Ethiopian Ministry of Health hugely committed to addressing neglected tropical diseases

The November 2012 SCI Newsletter highlighted the different projects across Ethiopia that SCI is involved with. Due to the immense commitment the Ethiopian Government has demonstrated to controlling neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) SCI has made Ethiopia a priority for 2013.

SCI has currently committed £567,000 of funds for the projects in Ethiopia during 2013. SCI hopes to raise approximately $1 million (£650,000) per year for Ethiopia to secure continuing treatment for schistosomiasis and soil-transmitted helminths (STH) year on year going forward, assuming further donations of PZQ (3 million tablets or more per year) continue to be forthcoming from the WHO.

While progress is painstaking, things are moving forward steadily.

- **Federal Ministry of Health (FMoH)**

  **NTD Master Plan Launch** - The FMoH is hosting an NTD scientific symposium on 12-14 June 2013, during which the NTD Master Plan will be launched. The symposium will include representations from each of the Ethiopian health regions. SCI has committed $50,000 to support the meeting and the Centre for Neglected Tropical Diseases Liverpool (CNTD) will also contribute.

  This symposium represents a huge step in Ethiopian Government advocacy and commitment to NTD control.

- **Plans for distribution of 3.5m PZQ and 6.8m MEB** - All the praziquantel (PZQ) donated by Merck KgA through the WHO has left the central health stores in Addis Ababa and is out in the districts awaiting delivery to schools. Mr. Oumer (Ethiopia’s National NTD Coordinator) is collecting budgets and workplans from each Health Region. MDA will take place once the budgets and plans have been approved. The Somali Region has taken the initiative and held a planning meeting in early April.

- **Nala Foundation - Tigray**

  The NGO Nala Foundation has agreed to assist Tigray Region with delivery of their share of the PZQ. SCI has signed a collaborative agreement with Nala and provided $100,000 for the distribution of the drugs. Activities will start in June, leading to 500,000 treatments.

- **Zege Peninsula**

  An updated Project Proposal and budget drafted by Dr Michael French (SCI) and Dr Michael Hauser (OneHealth Foundation) has been provided to Mamo Kacha Foundation (MKF) for submission to the relevant Ethiopian authorities for approval. Imperial College has signed a contract with MKF. Once all the plans have official approval SCI will transfer funds to MKF. In the meantime, microscopes and equipment are on order. We hope to treat the 15,000 people in Zege as a demonstration pilot project before the end of May 2013.

- **Ethiopian Health and Nutrition Research Institute (EHNRI)**

  The proposal for nationwide mapping of schistosomiasis and STHs is with EHNRI’s scientific and ethical review board. The board should approve the proposal at their meeting in April 2013. A contract between Imperial College and EHNRI is in progress. In the meantime, microscopes and equipment are on order, combined in the same order as for the Zege Peninsula. EHNRI are also mapping lymphatic filariasis (LF) distribution with our partners at Liverpool CNTD.

- **Southern Nations, Nationalities, and Peoples’ Region (SNNPR)**

  The proposal for implementation of school health and nutrition, and mapping in SNNPR is with EHNRI’s scientific and ethical review board. The Partnership for Child Development (PCD, Imperial College) are co-ordinating this project and SCI is collaborating to share expertise particularly in mapping as required.
Be part of something HUGE - Live Below the Line 2013

Join thousands of people across the UK, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the USA this April-May (29-3) and take action against extreme poverty? Live Below the Line (LBL) for SCI to raise money and awareness of the 1 billion people infected with neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) living below the poverty line everyday.

In 2011, 10,000 people worldwide took the Live Below the Line challenge and raised over £1 million. Last year 15,000 people took part. Will you make 2013 even more successful? Join in!

Thirty-four brave individuals lived below the line for SCI last year, raising an amazing £20,363! These funds were used to treat over 50,000 children in Senegal for schisto and soil-transmitted helminths (STH), protecting them from the poverty maintaining effects these diseases have for another year. This year funds will be directed to Ethiopia (see article on p.1)

The LBL 2013’s official challenge days are 29 April to 3 May this year, but you can take the challenge anytime before 30 June. Join us and ensure we can continue to protect these children and many more for another year, giving them a real chance of lifting themselves out of poverty.

This year you can help make an even bigger impact. Join us and get your friends, family and colleagues to either take part or sponsor you. Take action against extreme poverty - raise money to stop NTDs devastating the health, education and employment prospects of over one billion of the world’s poorest people, maintaining them in poverty.

If you do not want to take the challenge yourself, then perhaps you could sponsor Professor Fenwick? We would greatly appreciate your support - https://www.livebelowtheline.com/me/afenwick.

