Sabin Vaccine Institute Presents Its 2009 Annual Report

The Sabin Vaccine Institute is proud to present its 2009 Annual Report: Working Across the Globe to End Needless Suffering.

Inside, we have chronicled the numerous milestones and achievements reached by the Institute in 2009. You will learn more about Sabin's mission and impact across the globe and discover ways in which you can support our scientific approach to eliminating the devastating impact of infectious and neglected tropical diseases.

[Read the 2009 Annual Report: Working Across the Globe to End Needless Suffering.]

Sabin Vaccine Institute Co-Convenes Smallpox Eradication Symposium

Sabin, along with Brazil's Fundação Oswaldo Cruz (FIOCRUZ) and Fogarty International Center of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) convened the SEC 2010 Symposium on Smallpox Eradication in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from August 24-27, 2010. Over 260 delegates from 34 countries attended the four day meeting hosted on the historic campus of FIOCRUZ.

"Smallpox Eradication after 30 Years: Lessons, Legacies and Innovations" attracted many well known global health figures, including Drs. D.A. Henderson, who led the World Health Organization's (WHO) global smallpox eradication campaign from 1966-1977; Tadataka Yamada, President of the Global Health Program at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; and Mirta Roses, Director of the Pan American Health Organization. In addition, senior level ministry of health participants from various countries attended including Health Ministers María Luisa Ávila of Costa Rica and José Temporão of Brazil.

The primary aim of the symposium was to allow those who had worked on the smallpox eradication campaign to share their experiences with the younger global health generation in hopes of enlightening those currently working in the field on eradication campaigns.

At the conclusion of the symposium, a statement was released outlining the developments of the meeting as well as a call for a renewed look at the previous WHO decision to postpone the destruction of remaining smallpox virus currently held in only two laboratories (Russia and USA) globally.

A special symposium supplement containing all of the papers from the meeting will be published in VACCINE. Sabin Executive Vice President Dr. Ciro de Quadros will be co-editor of this publication together with symposium co-chairs Dr. Joel Bremen of the NIH and

Global Network Showcased on the CBS Super Screen in Times Square
A 15 second promotion developed by the Global Network is currently being shown on the CBS Super Screen in New York City's Times Square. The video will run for 15 seconds of every hour, 18 hours a day until October 18, 2010--receiving in excess of 1.5 million viewers daily.

Take a look at the video and join Global Network Ambassador Alyssa Milano in raising awareness about the devastating impact of neglected tropical diseases by texting "LIFE" to 30644 to learn more about how you can help End the Neglect.

Dr. Peter Hotez' PLoS Papers Ranked in the Top 5 of Most Downloaded

Dr. Neeraj Mistry Appointed Managing Director of Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases

Dr. Paulo Gadelha, President of FIOCRUZ.

For more information, click here.

Sabin Vaccine Development Begins Preparation of Regulatory Filings in Brazil and the United States for Na-GST-1

Sabin Vaccine Development has begun filing an Investigational New Drug ("IND") application to begin clinical testing of the Na-GST-1/Alhydrogel® vaccine in Brazil for hookworm disease.

The filing of the IND follows a successful Pre-IND meeting with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), during which guidance was provided to Sabin regarding the basis of approval and the product development plan. The FDA will review the IND application for safety to assure that research subjects will not be subjected to unreasonable risk. Once the application is approved, the vaccine will enter a Phase 1 trial in healthy adults to test safety and immunogenicity followed by trials in children and then a Phase 2 proof-of-principle study in children. Sabin has also filed a Clinical Trial Application in Brazil, where the Institute will be conducting the clinical trials.

With an estimated 32 million cases of human hookworm infection, Brazil has the sixth largest hookworm disease burden in the world and the largest number of cases in the Americas, accounting for almost two-thirds of the hookworm cases in the Western Hemisphere. An effective vaccine could prevent the 65,000 deaths and the annual loss of up to 22 million disability adjusted life years (DALYs) attributable to hookworm. Until now, no vaccine based on Na-GST-1 has been tested in humans.

