The Global Health Council
Annual Report 2008
(1 October 2007 – 30 September 2008)

The year 2008 was highlighted by strategic and innovative thinking, looking forward to new opportunities in global health, and preparing for the outcomes of the U.S. 2008 elections – the 111th Congress, the 44th presidency and its new administration. The Global Health Council played an active leadership role to ensure that the critical issues in global health and the voices of civil society and other key stakeholders were communicated to the Presidential campaigns and to the Obama administration and the new United States Congress.

In 2008 alone, the Global Health Council made more than 1,000 formal policy contacts with the U.S. government and international policy institutions on issues ranging from the development of a comprehensive approach to U.S. global health policy to the formulation of a robust international affairs budget that included increased investments in global health for FY 2009. The Council also proposed questions for witnesses at congressional hearings on areas of global concern, including the Partner Vetting System, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, foreign assistance reform and FY09 State Department priorities.

As the election neared, the Global Health Council assumed a leadership role in convening organizations working in global health to develop key recommendations for the incoming president and administration. In addition to submitting its own transition document, the Council compiled recommendations through its Roundtables for Global AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis. The Council also participated in the creation of transition documents for the maternal and family health communities (see text box). Council President, Dr. Nils Daulaire wrote in Health Affairs about the outlook for global health under the next U.S. administration.

In addition, the Global Health Council continued to press ahead with its other core function – disseminating evidence and lessons learned from programs operating in the field in its priority issue areas: Women's Health, Child Health, HIV/AIDS, Infectious Diseases, and

In its 36th year, the Global Health Council had 530 member organizations and 4,650 individual members around the world, and served as the premier professional association for those working in and studying global health. Members played a key role in developing positions and community recommendations:

Highlights from the Global Health Council’s transition document include:
- Need for high-level appointee for global health within the National Security Council;
- Need for a cohesive, integrated five-year strategy on global health;
- Need for restructuring management and delivery of global health;
- Need for five-year initiative on family health that integrates maternal, child and reproductive health.

Highlights from the community recommendation process, include:

Global AIDS Roundtable:
- Increasing focus on prevention: reaching vulnerable populations and calling for comprehensive interventions to include family planning;
- Treating 4 million people living with HIV through a combination of bilateral and multilateral funds;
- Ensuring access to high-quality of care and high-quality/lowest-price drugs
- Establishing a gender-focused strategy;
- Training 140,000 health workers and strengthening health systems;
- Increasing coordination between HIV and other programs, particularly TB/HIV.

Malaria Roundtable:
- Developing and implementing a five-year strategy;
- Retaining Malaria Coordinator position;
- Fulfilling funding commitments made in H.R. 5501, Lantos/Hyde Leadership Act Against AIDS, TB, and Malaria, with a minimum of $800 million for FY 2010.

TB Roundtable:
- Developing and implementing a five-year strategy;
- Fulfilling funding commitments made in H.R. 5501, Lantos/Hyde Leadership Act Against, AIDS, TB, and Malaria, with a minimum of $650 million for FY 2010;
- Increasing the focus on research and development.

Maternal Health:
- Developing a comprehensive, evidence-based Maternal and Newborn Health Emergency Action Plan;
- Scaling up to a yearly contribution of $1.3 billion per year.

Family Health:
- Announcing Presidential Global Family Health Action Plan;
- Reaffirming commitment to Millennium Development Goals;
- Allocating $2.2 billion for maternal and child health for Fiscal Year 2010: $900 million for child health and $1.3 billion for maternal health.
Health Systems. **The Global Health Council’s 2008 Annual International Conference**, the preeminent event of its kind, drew more than 2,300 participants (a new attendance record) from more than 80 countries who shared information and debated salient issues around its *community health* theme. The Conference marked the 35th anniversary of the event, and provided opportunities for building new and strengthening existing partnerships. Featured legends and highly influential speakers within the global health community included **Dr. Margaret Chan**, Director-General of the World Health Organization, **Dr. Mirta Roses**, Director of the Pan American Health Organization, and **Prof. Carl Taylor**, who received the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award for his dedication to improving the health care of the world’s most marginalized people through innovative and sustainable community-based interventions. **The Councils Policy Series events** – a highly esteemed forum for both policy makers and practitioners to disseminate findings and best practices – featured high-profile and influential speakers as well.

**Looking ahead to 2009**, in the words of Nils Daulaire, “Now comes the task of translating promises into real policies, programs, and investments . . . The temptation in any new administration, particularly when power has transferred from one political party to another, is to assume that everything old must be scrapped. Particularly in the arena of global health, where the Bush administration has made a strong mark, this would be a serious error. Continuity and expansion of some of Bush’s hallmark disease-fighting initiatives need to be coupled with key policy modifications and a new, more comprehensive commitment to improving the health of families everywhere. Through these actions, President-elect Obama could, by the end of his term in office, achieve the remarkable goal of saving more than 6 million lives each year among the world’s poorest societies and could build the foundation for a truly healthier, more secure world.”¹ The Global Health Council is well-positioned to help the new president achieve these goals and we look forward to building on our successes of 2008.

**Financial Statement FY2008**

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¹ *Health Affairs*, 28, no. 2 (2009): w199-w204 (Published online 16 January 2009) doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.28.2.w199