segment includes information on CAM-related issues such as policy and legislation; accreditation, training and licensure; utilization rates; and survey data. The Global Atlas is currently under development by the WHO Kobe Centre in Kobe, Japan, and is to be published during 2004.

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO)/World Health Organization (WHO)

Dr. Jack Killen and Karen Kun participated in the December 15-17, 2003, Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine and National Health Systems Working Group meeting at PAHO Headquarters in Washington, DC. The Working Group discussed items including medicinal plants, the WHO Global Atlas of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative Medicine that is currently under development, and research needs and opportunities. NCCAM is a PAHO/WHO Collaborating Center for Traditional Medicine.

National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute (NHLBI)
Highlights of International Activities

PAHO - The Directors of NHLBI and PAHO signed a document for joint collaboration in cardiovascular disease prevention and control during the next five years. The major focus of joint activities in the area of heart disease includes the prevention of hypertension which builds on the Institute's Pan American Hypertension Initiative (PAHI) as well as the "Salud para su Corazón" program. An editorial by Drs. Mirta Roses-Periago and Claude Lenfant, and an article on the proposed PAHI Blood Pressure Measurement Standard for the Americas were published in English and in Spanish in the November issue of the Pan American Journal of Public Health. A prerelease in English and Spanish was also issued by the Journal. The editorial and article were developed as a result of previous PAHI meetings. A follow-up meeting of the nine PAHI partners is planned for Spring 2004.

AFGHANISTAN - The NHLBI has developed a proposal for training of Afghan health professionals in blood resources management and training. This is part of a DHHS US-Afghanistan initiative.

INDIA - A visit to India is being planned for the Chief of the Hematology Branch to explore collaborative opportunities in the area of hepatitis virus infections and post-hepatitis aplastic anemia as well as on viral hemorrhagic fevers, e.g. dengue.

IRAQ - Four proposals were submitted for consideration in the NIH response to the President's \$2.45 B supplemental fund to strengthen the Iraqi health research effort. The proposals concern collaborations on hypertension, asthma, stress in cardiovascular disease and gender differences in adaptive responses, and blood resources. Also, four NHLBI staff members expressed interest in assisting in health projects in Iraq in response to an earlier request from DHHS.

ITALY - A US-Italy Symposium on Biomarkers for the Metabolic Syndrome and Related Cardiovascular Diseases was held Oct. 20-22 at the University of Milan, Milan, Italy. An Italian scientist from the University of Milan worked at the National Jewish Medical and Research Center, Denver, in Colorado on joint pulmonary research July-September.

RUSSIA - A US-Russia Joint Symposium on the Role of Infections and Inflammatory Responses in Heart and Lung Diseases was held in Orlando, Florida in November.

TAIWAN - NHLBI has agreed to a Joint US-Taiwan Symposium on Childhood Asthma to be held in Taiwan. The dates are under consideration by both sides.

VIETNAM - A Vietnamese scientist will be working in the Hematology Branch, DIR, January - April in joint research on blood safety and bone marrow transplantation. Also, a three member group of scientists are scheduled to travel to Vietnam in March to present lectures at hematology and blood transfusion institutes in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, as well as at the Medical College in Hue.

National Institute of Child Health and Human Development

Highlights of International Activities

November 2003-January 2004

NIH Roundtable on Monitoring and Managing Grants in the Developing World.

Increasingly, NIH Institutes and Centers (ICs) are providing support to research institutions in developing countries either directly or through U.S.-based institutions to reduce existing and future global health disparities. On December 16, 2003, at the Lawton Chiles International Center on the NIH campus, the Fogarty International Center (FIC) and the NICHD hosted the first of an anticipated series of meetings to identify and address the challenges and potential solutions involved with funding and administering grants in developing countries. The meeting was planned in consultation with the NIH Office of Extramural Research and in cooperation with the NIH Extramural Program Management Committee. The ultimate goal of providing an informal, interactive forum for discussion of these topics is 1) to provide the NIH with guidance for the more effective administration of research projects in developing countries, and 2) to develop improved processes to help first-time and intermediate funding recipients in these areas to establish well-managed capacity-building infrastructures within their institutions to receive, administer, and monitor the funding activity. Over 40 participants from the NIH community, representing 15 different Institutes, Centers, and Offices, were in attendance.