Dr. Neeraj Mistry was appointed Managing Director of the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases on July 19, 2010. Dr. Mistry will focus his talents on advocacy and resource mobilization efforts, creatively bringing together like minded groups and individuals for the common purpose of controlling and eliminating neglected tropical diseases (NTDs).

A South African national and public health physician, Dr. Mistry is experienced in global health policy and programming, having worked in both developing and developed countries and the public and private sectors in clinical practice, health policy and social development. In the past year, he provided consulting services to international organizations including the World Health Organization, the United Kingdom's Department for International Development and The Global Fund, prior to which he was a senior vice president in APCO Worldwide's Washington, DC
his editorials ranking in the top five most downloaded editorials.

To date, Dr. Hotez' top five ranked PLoS articles have been downloaded over 37,000 times.

Ministers of Finance from Liberia and Sierra Leone Participate in Peer Exchange

Officials from the ministries of finance of Liberia and Sierra Leone met with their Ugandan counterparts during a SIF organized peer exchanged which took place August 26-28, 2010.

The participants learned about Uganda's performance-based budgeting system and how applying a similar performance-based budgeting approach in Liberia and Sierra Leone will help the latter two countries make stronger investment cases for their national immunization program budgets.

Sabin in the News

Dr. Peter Hotez wrote about neglected infections of poverty in the U.S. and the global burden of neglected tropical diseases in a two-part blog series for Tavis Smiley.

Dr. Ciro de Quadros asks “What's Possible for Global Health?” in a blog post for ONE.

The Rising Nepal interviewed Dr. de Quadros about the office.

"We are delighted that Dr. Mistry is joining the Global Network, where he will bring intellectual leadership and creative thinking to the development of the program's important mission and goals," said Michael W. Marine, CEO of the Sabin Vaccine Institute. "His exceptional research, planning and evaluation skills, as well as his extensive international experience, will help the Global Network achieve its overarching goal of bringing new resources to the fight against NTDs in endemic countries around the world."

Read the full press release.

SIF and the World Health Organization Host the DR Congo's Second Parliamentary Briefing in Kinshasa

On June 16, 2010, SIF and the World Health Organization (WHO) hosted the DR Congo's second parliamentary briefing on sustainable health immunization in Kinshasa, DR Congo.

Participants included members of DR Congo's national assembly; officials from the Ministries of Health, Finance, Budget and Planning; and representatives from USAID, World Bank, UNICEF and WHO. As a result of the parliamentary briefing, the assembly's finance and economy committee will help the national expanded program on immunization (EPI) team prepare the proposed 2011 EPI budget.

Global Network, Fundación Mundo Sano and Instituto de Investigaciones en Enfermedades Tropicales Partner to Tackle NTDs in Argentina

The Global Network announced a partnership with Fundación Mundo Sano and Instituto de Investigaciones en Enfermedades Tropicales in May 2010 to fight Strongyloides and other soil-transmitted helminths in Argentina through a new pilot project in the Department of Oran, Province of Salta, Argentina. The pilot project will serve as a starting point for the implementation of community-based interventions to address the public health burden of neglected tropical diseases (NTDs) on poor populations in Argentina.

Strongyloides is one of the most neglected of the NTDs, particularly in Latin America where 200 million people suffer from these diseases. Children are especially susceptible - 30 percent of preschool age children in the region are affected by Strongyloides, and more than 50 percent are infected by hookworm. Strongyloides is rarely targeted for community based interventions due to difficulties in diagnosis. The pilot program will attempt to overcome this hurdle,
benefits of immunization and importance of sustainable funding.

ReliefWeb published the World Health Organization DR Congo bureau's summary on the second SIF parliamentary briefing held in the nation.

Matthew Berger of the Inter Press Service interviewed Dr. de Quadros prior to the SEC 2010 Symposium on Smallpox Eradication to learn how the “Death of Smallpox Holds Clues to Stop Viral Killers Inter Press Service.”

