



# WFPHA: World Federation of Public Health Associations

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*Journal of Public Health Policy* (2008) **29**, 250–255. doi:10.1057/jphp.2008.8

## THE FEDERATION'S PAGES

### *Editorial Note*

As already envisaged in the third issue of 2007, the WFPHA initiated a comprehensive discussion process on its goals, strategies, and activities. Because of the vital importance of arriving at a realistic action plan very soon, we devote these pages exclusively to the reports of the Secretary General of the Federation. All member associations are invited and strongly urged to participate in this development and send their comments, questions, suggestions that we are willing to publish in the next issue of the Federations Pages.

### *The Column of the WFPHA Secretary General*

#### *Bellagio and Beyond: The WFPHA on the Move*

In early 2007, the World Federation of Public Health Associations (WFPHA) was fortunate to have its proposal for a planning retreat accepted by the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Study and Conference Center. This prestigious program provides *space for framing debates on world issues, for translating theory into action, and for devising creative responses to some of the most pressing issues of our time, especially those directed at alleviating poverty and vulnerability*. See <http://www.rockfound.org/bellagio/bellagio.shtml>

The Executive Board of the WFPHA convened a 4-day strategic planning workshop at the Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio Center. Twelve members of the Executive Board – five from developing countries – met to revise and update the strategic plan of the organization. Over the

course of the 4-day conference, the retreat facilitator, Colin Rorrie led the participants through an iterative process to outline mission, vision, values, goals, and strategies culminating in a concrete, actionable 5-year strategic plan. It is anticipated that this plan will be reviewed and updated annually.

The theme of the retreat was *Strengthening Public Health Associations across the Globe: Moving from Good to Great*. The framework of the session was based on the work of Jim Collins that has been published in *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't* (1), *Good to Great and the Social Sectors* (2), and *7 Measures of Success: What Remarkable Associations Do That Others Don't* (3), a publication resulting from the collaboration between Jim Collins and the international organization, the American Society of Association Executives. The retreat's major aims were to produce the following outcomes: A written 5-year strategic plan; a paper by Ilona Kickbusch, Ph.D., outlining the state of public health and opportunities for public health associations to contribute to public health; and a *Bellagio Declaration* documenting the Executive Board's commitments to improving the Federation's future by moving the strategic agenda forward. The WFPHA Strategic Plan 2007–2012 as approved by the General Assembly, May 2007, is as follows (see also the preview in *The Federation's Pages* no. 3, 2007):

The WFPHA is an international, nongovernmental, multi-professional, and civil society organization bringing together all people interested and active in safeguarding and promoting the public's health for professional exchange, collaboration, and action. Founded in 1967, it is the only worldwide professional society representing and serving the broad spectrum of public health, as distinct from single disciplines or occupations. The Federation's governing members are national and regional public health associations, and regional associations of school of public health presently numbering more than 70.

**Vision:**

To lead the quest for a healthy global society.

**Mission:**

WFPHA is an international nongovernmental, multi-professional and civil society organization, dedicated to promoting and protecting global public health.

**Values:**

*Right to Health:* We hold that health is a fundamental human right and a public good.

*Social Justice:* We advocate for equity and nondiscrimination and the elimination of health disparities.

*Diversity and Inclusion:* We promote a global public health perspective that includes diverse social and cultural backgrounds, ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability.

*Partnership:* We use partnership as the basis for mutual learning and capacity building.

*Ethical Conduct:* We believe in the ethical practice of public health for individuals and populations.

**Goals and Strategies:**

*Goal One: To develop and promote effective global policies to improve the health of populations.*

Strategies:

1. Develop a process for creating and prioritizing global health policy for action by WFPHA and other stakeholders.
2. Make efficient use of all methods to disseminate and advocate the policies of WFPHA.