NICHD Deputy Director Yvonne Maddox provided welcoming remarks at the meeting. Dr. Karen Hofman, Director, Division of Advanced Studies and Policy Analysis, FIC, also welcomed the group on behalf of Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, Acting Director, FIC. The meeting was co-chaired and planned by Dr. Hofman and Dr. Danuta Krotoski, Acting Associate Director for Prevention Research and International Programs (PRIP), NICHD, with assistance from FIC and NICHD staff, including Mr. Bruce Butrum, Chief, Grants Management Section, FIC, Dr. Barbara Sina, Program Officer, Division of International Training and Research, FIC, and Ms. Eva Sereghy, Program Analyst, PRIP, NICHD. Mr. Mark Richardson, an HHS Emerging Leaders Program Fellow at FIC, played a key role in the planning and coordination of this event. Other NICHD meeting participants included Dr. Anne Willoughby, Director, Center for Research for Mothers and Children (CRMC), Dr. Nancy Moss, Program Officer, CRMC, Dr. Susan Newcomer, Statistician, Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch, Center for Population Research (CPR), and Ms. Lisa Moeller, Grants Management Specialist, Grants Management Branch.

Africa

Second Ethiopian Workshop on HIV Disease Management. Dr. Lynne Mofenson, Branch Chief, Pediatric, Adolescent and Maternal AIDS Branch (PAMA), CRMC, was an invited speaker at “The Second Ethiopian Workshop on HIV Disease Management 2003” that was held October 28-31, 2003, in Addis Ababa to provide training to 60 Ethiopian physicians. The focus of the workshop was on “Antiretrovirals and Prevention of

Mother-to-Child Transmission.” Dr. Mofenson delivered talks on the epidemiology of and risk factors for mother-to-child HIV transmission; on transmission of HIV through breastfeeding; and on risk factors and prevention. She also provided an overview of past, current, and future clinical trials on prevention of mother –to-child HIV transmission; an overview of toxicity of antiretroviral drugs in pregnant women and their infants, and development of drug resistance. In addition, Dr. Mofenson provided consultation to the newly formed Society Against HIV/AIDS in Ethiopia, which is working to establish a prevention of mother- to-child transmission program in a rural area of northern Ethiopia.

World Health Organization’s Technical Advisory Group on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS in Durban, South Africa. The second formal meeting of the World Health Organization’s (WHO) Technical Advisory Group on Nutrition and HIV/AIDS (TAG) was held in Durban, South Africa, November 17-20, 2003. As a member of the Technical Advisory Group, Dr. Daniel Raiten, HSA, PRIP, participated in discussions of the final draft of a technical report that incorporated the first set of guidelines for the role of diet and nutrition in prevention, care, and treatment of HIV/AIDS in resource-limited settings. TAG members also discussed plans for a larger consultation in Africa in the fall 2004. The purpose of this consultation will be to 1) receive input from affected communities regarding the relevance of the TAG guidance document, and 2) identify strategies for implementing and developing an ethnocentric basic, clinical, and operational research agenda.

Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission-Plus Program Review in Lusaka, Zambia. Dr. Willoughby, Director, Center for Research for Mothers and Children, NICHD, participated in a review of the Mother-to-Child Transmission (MTCT) Plus program in Africa, November 18-20, 2003, in Lusaka, Zambia. This meeting provided a unique forum in which to share with the MTCT-Plus team the experience of NICHD and its supported researchers in the prevention of perinatal transmission of HIV. It also provided an opportunity to learn from the MTCT-Plus investigators information that could further enhance NICHD and NIH research programs in this area, both domestically and internationally.

The Americas

DHHS/PAHO Meeting on Family and Community Health Programs. On November 10, 2003, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Global Health Affairs organized a meeting with Dr. Gina Tambini, Director of the newly created Area on Family and Community Health at the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). Also in attendance were the heads of the following units now under Dr. Tambini’s purview: Child and Adolescent Health, Women and Maternal Health, Nutrition, Immunizations, and HIV/AIDS. The purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for PAHO and HHS agency participants to brief each other about their respective programs in family and community health. Dr. Danuta Krotoski, Acting Associate Director, PRIP, Dr. Daniel Raiten, HSA, PRIP, and Dr. Mariana Kastrinakis, Medical Officer, PAMA Branch, CRMC, provided brief overviews of NICHD activities relevant to PAHO interests. George Herrfurth, Program Officer for Multilateral

Programs, Fogarty International Center, coordinated the NIH presence at this meeting. Representatives from the Health Resources and Services Administration, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Administration for Children and Families, and the Administration on Aging also participated in the meeting, which was held at the Hubert H. Humphrey Building, Washington, D.C.