Voice of America reporter Nico Colombant highlights remarks from the congressional briefing on eliminating NTDs in "Researchers, USAID Seek More Money To Fight Neglected Tropical Diseases.”

EarthSky interviewed Dr. Hotez about parasitic infections in the U.S and created two audio podcasts.

Dr. David Diemert provides insights on infectious disease trends for ADVANCE for Medical Laboratory Professionals who also featured a slide show of images from Sabin Vaccine Development's clinical trial site in Minas Gerais, Brazil.

Recent Scientific Articles

Since the last issue of The Sabin Report, Dr. Peter Hotez has authored 3 op-eds: "Parasites in Paradise" for the New York Times, "Vaccines Over Missiles" for the Ottawa Citizen, and "Gulf Coast Must Remain and could prove to be a significant breakthrough in controlling Strongyloides.

Read the press release.

Instituto Butantan to Manufacture Schistosomiasis Vaccine Candidate Sm-TSP-2

In August, Sabin Vaccine Development traveled to Sao Paulo, Brazil to visit long-time collaborator Instituto Butantan (IB) in preparation for the manufacture of Sabin's schistosomiasis vaccine candidate Sm-TSP-2. Vaccine development personnel met with the Brazilian project team to discuss technology transfer and assist in the current good manufacturing practices (cGMP) audit of the pilot production facility. Manufacture of Sm-TSP-2 will mark a new milestone in the partnership between Sabin and IB, which began with the manufacture of the Na-ASP-2 hookworm vaccine in 2007. Preliminary manufacturing activities have already begun, and production of the schistosomiasis vaccine is planned for December 2010.

Founded in 1901, Instituto Butantan is South America's largest producer of biopharmaceuticals and immunobiologics, and is world-renowned for their research on venomous animals and production of antivenom. IB is also a key supplier of Brazil's childhood vaccines, producing over 100 million doses per year. Sabin Vaccine Development hopes to leverage IB's expertise in the manufacture of recombinant pediatric vaccines such as Hepatitis B for the Sm-TSP-2 vaccine project.

The Sm-TSP-2 molecule is a protein naturally occurring in the body wall of the adult schistosome. This protein may be involved in the parasite's nutrition and evasion of the host immune response that leads to the development of chronic schistosomiasis. Over time, chronic schistosomiasis can result in enlargement of the spleen and liver, bladder cancer and obstruction of the kidneys. Preliminary studies in mice have provided evidence that vaccination with the Sm-TSP-2 protein can result in a significant reduction in host worm counts and egg burdens. This may in turn translate into reduced disease severity for the 200 million individuals infected with schistosomiasis worldwide.

Global Network, Congressional Malaria and Neglected Tropical Disease Caucus ask "Can NTDs be Eliminated?"

On June 10, 2010, the Global Network hosted a congressional briefing, "Can NTDs be Eliminated?," in conjunction with the Congressional Malaria and Neglected Tropical Disease Caucus.
Vigilant for New Health Threat,” co-authored with Edward T. Ryan of the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, for the Houston Chronicle.

In August, The Lancet published “Africa is Desperate for Praziquantel” which was co-authored by Drs. Hotez and Lorenzo Savioli of the World Health Organization (WHO); Dr. Dirk Engels of the WHO; and Dr. Alan Fenwick of Imperial College London.

In addition, Dr. Hotez authored “A National School of Tropical Medicine and Neglected Infections of Poverty for North America” and “Neglected Tropical Disease Control in the Post-American World” and co-authored “The Global Atlas of Helminth Infection: Mapping the Way Forward in Neglected Tropical Disease Control,” “Manifesto” for Advancing the Control and Elimination of Neglected Tropical Diseases,” and “Which New Approaches to Tackling Neglected Tropical Diseases Show Promise?” for the Public Library of Science (PLoS).