You can make a difference!

Can you ‘Live Below the Line’?
£1 of food a day, for 5 days

Sign up today!

www.livebelowtheline.com/uk-sci-imperial

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Do your everyday online shopping and raise money for SCI with Give as you Live

Give as you Live helps you raise money for ‘Imperial College Trust Schistosomiasis Control Initiative’ at no cost to you - every time you shop online. Thousands of brands including Amazon, John Lewis, M&S and Sainsbury’s will donate a percentage of every purchase you make to SCI. Start raising money today. To find out more click here.
SCI’S PLANS AND NEW ACTIVITIES (MARCH 2013-OCTOBER 2013)

_Côte d’Ivoire_: The programme is continuing apace and is adequately funded by DFID.

_Mauritania_: An additional $50,000 has been earmarked for future MDA. We are awaiting the budget from Mauritania’s Ministry of Health.

_Mozambique_: A shortfall has been identified in the Cabo del Gado region preventing full coverage being achieved. SCI has committed $100,000 to ensure full MDA coverage is achieved during 2013.

_Senegal_: We have partnered with The Child Fund (which is supported by USAID). By pooling resources an expansion of coverage will be achieved more effectively and rapidly. SCI will be contributing $100,000.

_Tanzania_: MDA has been slower than expected. Following a meeting of stakeholders in March we hope to see treatment taking place during the coming months.

_Uganda_: 230,000 school aged children and adults need treatment across the 150 inhabited Ugandan Islands. SCI will be providing £50,000 to pay for treatment. Treatment will take place in the third quarter of 2013. SCI has also financed a monitoring and evaluation programme to determine and address any issues of low coverage.

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Three must read reports for the NTD community!

Combating neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) has seen "unprecedented progress", according to a WHO report on NTDs published on 16 January 2013, one year after a group of public and private partners came together to address NTDs and endorsed The London Declaration on NTDs, an unprecedented pledge to work toward the World Health Organization’s (WHO) goal of controlling or eliminating 10 NTDs by 2020.

The progress of the last year is detailed in a new report, ‘From Promises to Progress: First Anniversary Report on the London Declaration on NTDs’. This report was issued in coordination with a second progress report from WHO, ‘Sustaining the drive to overcome the global impact of neglected tropical diseases’, documenting the specific efforts of partners and affected countries in the past two years, which have helped to fast-track many programs in order to achieve measurable impact.

To mark the important anniversary, the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases, in partnership with Hudson Institute’s Center for Science in Public Policy, also released a new report, “Social and Economic Impact Review on Neglected Tropical Diseases”, highlighting the crucial links between NTDs and broader economic and societal consequences.

Director-General of WHO, Dr. Margaret Chan, commended the progress, and noted: “The challenge now is to strengthen capacity of national disease programmes in endemic countries and streamline supply chains to get the drugs to the people who need them, when they need them.” Organisations like SCI are key to achieving this. WHO says it hopes that treatment for schistosomiasis (bilharzia) would reach 235 million people in the next five years.
COUNTRY FOCUS: Yemen update - National Campaign March 2013

The Yemen Schistosomiasis Control Project launched a national campaign between the 10th - 13th March 2013. This campaign, financed by The World Bank with SCI providing technical assistance with mapping, monitoring and evaluation of health impact, will contribute to the programme’s aims of the elimination of schistosomiasis-related morbidity in the entire country. This is the first phase of the second operational year, 2012-2013.

The Campaign delivered mass drug treatment to children, over 6 years of age, and adults in infected areas (with the exception of pregnant women). It targeted 160 districts (of a country total of 334) in 10 governorates of Yemen (Sana’a, Taiz, Hajjah, Ibb, Dhamar, 'Amran, Al-Mahwit, Reema, Saada, and Lahaj). The number of people targeted for treatment was 11,030,760, almost half of the Yemeni population.

School-aged children (both those enrolled and non-enrolled in school) and adults in the community were targeted through fixed teams (operating from schools and health facilities) and mobile teams (operating from health centres, mosques, markets, village leaders’ houses, etc.).

This will be followed up with a second phase of the campaign that will target 2 million people in the remaining 9 endemic governorates in mid-April 2013.

Social mobilization plays a key role in the success of such campaigns. A combination of banners, posters, leaflets, brochures, TV & radio program broadcasting was used. Songs and drama have also been produced to attract community members who are illiterate. The campaign was launched under the auspice of the Yemen Prime Minister. The Minister of Health and Lahj Governor attended the launch alongside representatives from International agencies, the UN, local authority officials, and the SCI.