5th International Symposium on Pediatric AIDS, Sao Paolo, Brazil. Dr. Mofenson was also an invited plenary speaker at the 5th International Symposium on Pediatric AIDS, held in Sao Paolo, Brazil on November 12-14, 2003. Prior to the symposium, Dr. Mofenson attended a meeting in Sao Paolo to discuss the pediatric portion of the World Health Organization (WHO) draft guidelines for antiretroviral therapy in resource-limited settings with representatives from WHO and pediatricians from Brazil. Dr. Mofenson was a member of the Writing Committee that met in Paris, France, in October, 2003, to revise these interim guidelines. She was responsible for the development of the sections of the guidelines on pediatric therapy and treatment of women of childbearing age. The guidelines were finalized in late November and announced on World AIDS Day, December 1, 2003.

Latin American Genetics and Genomics meeting in Santiago, Chile. On November 20-21, 2003, Dr. James Hanson, Acting Director, Center for Developmental Biology and Perinatal Medicine, and Dr. Danuta Krotoski, Acting Associate Director, PRIP, participated in a Latin American Genetics and Genomics meeting in Santiago, Chile. With support from the Ford Foundation, the Department of Medical Genetics at the University of Chile organized the meeting to address the need, feasibility, and strategies for the establishment of a genetics research agenda to help improve the health of children in Latin America. In addition, the meeting provided guidance for the development of a pilot study of genetics literacy/education in Chile.

Third National Conference on HIV/AIDS in San Salvador, El Salvador. On World AIDS Day, Dr. Mofenson gave the opening plenary talk at the Third National Conference on HIV/AIDS in San Salvador, which was sponsored by the National Program on HIV/AIDS of the El Salvador Ministry of Health. Her presentation was on the “Present and Future of Mother-to-Child HIV Transmission Worldwide.”

8th World STI/AIDS Congress, Montevideo, Uruguay. Dr. Patricia Reichelderfer, Microbiologist, CPR, attended the 8th World STI/AIDS Congress that was held in Montevideo, Uruguay on December 2-5, 2003. She presented at a symposium on “Contraception and HIV-infected Women.”

Asia

Indo-U.S. Joint Program on Contraception and Reproductive Health Research. The sixth meeting of the Joint Working Group (JWG) responsible for scientific oversight of the Indo-U.S. Program on Contraception and Reproductive Health Research (CRHR) was held on October 21-22, 2003 at the National Institute of Immunology in New Delhi, India. This JWG meeting was preceded by a workshop entitled, “Male Contraception

Research and the Role of Men in Reproductive Health.” Institute staff who attended the JWG meeting and associated workshop included Dr. Yvonne Maddox, NICHD Deputy Director and the JWG co-chair; Dr. Danuta Krotoski, Acting Associate Director, OPRIP; Dr. Gabriel Bialy, Deputy Director, CPR; Dr. Daniel Raiten, HSA, PRIP, and Dr. Susan Newcomer, Statistician, DBSB, CPR. Dr. Newcomer was involved in the planning of the workshop and served as chair of two scientific panels. While in India, Drs. Maddox, Krotoski and Raiten, also attended a meeting of the U.S. and Indian Secretariats of the Indo-U.S. JWG on Maternal and Child Health and Human Development Research. The members of the Secretariats discussed areas of research priority for the Indian Medical Research Council, finalized plans for reviewing current applications, and considered the possibility of an interim workshop on “Risk Factors for Maternal Mortality and Morbidity in India.”

Europe

Initiative for Maternal Mortality Programme Assessment Meeting, London, U.K. Dr. Anne Willoughby, Director, CRMC, was invited to a meeting organized by the Initiative for Maternal Mortality Programme Assessment within the Department of International Development, London, United Kingdom, on October 28, 2003. The focus of meeting was on how to ensure that policy makers and program managers utilize rigorously-produced evidence to inform the development and implementation of effective and cost-effective research-based interventions in the developing world. Representatives from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, Save the Children, UNICEF, USAID, the Wellcome Trust, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization (WHO) also attended the meeting.

Meeting on Pediatric Tuberculosis, Paris, France. Dr. Leslie Serchuck, Medical Officer, PAMA, CRMC, NICHD, represented the NIH at a workshop in Paris, France, October 28-29, 2003, on childhood tuberculosis (TB). The purpose of the workshop was to develop a set of guidelines for the management of TB in children and youth that could be used by clinicians and national TB programs in low resource settings. Twenty experts from 11 countries (including South Africa, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Zambia, Ethiopia, Brazil, Russia, Oslo, France and the U.S.) participated in the meeting, which was sponsored by the CDC and included representatives from the International Union Against TB and Lung Diseases (IUATLD) and WHO.

Dr. Duane Alexander, Director, NICHD, attended the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Bioethics meeting in Strasbourg, France, December 1-7, 2003, as the U.S. observer, a role he has held for the past nine years.