*Goal Two: To advance public health practice, education/training, and research.*

Strategies:

1. Encourage all member associations to use the Knowledge Management for Public Health (KM4PH) network to exchange public health practices, knowledge, and research with a target of 50% by the end of 2008.
2. Develop a plan to provide ongoing education and training at regional and global levels.
3. Identify and implement approaches to enhance the use of *Journal of Public Health Policy*.
4. Continue organizing the World Congress on Public Health.

*Goal Three: To expand and strengthen internal and external partnerships.*

Strategies:

1. Establish formalized collaborations with international governmental and nongovernmental organizations, alliances, and United Nations bodies.

2. Develop a plan to increase member involvement in global public health initiatives and networking.

*Goal Four: To achieve and maintain an effective, efficient, and sustainable organization.*

Strategies:

1. Assess the current structures, policies, and functions of the WFPHA and make changes as dictated by the WFPHA strategic plan by July 2007.
2. Develop a business plan, including funding, for short-term and long-term sustainability of WFPHA by the end of 2007.
3. Review the current membership criteria and make recommendations.

*Goal Five: To support member associations in improving their infrastructure and organizational capacity.*

Strategies:

1. Develop a plan to assist members in achieving fiscal and organizational sustainability.
2. Obtain funding to assist member associations in strengthening their operational capacity.
3. Develop mechanisms to guide member associations in strengthening their policy making and advocacy capacity.

A follow-up meeting on the Action Plan to be derived from the adopted strategies will take place on February 7–10, 2008 in Geneva.

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*WFPHA News and Notes*

In keeping with the strategic plan (see above), a commitment to action and the commitment to move the organization forward, the Federation had a busy year. Some of the key 2007 successes include:

- (1) The WFPHA being recognized as a participating organization of the Group on Earth Observations (GEO) at the GEO-IV Plenary session in Cape Town, South Africa, on 28 November 2007. GEO is a voluntary partnership of governments and international organizations launched in response to calls for action by the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development and the G8 (Group of Eight). GEO recognizes that international collaboration is essential for exploiting the growing potential of Earth observations to support decision-making in an increasingly complex and environmentally stressed world. It provides a framework within which these partners can develop new projects and coordinate their strategies and investments. As of November 2007, GEO's members include 72 governments and the European Commission. In addition, 46 intergovernmental, international, and regional organizations with a mandate in Earth observation or related issues have been recognized as Participating Organizations.
- (2) The WFPHA has applied for membership in the Global Health Workforce Alliance (GHWA) and was invited to participate in a consultation process on the development of a Human Resources for Health (HRH) Roadmap. According to GHWA, the "Roadmap" *is envisaged as a tool that countries, regional bodies, international development partners, civil society, and the private sector may refer to in support of activities and plans that address the HRH crisis*. The GHWA is a partnership dedicated to identifying and implementing solutions to the health workforce crisis. It brings together a variety of actors, including national governments, civil society, finance institutions, workers, international agencies, academic institutions, and professional associations.
- (3) The WFPHA convened an Invitational Forum on the Global Public Health Workforce in November 2007 as part of the American Public Health Association Annual meeting. The "forum whitepaper" was developed by Drs. Fitzhugh Mullan and Sebyle Frehyot of George Washington University School of Public Health & Health Sciences. These efforts are part of a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to conduct work around New Public Health Competencies for the Global Workforce.
- (4) The WFPHA has agreed to be a co-sponsor of the World Justice Project, an American Bar Association (ABA) effort that seeks to strengthen the rule of law internationally by reaching out to other

professions beyond the justice sector to engage them in a global collaboration. One of the Project's activities this upcoming year is to hold multi-disciplinary meetings on four continents. The next meetings will be held in Accra, Ghana January 9–10, 2008. The Federation will be represented by our member associations in Ethiopia and Mozambique.

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2. Collins J. *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*. Colorado: Jim Collins; 2005.
3. ASAE. *7 Measures of Success: What Remarkable Associations Do That Others Don't*. Washington, DC; The Center for Association Leadership; 2006.