Upcoming Meetings

The first Sustainable Immunization Financing (SIF) Parliamentary Colloquium on Sustainable Immunization Financing will take place on November 15-17, 2010 at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) campus in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Over 120 participants from the fifteen SIF pilot countries and global immunization partner agencies are expected to Caucus on the successes of NTD interventions and programs to date, and the future of NTD control and elimination efforts.

Representatives from the U.S. government and several global health and international development organizations attended to hear presentations from the expert panelists--Dr. Peter Hotez of the Sabin Vaccine Institute; Dr. Christy Hanson from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID); and Mr. Ken Gustavsen from Merck &Co.--and to contribute to the discussion moderated by Mr. Steve Sternberg from USA TODAY.

Dr. Hotez focused on what new funding and operational resources must be mobilized if the seven most common NTDs are to be eliminated. Both Mr. Gustavsen and Dr. Hanson added that while taking a more holistic approach to NTD control and combining disease specific, vertical interventions has proven effective, the NTD community cannot afford to lose sight of individual disease experts, goals, and commitments.

Read the full event recap here.

SIF Initiatives Gain Ground In Three Pilot Asian Countries

Sabin Executive Vice President Dr. Ciro de Quadros joined Senior Program Officer Devendra Gnawali in Kathmandu, Nepal on June 15, 2010 for "Countdown to 2015 and Sustainable Immunization Financing: The Role of Civil Society Organizations," an event co-organized by Sabin, UNICEF, and Rotary International.

In Colombo, Sri Lanka, the second Asian SIF sub-regional parliamentary briefing took place July 15-16, 2010 while on August 5, 2010, the Nepalese Women, Children and Social Welfare parliamentary committee formally requested its government institute a national immunization law.

Sabin Vaccine Development Holds Successful Meetings With FIOCRUZ and Instituto Butantan on Future Collaborations

While in Rio de Janerio, Brazil for the SEC 2010 Symposium on Smallpox Eradication, executive staff of Sabin Vaccine Institute, The George Washington University (GWU) and Fundação Oswaldo Cruz
For more information contact sif@sabin.org.

On November 22, 2010 the Pneumococcal Awareness Council of Experts (PACE) will host, along with the Jordan Ministry of Health and The University of Jordan, "Prevent Pneumonia" in Amman, Jordan. Planned with PACE member Dr. Najwa Khuri-Bulos, attendees at the meeting will include high level personnel from the Jordan Ministry of Health as well as expanded program on immunization managers from Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Palestine. The main objective of the event is to inform decision makers, including academics, health officials and practicing physicians, about the prevention and treatment of pneumonia with special reference to the Arab region.

(FIOCRUZ) met to discuss the future of the highly successful ten-year partnership for research and development of vaccines for diseases which impact the world's poorest populations.

Dr. Paolo Gadelha, President of FIOCRUZ, welcomed Sabin President Dr. Peter Hotez, Executive Vice President Dr. Ciro de Quadros, and Sabin Vaccine Development's Director of Product Development Dr. Maria Elena Bottazzi, and highlighted how successful the collaboration between FIOCRUZ and Sabin has been over the past ten years.

The discussion focused on new potential collaborative opportunities for hookworm and schistosomiasis vaccine development and evaluation. During the meeting, FIOCRUZ announced that two major technology infrastructure projects, a pilot (prototype) manufacturing plant at FIOCRUZ Bio-Manguinhos and a Center for Biotechnology Development (CDTS)--where material for vaccines targeting neglected tropical disease could potentially be manufactured--will be completed by the end of 2011.

During the same trip, Drs. Hotez, de Quadros, and Bottazzi also met with Dr. Hernan Chaimovich, Superintendent of Fundação Butantan and the project team of Instituto Butantan (IB) in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Fundação Butantan is the private entity that supports the activities of IB and permits IB to be a producer of vaccines and to develop new biotechnologies.

Discussions were conducted with both IB and FIOCRUZ regarding Sabin's future collaboration with these Brazilian organizations to manufacture hookworm and schistosomiasis vaccines. In the current plan, IB would produce pilot material for Phase 1 and 2 vaccine clinical trials, which would be followed by technology transfer to FIOCRUZ for large-scale production.