“Our client in Yemen will embark on its biggest ever nationwide distribution campaign reaching more than 11 million people in a few days. This is even bigger than polio immunization campaigns historically known to be the most successful in Yemen. This is also being done at a lower cost for drug distribution than internationally implemented in other countries. This capacity developed could not have been possible without SCI. Also, the cost savings allowed the client to expand the deworming program for soil-transmitted helminths in new areas in non-Schisto provinces.” Dr Alaa Hamed, Senior Health Specialist, The World Bank.

Governorates (in blue) to be treated in March 2013 as part of Campaign 1, Operational Year 2012-2013.
SCI’s Director receives Honorary Membership of the American Society of Tropical Medicine Hygiene (ASTMH)

Professor Alan Fenwick was presented with Honorary Membership of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) during the Plenary session of the 61st Annual meeting of the ASTMH on Sunday 11 November 2012.

Professor Stephen Hoffman, Past President of the ASTMH, read out at the ceremony, “many consider Alan to have contributed more to the control of schistosomiasis in modern times than any single living individual.” He went on to say, “Through his tenacity, his interpersonal skills, insightful planning, and magnificent force of will, Alan has achieved extraordinary reductions in the prevalence and intensity of schistosomiasis….. In Uganda over 4 million children and adults have been treated by the Ministry of Health’s Ugandan Bilharzia and Worm Control Programme. The percentage of children with moderate and heavy infections has been reduced from 26.1% to below 3%.” He finished off by saying “SCI operations have touched the lives of over 100 million children in Africa through Alan’s careful planning and disease control management acumen”. To read more click here.

SCIENCE FACES

Lord Andrew Stone of Blackheath

Lord Andrew Stone of Blackheath, who has pioneered the on-line health care charity DIPEx, to disseminate research into personal experiences of health and illness, has kindly agreed to join the SCI Advisory Board and will be present in June at our next Board meeting.

Dr. Jacqueline Leslie

Dr. Jacqueline Leslie joined the SCI in January 2009, as a Health Economist. Her work has focused on looking at the cost of schistosomiasis and integrated NTD programmes, as well as contributing to the monitoring and coverage surveys for the ICOSA project. In addition, Jackie has managed a review of the attributes that make for effective behaviour change communication strategies in social marketing health programmes. Her most recent publication can be found in International Health (March 2013 5), or you can request a copy from a.wilhelme@imperial.ac.uk.

Jackie is leaving to work in consultancy focusing on markets for the poor.

Up and coming positions at SCI

Keep an eye out for the following positions which will be being advertised on the SCI website over the next few months:

- Health Economist
- Monitoring and Evaluation Senior Manager
- Francophone Programme Manager
- Anglophone Programme Manager
Michael Campbell climbed Kilimanjaro raising £443 for SCI

On 22 September 2012, after a 6 day trek, Michael reached the summit of Kilimanjaro. “It was tough, and I didn't think I'd make it many times on the 14 hour summit day, but the thought of the money I had raised and could raise for a charity that does work as important as SCI truly kept me going. I joined an expedition with nine others, all climbing for different reasons. Here’s a photo of me on the summit”.

Corporate Charity Sponsor Kemp Little LLP’s fundraising finale

An enormous thanks to the amazing fundraising efforts throughout the year of Kemp Little LLP’s Partners and employees! Kemp Little brought their fundraising efforts for SCI to an impressive close singing Christmas carols under the famous Norwegian Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square on 22 December. Kemp Little LLP raised over £14,000 to ensure over 25,000 children on The Islands of Uganda receive treatment for schisto and STH.

Oxford Global Health Group (OGHG) Ceilidh and raised £455

Celebrating a belated Burns Night, the OGHG organised a Ceilidh (a Scottish barn dance) on 1 February 2013. The fabulous Oxford University Ceilidh Band and their caller Merrick, provided the live music for the 70 or so revellers. The evening drew to a close with a vigorous ‘Strip the Willow’ as the grand finale!

£50,000 raised for Ethiopia through the BigGive Christmas Challenge 2012

Thank you to everyone who came out in support of SCI and battled to make a donation through the BigGive Christmas Challenge between 6–8 December 2012. Thanks to your determination the target £50,000 was reached and 1.5 million Ethiopian children will receive the medication they so desperately need during May 2013.

Neglected Tropical Diseases featured on Red Nose Day March 2013

Steve Jones, host of ‘Let’s Dance’ traveled to Malawi to learn about NTDs first hand. SCI assisted Comic Relief in organising his visit. During the Red Nose Day tv show Steve Jones presented two short videos from his journey that showcased the horrific impact of NTDs and introduced this issue of poverty to millions of viewers across the UK. Click here to watch the short videos.