Report on the First World Health Organization Consultative Meeting on Health as a Bridge for Peace[1]

Les Pensières, Annecy, 30-31 October 1997

I. Introduction

The Consultative Meeting was convened by the World Health Organization Division of Emergency and Humanitarian Action (WHO/EHA), as part of the Health as a Bridge for Peace project, sponsored by the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom. The main purpose of the project is to develop practical guidance on peacebuilding skills for health professionals. The Consultative Meeting is part of the scope of work for the project. The meeting built upon earlier work undertaken by the World Health Organization's Task Force on Health in Development Policies, several international symposia, and regional initiatives most notably in Southern Africa, Central America, and Eastern Europe. (See Agenda in Appendix A.)

1.1. The stated objectives of the Consultative Meeting included:

- To build consensus on working definitions of terminology commonly referred to in conflict and health as a bridge for peace discussions and activities;
- To reach a common understanding of the dynamics of violent conflict and conflict cycles;
- To identify key issues to be address, and appropriate interventions, in the framework of health as a bridge for peace at different phases of conflict cycles;
- To identify stakeholders in other disciplines and sectors to be sensitized in the process of advocating health as a bridge for peace;
- To reflect on the possibilities and limits of peacebuilding through health, based on lessons learned in the case studies;
- To identify key skills necessary for health professionals to contribute to peacebuilding through health; and
- To propose a plan of action to advance health as a bridge for peace.

1.2. Expected outcomes of the meeting included a Plan of Action to include identification of:

- Documentation of experiences through case studies;
- Networking with other individuals and agencies involved in peace and health issues;
- Sensitization and advocacy involving other disciplines and sectors;
- Active skills training for health professionals; and
- Impact evaluation and analysis for further applied learning.

---

[1] *Draft prepared by: The George Washington University Center for International Health, a WHO Collaborating Centre for Health and Development*