

In this month's *Bulletin*

Call for papers: upcoming theme issues

The *Bulletin* welcomes contributions to two theme issues to be published in 2008: one on childhood pneumonia and the other on ethics in public health. Brian M Greenwood et al. (502) write that very little research has been done on childhood pneumonia, apart from trials of pneumococcal and *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) vaccines. In another editorial, Carl H Coleman et al. (504) discuss how the ethics theme issue should help policy-makers incorporate ethics into health policies.

In the news (505–510)

Claire Keeton reports from South Africa on innovative programmes that are helping men to change sexist, risky and violent behaviours, which harm the health and well-being of women and the communities in which they live. May Meleigy writes that the United Arab Emirates (UAE) has set a trend for controlling malaria in WHO's Eastern Mediterranean Region and describes how other countries are making progress, despite pockets of resistance. In this month's interview, Dr Robert Ridley talks about a new direction for TDR, the Special Programme for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases.

Hib vaccine in Kenya (511–518)

Angela Oloo Akumu et al. found that the Hib vaccine was highly effective after it was introduced into routine immunization services in Kenya in 2001, but that cutting the vaccine's price would provide greater incentives for governments to broaden coverage.

China continues to battle schistosomiasis (519–526)

Schistosomiasis remains of considerable public health concern in China. Julie Balen et al. estimated the prevalence of

Schistosoma japonicum in human and buffalo populations in the Dongting Lake region using national data from the periodic epidemiological survey of 2004. They found a significant reduction in the number of humans infected since the previous survey in 1995 and concluded that this was partly due to large-scale chemotherapy campaigns.

How Brazil reduced smoking (527–534)

Although Brazil is the world's second-largest producer of tobacco, the country has a strong record of initiatives aimed at combating smoking. Carlos Augusto Monteiro et al. evaluated smoking indicators in the adult population and found that the prevalence of smoking had fallen from 34% in 1989 to 22.4% in 2003. They found that reductions in the prevalence and intensity of smoking were greater among males, younger age groups and higher socioeconomic strata and they attribute these reductions to Brazil's tobacco control efforts.

Respiratory infections in Guatemala (535–544)

Nigel Bruce et al. evaluated methods used in the first randomized exposure study of pollution indoors and respiratory effects (RESPIRE), a controlled trial testing the impact of reduced indoor air pollution on acute lower respiratory infections among children aged 18 months or younger in rural Guatemala. They found that the combination of case-finding methods achieved good sensitivity and specificity, but intervention cases had greater likelihood of reaching the physician and being investigated.

A safe, low-cost method to fight lymphatic filariasis (545–549)

A global effort is under way to eliminate the parasitic disease lymphatic filariasis. Patrick Lammie et al. discuss the methods used to control the disease, in

particular fortifying salt with diethyl-carbamazine (DEC) as a safe, low-cost and effective strategy to eliminate transmission of lymphatic filariasis. The authors argue that elimination programmes would benefit from fortifying salt with DEC instead of mass administration of tablets, and they discuss why DEC-fortified salt remains an underutilized intervention.

Lessons from the field

Kevin Miles et al. (555–560) argue that the use of non-medical staff should be considered when rolling out antiretroviral therapy (ART), taking the experience of Botswana as an example. Henk van Berg et al. (561–567) evaluate a project that uses farmer field schools to teach farmers how to manage vector-borne diseases and to improve rice yields. Joseph Kwong-Leung Yu et al. (550–554) describe how clinical staff at four facilities in Malawi attempted to trace patients who were lost to follow up after they started ART. The authors concluded that ART clinics in poor countries should ensure that patients' addresses are correct and that they should trace such patients promptly and routinely.

How effective are global health partnerships? (568–569)

A large group of donor and recipient countries, international organizations and civil society organizations agreed, in the Paris Declaration of March 2005, for the first time to set targets for aid effectiveness and indicators to measure progress. Nicolaus Lorenz argues that with more than 70 global health partnerships in existence today, the need for these partnerships to work effectively is all the more pressing. ■