

To mark WHO's 60th anniversary, the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* plans a volume of papers from the Public Health Classics series. One of the most popular sections of the journal, Public Health Classics publishes commentaries by

experts who analyse groundbreaking papers in the context of public health today.

The Nairobi debate in February this year was organized by WHO's Department of Knowledge Management and Sharing with funding from

the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases.

The Global Health Histories' web site gives an overview of these and other upcoming events: [http://www.who.int/global\\_health\\_histories/en/](http://www.who.int/global_health_histories/en/) ■

## Recent news from WHO

- Governments, donors and international agencies, at a meeting in Geneva on 28 February, agreed that implementation of innovative, tailored approaches can eradicate the **polio virus** in Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan, the only countries where polio remains endemic. Personal envoys of heads of the four governments presented these new plans for the final assault on these last remaining strongholds of the virus. WHO warned that if additional funds of US\$ 575 million are not found for 2007–2008, the global polio eradication programme will be forced to cancel key activities as early as May 2007.
- A new WHO report shows that **neurological disorders**, ranging from epilepsy to Alzheimer disease, from stroke to headache, affect up to one billion people worldwide. *Neurological disorders: public health challenges*, which was released on 27 February, reveals that of the one billion people affected 50 million suffer from epilepsy and 24 million from Alzheimer and other dementias. Read the report at: [http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/en](http://www.who.int/mental_health/en)
- Dr Margaret Chan, Director-General, named her **senior team** to lead the clusters of departments at WHO headquarters on 22 February. Chan announced a revised structure including three new clusters to re-align WHO's structure with the six core areas: health development, health security, health systems capacity, evidence and information, partnership, and performance. Dr Ala Alwan was named assistant director-general of a new cluster for Health Action in Crises, which was formerly a WHO programme. Dr Tim Evans was named assistant director-general of a new cluster for Information, Evidence and Research. Dr Anders Nordström was named assistant director-general of a new Health Systems and Services cluster. Chan made two additional assistant director-general appointments: Dr Hiroki Nakatani to head the HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria cluster, and Ms Namita Pradhan to head the General Management cluster. Chan also appointed Mr Denis Aitken as representative of the Director-General for a new programme on Partnerships and UN Reform.
- A meeting of experts held 14 to 16 February at WHO to discuss advances in **pandemic influenza vaccine development**, reported encouraging progress. More than 40 clinical trials have been completed or are ongoing. Sixteen manufacturers from 10 countries are developing prototype pandemic influenza vaccines to protect humans against H5N1 avian influenza virus. Five of them are also involved in the development of vaccines against other avian viruses (H9N2, H5N2, and H5N3).

For more about these and other WHO news items please see: <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/events/2007/en/index.html>



WHO/J. M. Giboux

Volunteers in Pakistan are trained at a polio clinic to administer the oral vaccine to children in refugee camps. Pakistan is one of the four remaining polio endemic countries.



WHO

Rotary International President Bill Boyd, Director of US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Dr Julie Gerberding, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Kul Gautam and WHO Director-General Dr Margaret Chan at 28 February meeting in Geneva.



WHO/G. Smyth

Researcher developing a vaccine candidate for avian flu in the United Kingdom.