Dr. Danuta Krotoski participated in a technical consultation in Geneva, Switzerland, November 25-27, 2003, to provide guidance to the WHO on a strategy to reduce low birth weight and promote optimal fetal growth in developing countries. The WHO intends to present a report on its Strategy for Optimal Fetal Outcomes at the May 2005 WHO General Assembly. Recommendations from this meeting, which include an increased emphasis on the maternal-fetal dyad, will be incorporated into this document.

The final report will provide both scientific background and intervention strategies that can be brought to the field and integrated with ongoing programs of interventions for neonatal and childcare.

While in Geneva (November 29-December 3, 2003), Dr. Krotoski also met with Dr. Jenny Pronczuk and Dr. Margaret Chan of the WHO International Programme on Chemical Safety and Protection of the Human Environment. They worked to finalize a Letter of Intent, submitted to the Gates Foundation-funded “Grand Challenges in Global Health” initiative, for the support of longitudinal studies on the impact of the environment on children in developing countries. These studies would parallel the U.S. National Children’s Study (NCS). Dr. Pronczuk and Dr. Krotoski serve as co-chairs of the International Interest Group of the NCS.

Dr. Krotoski also attended the 7th annual meeting of the Global Forum for Health Research on December 1-5, 2003, held in Geneva. This year’s meeting focused on economics and health policy, gender and health, social sciences research in developing countries, and research on violence and injuries. Two sessions were of particular interest to the NICHD: “Investing in Maternal Health” and “Poverty, Child Health and Nutrition.”

International Activities of the NIH Office of Technology Transfer (OTT)

November 2003-January 2004

- As part of NIH's mission of biomedical research to extend healthy life and reduce the burdens of illness, the Office of Technology Transfer (OTT) is currently working on ways to enhance the process of transferring technologies to developing countries to meet global health problems.
- In particular, OTT is identifying potential licensees or sublicensees in developing countries for Public Health Service technologies, based on the needs and capabilities of partner institutions in different countries in Latin America, Africa and Asia. This effort will help OTT/NIH meet an important part of its mission reducing disease burden that have a devastating effect particularly on people
- To that extent, OTT has developed an inventory of companies, universities, government organizations, foundations and different institutions involved in biotechnology, biomedical research where we understand that there is a need and potential to transfer different PHS technologies. This inventory includes more than 30 countries in the developing world.
- At OTT we have defined some priority countries (5-7) where we will start working first based on public health need but also the infrastructure and capabilities available.
- We have also identified international organizations, regional, other parts of USG, private foundations and professional societies that might have an interest on technology transfer issues as relates to health and that could possibly become partners of NIH in this endeavor.
- In the recent months OTT has transferred (or in the process of completing) the transfer of technologies and/or materials useful to reduce the burden of diseases such as malaria, dengue, meningitis, pertussis, HIV/AIDS to several companies, research institutions and public foundations in India, Mexico, and Sub-Saharan Africa. There has been an interest from some regional and international entities in technologies related to other chronic disorders.
- In the months of November and December, 2003 Dr. Mark Rohrbaugh, Director of OTT and Dr. Luis A. Salicrup, Senior Advisor for International Technology Transfer met with senior representatives of the Drugs for Neglected Diseases Initiative (DNDi). During these meetings, NIH and DNDi discussed areas of mutual interest and possible ways to work together facilitating the transfer of technologies related to Trypanosomiasis, Chagas Disease, and Leishmaniasis.
- In November 19, Dr. Salicrup presented a lecture on the International Activities at the NIH Office of Technology Transfer in a *Workshop and Retreat for Technology Managers on IPR and Public Private Partnerships* in Gual Pahari, India. The Patent Facilitating Centre (TIFAC) of the Indian Ministry of Science and Technology organized this workshop. Participants included researchers and technology managers from 25 different universities presented their current activities related to IPR and tech transfer.
- Dr. Salicrup represented OTT in the 17th Meeting of the Indo-US Vaccine Action Programme (VAP) Working Group, November 17-18 in New Delhi, India.

Besides discussing the different collaborative projects related to rotavirus clinical trials in India, Malaria, HIV/AIDS, Rabies, Leishmania, and Cancer, the group decided on the priorities for the next three years, which will include some technology transfer initiatives.

- Dr. Rohrbaugh represented HHS on in early December at a meeting in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in Paris, France. The U.S. Delegation supported efforts to increase innovation and introduction of new technologies from bench to bedside.
- Dr. Rohrbaugh represented OTT/NIH in December at a meeting at the World Health Organization related to Intellectual Property Rights Management in developing countries.
- Mr. Ted Roumel and Dr. Salicrup represented OTT on the meeting “Role of the University in Promoting International Health Research” held at the Fogarty International Center on December 11, 2003.