

PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVES INFORMATION SHEET

Name of the Partnership/Initiative

Healthy Environments for Children : A Global Alliance on Children's Health and Environment

Expected date of initiation: August 2002

Expected date of completion: On-going; first phase August 2002 to August 2007

Partners Involved:

Governments: Governments of all Member States have been invited by WHO to participate and support the founding of the alliance on "Healthy Environments for Children".

Intergovernmental organizations: IGOs who have expressed to WHO their interest and support for the alliance include UNICEF, UNEP, UN Habitat and other institutions in the UN system, as well as regional bodies

Major groups: Children and Youth; Women; Local Government; NGOs; Business and Industry; Scientific and Technological Community

Other: International Society of Doctors for the Environment (ISDE), Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR), International Network of Children's Health, Environment and Safety (INCHES), other NGOs and CBOs, regional entities, private sector bodies, development agencies, research and academic institutions, etc

Leading Partner:

Name of the contact person/focal point:

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Main objectives of the Partnership/Initiative

Please provide a brief description:

Background/Rationale

The world's children are key to the healthy future of our planet and its people. Poor children, particularly, face a range of dangers to health from the physical conditions in which they live. Work by many institutions shows that there is real potential for improving children's health, and creating better futures for them and their families, through a dramatic scale up in action to tackle

these dangers.

The healthy environments for children initiative is an essential component of the efforts of WHO and its partners to implement Agenda 21, reduce global poverty and to reach the Millennium Development Goals.

Overall Objectives

The overall objective of the initiative is to scale up global action to address priority health dangers and risks in the places where children live, are educated, and play. A number of important risk factors will be focussed on in differing settings – for example water (quantity and quality); insect vectors of disease; air (eg indoor air pollution through solid fuel use, and passive smoking); chemicals (eg pesticides, lead), accidents in and around the home, and unhealthy behaviours.

The initiative will help to position the UN system to develop a movement involving many institutions and groups to scale up action in creating healthier environments for children. It will address how interventions to tackle these risks can be integrated, be taken forward by communities themselves, and be shown to yield real benefits : Healthy - and safe - homes, schools, surroundings, play areas etc.

The initiative will encourage a groundswell of action at the local level in particular, through many sectors (including health, environment, education, housing, agriculture, energy, water, local government and social protection sectors), involving numerous groups (for example community groups, NGOs, private entities and others with an interest) alongside national governments, within the context of national and local plans where they exist.

The emphasis will be on getting different groups to work together, to agreed strategies, but in ways that reflect their interests and strengths. The initiative will be as inclusive as possible, with emphasis on the stewardship role of governments.

The initiative will be *science-based, and action oriented*. It will be rooted in evidence and science – based strategies with a focus on priority health and environmental outcomes. Strong emphasis will be placed on the continued production of evidence about how interventions can be effectively implemented, and on monitoring progress. It will bring together the best science, and the knowledge that comes from this science, building on what we know - the risk factors that cause death and suffering among children - particularly poor children, and that also contribute to environmental degradation.

The initiative will also promote *new science* - to further analyse the risk factors, and to test out the actions that could be taken to reduce these risks. It will encourage careful evaluation of all actions - from local to global level - to assess the extent to which they make a difference.

Please also provide a brief description of the relationship of the Partnership/Initiative with the objectives of Agenda 21 as well as relevant goals and objectives of the United Nation Millennium Declaration:

Relevant objectives of Agenda 21 include the following:

Chapter 6 on Protecting and Promoting Human Health, especially Section 6 b (Control of Communicable Diseases – eg reference to environmental management, vector control, hygiene education, awareness-raising, water supply and sanitation control, and waterborne disease control); Section 6c (Protecting Vulnerable Groups – eg reference to infants, children and youth); Section 6d (Meeting the Urban Health Challenge – eg reference to poor living conditions, inadequate housing etc); Section 6e (Reducing Health Risks from Environmental Pollution and Hazards – eg reference to indoor air pollution, water pollution, solid waste, pesticides, human settlements, industry and energy production – toxic compounds such as lead; and injuries etc). Overall emphasis throughout Chapter 6 is on the need for intersectoral collaboration, monitoring and assessment, capacity building etc.