At the conclusion of both meetings, participants renewed their commitment to developing and producing affordable vaccines for diseases such as hookworm and schistosomiasis and ensuring that the vaccines are available and accessible to poor populations.

Blog Highlights from End the Neglect and SIF

The Sustainable Immunization Financing (SIF) program launched a blog in May 2010 which will chronicle the work of its five program officers working in Africa and Asia to increase funding of national immunizations programs. To date, SIF's blog has featured posts on decentralization and immunization in Sierra Leone, the 9th International Rotavirus Symposium and profiles of each of its five senior program officers.

Below, please find links to blog highlights from SIF and the Global Network's End the Neglect blog:

- Forbes Journalist Helen Coster interviews Sabin President Dr. Peter Hotez about innovative models for vaccine development.
- Dr. Mariko Rasmussen, Program Assistant for Women Deliver,
blogs about accelerating progress for maternal health initiatives.

- Billy Shore, Executive Director of Share our Strength, shares his thoughts on Haiti six months after the earthquake.

- Dr. John Wecker, Director of the Vaccine Access and Delivery Global Program, PATH, blogs about the 2nd Asian Vaccine Conference (ASVAC) in Manila, Philippines.

- Sabin Senior Program Officer Jonas Mbwangue explains the importance of sustainable immunization financing in his memorandum to Cameroon's Prime Minister.

- Sabin Senior Program Officer Cliff Kamara discusses his work on strategies in securing sustainable immunization financing in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Nigeria.

- The SIF program summarizes the importance of an upcoming peer exchange between DR Congo and Cameroon.

9th International Rotavirus Symposium Recap

The 9th International Rotavirus Symposium, held from August 2-3, 2010 in Johannesburg, South Africa, brought together over 385 scientists, clinicians, public health professionals, and immunization leaders from over 65 countries. The event was designed to provide an update on relevant research that will inform public health agendas related to rotavirus gastroenteritis.

A Global Call to Action was issued at the conclusion of the symposium highlighting the facts associated with rotavirus and the commitment of those in attendance to move the agenda forward.

Read the press release.

Marva Loblack Joins Sabin as Associate Director, Quality & Regulatory

Marva Loblack has joined the Sabin Vaccine Institute as Associate Director, Quality & Regulatory for Sabin Vaccine Development in July 2010. In this role she directs the development, implementation and maintenance of quality assurance systems and activities for Sabin’s vaccine development initiatives.

Prior to joining Sabin, Ms. Loblack developed regulatory strategies for small and large molecule based therapeutics as Regulatory Affairs Manager at DJA Global Pharma LLC. She has also held positions with Othera Pharmaceutical Inc., Quest Pharmaceutical, and
Noramco of Delaware.

Ms. Loblaw received her bachelor's degree in chemistry from Delaware State University, a master's degree in business administration from Wesley College and a master's degree in bioscience regulatory affairs from Johns Hopkins University.

Amanda Miller to Lead Global Network's Asia Initiatives

Amanda Miller joined Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases as Program Officer in August 2010. In this position, Amanda's primary responsibility is to support Global Network's programmatic efforts, with a particular focus on regional initiatives in Asia.

Amanda holds a Master's degree in Public Health and Social Work at the University of Michigan, as well as a bachelor's degree in Social Work and Music Performance from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. During her graduate studies, she worked with the Access Project in Rwanda as part of the Neglected Tropical Disease communications team. Amanda also served in the U.S. Peace Corps in Botswana, focusing on HIV/AIDS programs including Home-Based Care and Orphan Care, as well as overall HIV education and awareness in the community.

Prior to joining Global Network, Amanda worked as a refugee case manager for Lutheran Social Services of Michigan. She was responsible for managing the cases of refugee minors and victims of human trafficking across international borders. In addition to managing services provided and immigration assistance, Amanda was also responsible for facilitating the training of foster parents and youth regarding health behavior changes.