Other relevant Chapters of Agenda 21 include Chapter 3 on Poverty; Chapter 7 on Human Settlements; Chapters relating to Conservation and Management of Resources for Development (water resources, air, toxic chemicals, waste etc) and Chapters on Strengthening the Role of Major Groups (especially children and youth, local authorities, NGOs, business and industry); and Means of Implementation – especially promoting education, awareness raising, capacity building, information for decision-making, etc.

Relevant goals and objectives of the UN Millenium Declaration include goals and targets relating to poverty; child mortality; combatting diseases such as malaria; environmental sustainability (eg in relation to country policies and programmes; improvements in the lives of slum dwellers, access to safe drinking water; improved sanitation; energy use) and others.

Expected results:

Please provide a brief description:

A groundswell of action at the local level, through many sectors, involving numerous groups, which is rooted in implementation of evidence and science – based strategies with a focus on priority health and environmental outcomes.

Specific targets of the Partnership/Initiative and timeframe for their achievement:

These will be decided once the plan of action has been approved by all partners in the alliance

Coordination and Implementation mechanism

Please provide a brief description of expected coordination/implementation mechanism of the Partnership/Initiative.

The initiative will be developed through the core partners in the alliance, building on programmes that are underway and focussing on targets that have been agreed.

Arrangements for funding

Please describe available and/or expected sources of funding for the implementation of the Partnership/Initiative (e.g. donor government(s); international organization(s)/financial institution(s); foundation(s); private sector; other major groups, etc.)

The initiative will seek additional funds from all of the above-mentioned sources to enable the scaling up of local action within poor communities. Some of these funds will be provided to support the implementation of work on healthy environments for children through national Poverty Reduction Strategies/Sustainable Development Strategies. Other funds should be available at country level for groups able to demonstrate the capacity to reduce risks to children's health. The continued availability of funds will be closely linked to results obtained by those who use them: those who succeed are more likely to be able to obtain additional resources.

Countries will be encouraged to set up multidisciplinary/multisectoral teams to develop plans and action strategies for children's health and the environment

Arrangements for capacity building and technology transfer

Please include information if the Partnership/Initiative provides for training, informational support, institutional strengthening and/or other capacity building measures:

The Initiative provides for training (eg workshops at local level, production of guidance materials – aimed at research, development, implementation and evaluation of intervention measures etc), informational support (eg integrated data-bases on health and environment conditions and risks of importance to children, intervention measures which work, case studies of best practice, advocacy products–fact sheets/policy briefs, videos etc,); institutional strengthening (particularly in local government) and other measures such as forums for high-level decision-makers in various sectors of government and other stakeholders to develop multisectoral plans and action strategies to influence international and national policy agendas relevant to children's health and the environment.

Links of Partnership/Initiative with on-going sustainable development activities at the international and/or regional level (if any)

Please provide a brief description:

The initiative will link with on-going sustainable development activities at international and regional/sub-regional level, including development and implementation of sustainable development strategies and poverty reduction strategies at national level, at sub-national level initiatives such as Healthy Cities, Sustainable Cities, Local Agenda 21 plans of action; key issue and sector - based initiatives dealing with water, energy, housing/settlements, etc. It will also link with, and build on existing initiatives on Children's Environmental Health in the regions, and globally. National Governments, NGOs, private entities, municipalities and local government, faith groups, youth groups and other interested parties will be eligible to seek involvement in the initiative.

Monitoring Arrangements

Please describe expected arrangements for monitoring of progress in the implementation of Partnerships/Initiative after it will be launched at the WSSD:

(e.g. frequency/modalities of preparation of progress reports; electronic updates, news-letters, etc)

Annual progress reports will be prepared; an interactive website will be set up; regular

newsletters, informational briefs prepared etc

Other relevant information:

Web-site (if available):

Name and contact information of the person filling in this table:

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